Engagement of citizens and public professionals in the co-production of public services

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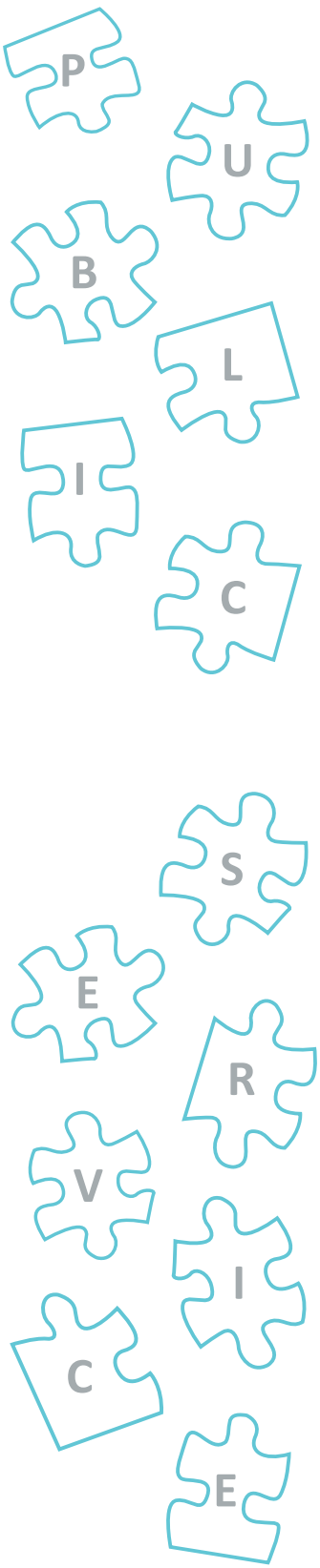
Carola van Eijk



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CHAPTER 1

Introducing this dissertation

1.1 INTRODUCTION

1.1.1 Illustrating the puzzle

In the case presented in Text box 1.1, a number of citizens want to take up responsibility for the neighborhood they are living in. Through a neighborhood watch scheme, they want to improve the safety and livability of their environment, in collaboration with public service professionals of the police and municipality. As the case shows, such a collaborative process is not without challenges.

Text box 1.1 Challenges for a neighborhood watch scheme and the public professionals involved

Suzan lives in a Dutch municipality. Within her neighborhood, there are troubles with youth hanging around and people throwing litter on the street. Suzan thinks it is important to contribute to the community, and that it is also her responsibility to help solve the current problems. Together with some other neighbors, she decides to start up a neighborhood watch scheme. For advice, she contacts the municipality where she comes in touch with Peter. Peter is civil servant and responsible for safety policies. Since neighborhood watch schemes are highly valued – also by the mayor – there are some guidelines available, enabling Peter to make a budget available and organize a training program. Peter also ensures Suzan gets in touch with Tina, the local police officer of this neighborhood. Tina really appreciates the willingness of Suzan and her team to invest efforts in the community. She is convinced the efforts of neighborhood watch schemes can help improve the livability. Moreover, for Tina active citizens like Suzan also contribute to her own work-activities: Tina believes she can better perform with the extra eyes and ears neighborhood watch schemes bring in. Yet, she also knows the members of neighborhood watch schemes are not used to communicate with large groups of youth hanging around on streets: although the members' intentions are good, when their way of communication does not fit the situation this can result in more conflicts and rumor between local residents and the youth. Therefore, Tina wants to help Suzan and her team by organizing information meetings and joining them on patrols. Something that is highly appreciated by Suzan and her teammates, and that increases their enthusiasm. However, Tina's supervisor – the local police chief – argues she spends too much time on the neighborhood watch scheme and that this is conflicting with other activities she needs to perform. Tina feels restricted by her supervisor and feels obliged to spend less time with the neighborhood watch scheme. This in turn gives Suzan the idea her efforts are not valued by Tina and the police, and she wonders whether she needs to continue her activities.

The members of the neighborhood watch scheme presented in Text box 1.1 lack the competencies to interact with youth hanging around on streets; competencies the police officers do have. In order for the neighborhood watch scheme to function in a safe and legitimate way, facilitation and support by the public professionals are important. Without this support, they might perceive their efforts as more difficult to perform and feel less motivated to continue their membership of the neighborhood watch scheme after a while. Yet, this also brings

some challenges for the public organization: the case illustrates how the police officer has to find the balance between requirements of the police organization on the one hand and expectations of the members of the neighborhood watch scheme on the other hand. It also shows how the police officer's attitude can influence the motivation of the neighborhood watch members. The members feel supported by the police officers' efforts to help the inexperienced team members, but when the police officer can spend less time with the neighborhood watch team they no longer feel valued. In the case presented, the police officer is convinced of the usefulness and added value of neighborhood watch schemes; however we might expect some police officers are less convinced. When this is reflected in their attitude towards the neighborhood watch scheme, we expect a similar reaction to how the team members reacted in the end. Moreover, the attitude of the members of the neighborhood watch scheme will be relevant: if the members have different motivations then shown in Text box 1.1 (for example being driven by the need for protection of their own properties instead of being concerned with the local community), how would the police officer respond? Will she still be convinced of the added value, or will she (also) have some concerns?

Thus, individual characteristics of citizens and public professionals – in terms of their capacity and willingness to collaborate – are likely to strongly affect the extent to which they feel engaged in the collaboration, and this in turn seems to be reflected in the collaborative process.

1.1.2 Introducing the research question

The collaboration between Suzan, Tina and Peter, and the challenges they are confronted with are not unique. In academic literature, collaboration between citizens and public professionals aimed at the provision of public services is labeled ***co-production***. Within the Netherlands but also in several other countries around the globe, similar collaborations can be identified. To list a few examples: parents in several European countries are engaged with primary schools and childcare services (Pestoff 2008); in Scotland there are community-based care packages for vulnerable elderly people (Jackson 2013); residents of Hong Kong volunteer in collaboration with governmental agencies to help immigrants in their new environment (Tu 2016);

unemployed people participate in Dutch activation programs (Fledderus 2016); and tenants in Germany manage social housing through housing cooperatives (Brandsen and Helderman 2012). In this dissertation I will investigate client councils in healthcare organizations and representative advisory councils at primary schools as two other forms of co-production in addition to the neighborhood watch schemes that have already been introduced.

Through co-production, citizens and professionals become partners, and their collaboration requires (intense) interaction. But, why do citizens like Suzan sometimes become disappointed in co-production processes? And why do professionals like Tina feel constrained in interacting with citizens? How does the extent to which citizens and professionals feel engaged impact the interaction between them? Moreover, although governments are seeking ways to involve a broader range of citizens, in many instances only a small number of citizens respond (WRR 2012). What drives citizens to engage in co-production? Although the number of studies on the topic of co-production has increased substantially during the past decades and valuable insights are delivered, these puzzles still remain unsolved.

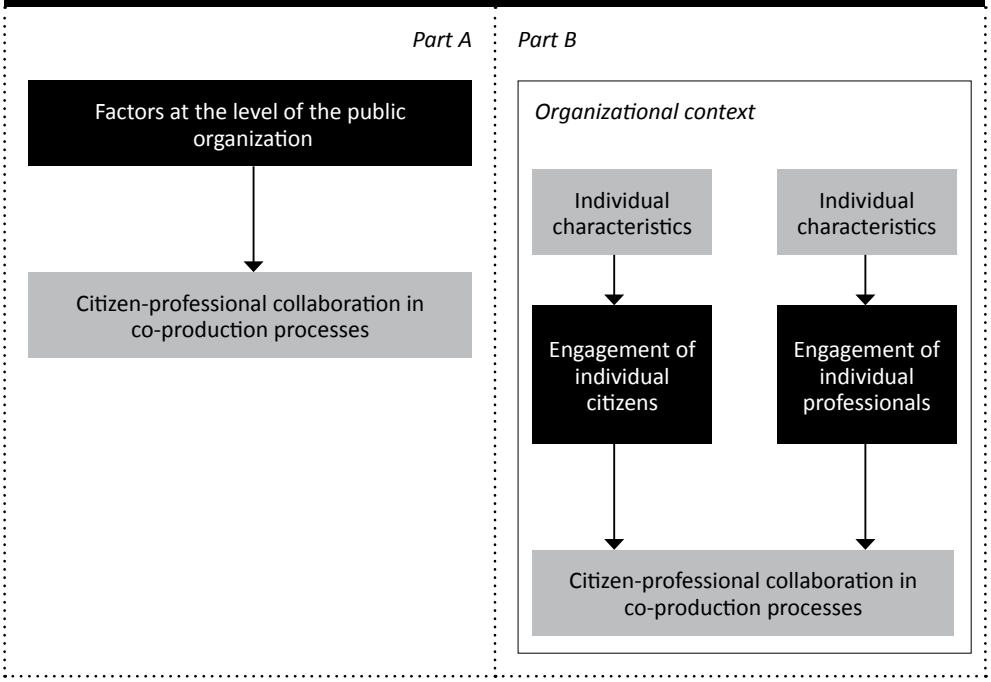
In an attempt to find answers, this study takes a different approach than most existing studies. Generally, studies on co-production focus on collaborative networks, processes, and organizations (cf. Brandsen and Van Hout 2006; Joshi and Moore 2004; Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012). Research, for example, finds that organizational processes need to be oriented at clients' needs (Alford 2009), the networks in which co-production occurs need to be supportive for co-production (Porter 2012), and ICT can be integrated to facilitate the process (Meijer 2012; Gascó and Fernández 2014). However, the emphasis on the aggregate level of the public organization hinders a focus on the individual level of the citizens and professionals involved. Reviews by Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff (2012), and Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers (2015), show that scarcely any empirical attention has been paid to the individuals involved in co-production. Only recently we can observe a gradual shift (cf. Osborne, Radnor and Strokosch 2016).

Yet, as the case in Text box 1.1 of Suzan's neighborhood watch scheme clearly illustrates: co-production is about the *collaboration between individuals*. The argument I want to make in this dissertation is, therefore, that conditions for

successful collaboration between public service professionals and citizens should *also* be studied at the level of the individuals involved. That is, to find answers for the questions addressed above we should not only ask *how networks or organizations can involve citizens*, but also *why the individual citizens feel engaged* with the process. We should not only investigate *how public organizations are involved* in co-production, but also *how the individual professionals perceive the collaboration and why they feel engaged* to involve citizens in the service delivery process. Engagement, here, refers to an open-minded attitude, to being motivated to contribute efforts, to feeling committed to co-production, and being convinced co-production is important and useful for the service delivery process. To increase our understanding of what individual characteristics determine the engagement of individual citizens and professionals, and to better understand the role of this engagement in the collaborative process, this dissertation aims to answer the following research question: ***What are the motivations for individual citizens and public professionals to engage in the co-production of public services, and how do mutual perceptions of the co-production partners' engagement influence the collaboration?***

While in this dissertation the perspective of the individuals involved is central, it is important to note that the organizational level is not entirely excluded. That is, for example the extent to which public professionals perceive the organization to be supportive might impact on their engagement, like police officer Tina who feels restricted by the local police chief. In other words, the individuals involved in co-production behave in the context of public organizations. Figure 1.1 schematizes the differences in focus between the existing co-production literature and the dissertation's study.

Figure 1.1 Key variables included in the existing co-production literature (A) and in this dissertation's study (B)



In the following sections of this introduction, the theoretical and methodological contributions (section 1.5), the outline of the dissertation (section 1.6), and the practical relevance (section 1.7) are discussed more in depth, thereby also introducing what specific variables explaining citizens' and professionals' engagement will be investigated. Because this dissertation is based on a number of academic articles published in or submitted to international journals (including both theory and empirical results) (see section 1.5), this introductory chapter will start with a discussion of the context against which this dissertation can be placed (section 1.2). That is, involvement of citizens is not new, yet the intensity and nature of the involvement has changed over time and co-production can be perceived as a next step in this development (cf. Moynihan and Thomas 2013; Brandsen and Honingh 2013; Bovaird 2005; Osborne, Radnor and Nasi 2012). To better understand this development, the next section starts with a description of changing perceptions

on the roles of both citizens and public agencies in society, followed (in sections 1.3 and 1.4) by a brief introduction to the co-production literature.

1.2 GENERAL CONTEXT: THE EVOLVING RELATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENT AND CITIZENS

If we position co-production in a broader context, we can observe a changing discourse on what is or should be the role of both citizens and government. In the (political) debate, throughout the years different arguments are proposed on how the interrelationship between citizens and government should look like (for an overview see for example Rouban 1999a). The collaboration between citizens and public professionals as specified within co-production adds another chapter to this evolutionary interrelationship. This section provides a summary of these debates, positioning co-production in broader debates found in literature on citizenship and public administration (for a more comprehensive discussion see Van Eijk and Steen 2012a). Thereafter, in the next section I will give a brief overview of the co-production literature. In the remainder of this chapter, the gaps that can be identified in the co-production literature will be discussed, followed by the theoretical and methodological contributions of this dissertation.

1.2.1 The evolution of the concept of citizenship

Depending on the specific institutional and cultural setting and varying over time, each society has its own values and norms regarding what is the citizens' role in society (cf. Turner 1990; Westholm, Montero and Van Deth 2007; Amnå 2010). The concept of citizenship diverges both from country to country and from time to time, resulting in different viewpoints on rights, responsibilities and the interrelationship between society and government. In the Netherlands, citizenship is built upon five sequential 'layers'; similar to different strata in a process of sedimentation (Van den Brink 2002). These layers describe citizenship in judicial, political, social, economic and cultural terms.

The first layer – the judicial one – started with the Netherlands becoming a *rechtsstaat* in 1798. At that moment, citizens became subjects: only the government

was allowed to take part in politics, and citizens were protected by legal rights. The second layer reflects the start of the representative democracy in 1848. The role of citizens – i.e., only the elite living in the main cities – changed from subject to voter, while the government ensured public security. After much debate in particularly 1898 (starting point of the third layer), universal suffrage was acquired for men (1917) and women (1919). Within 'social citizenship', the citizens' role extended to active representation: citizens not only voted but were also members of a political party. The government – as 'people's democracy' – focused on ensuring social justice among citizens. After the Second World War, due to the emergence of the welfare state, the government's role changed to protecting and safeguarding social security. Thus, the fourth layer is about economic citizenship. Finally, within the fifth layer citizenship is described in cultural terms. Within the info-state starting in 1968, the government's main task was to enable citizens to develop themselves, while citizens got organized in pressure groups to influence decision-making (Van den Brink 2002).

Van den Brink's (2002) classification ends at the year 1998. In the 2000s, different scholars (cf. Tonkens 2006; Clarke, Newman, Smith, Vidler and Westmarland 2007) observe yet again a new interpretation in the concept of citizenship, namely the evolution to 'active citizenship'. This term reflects that within civil society focus is not only on citizens' rights as developed during the past decades, but also – if not more – on citizens' responsibilities. The advocates of the idea of active citizenship propose that due to the huge growth of the welfare state citizens have become 'dependent', 'passive' and 'lazy' (Van de Bovenkamp 2010: 10). To activate them, governments need to roll back. While citizens have the right to make decisions concerning their own lives, they also have the responsibility to take care of themselves, each other and society as a whole. So, citizens are expected to be self-reliant, voluntarily help people in their social network, and try to improve services (Van de Bovenkamp 2010: 10).[1]

1 In the idea of active citizenship, also an active role of citizens is favored in political processes aimed at the improvement of public policies. Improvement of policies can be approached through different forms of political participation, ranging from joining consultation meetings to participatory budgeting. However, this dissertation is concerned with processes directed at public services (i.e., co-production processes) and so processes of political participation concerned with public policies are beyond the study's scope (for an overview of different forms of political participation in the Netherlands, see Van Eijk (2014)).

So, today's form of citizenship emphasizes citizens' involvement in the improvement and delivery of public services. It marks a shift from being merely involved in political processes aimed at changing policies to being (particularly) involved in service delivery processes. Co-production fits into this idea of citizen involvement in public service delivery: it is about professionals and citizens who jointly contribute to the provision of services (cf. definitions by Brandsen, Pestoff and Verschuere (2012: 1) and Parks et al. (1981)). In line with the dissertation's central aim to explain engagement of citizens and professionals, the first sub research question will be directed at why citizens are willing to pick up this new role and what motivates them to co-produce. Since viewpoints on citizens' roles vary over time and place, we will also take different contexts (i.e., countries) into account (see section 1.5). Text box 1.2 visualizes the changing nature of citizenship in a concrete policy domain, namely health care. Here, co-production takes, among others, place through client councils in health care organizations.

Text box 1.2 The changing nature of citizenship in the policy domain of health care

Within the Netherlands, the democratization movement that put more emphasis on citizens' voices was also visible in health care. From the 1960s and especially the 1970s onwards, patients were given more and more opportunities to voice their opinion. The underlying idea was that patients should not be perceived as passive recipients of care, but as citizens who have certain rights to influence decision-making: both in the context of their individual treatment and collectively in decision-making processes at the governmental or organizational (e.g., hospital, nursing home) level. So, at the individual level patients were enabled to influence their own care. As 'active' and 'good' patients they take up responsibilities and are in control of their own life. At the collective level, a number of patient organizations were established. In the 1970s the number of these kinds of interest representation organizations was small, but in the years following almost every possible disease was represented. The patient organizations are not only concerned with interest representation and lobbying, they also deliver several services to their own members; e.g., providing information, organizing activities for fellow sufferers, and doing research. In the 1980s and 1990s, patient organizations were institutionalized within the policy system, making them co-responsible for both the policies and care provided. Different patient laws were introduced to further strengthen the position of patients. In 1996, the 'Participation by Clients of Care Institutions Act' [*Wet medezeggenschap cliënten zorginstellingen*] came into force, obliging every single health care organization to install a client council. This council has an important say in the management of the health care organization and the quality of the care delivered.

1.2.2 Governments finding new forms of engagement

When positioning co-production in a broader context, the citizens' changing role is

only half of the story. The other half relates to expectations about the government's role: within the field of public administration, scholars have observed several changes in the way the government is organized and how it interacts with actors in the environment. These changes are classified within three dominant paradigms or "big models of public management reform", namely Traditional Public Administration (TPA), New Public Management (NPM), and New Public Governance (NPG) (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011). Within each paradigm, citizens (or customers) are empowered by the government, albeit in a different way. Central to the government's motivations to empower citizens and increase their participation, are enhancing the quality of services while reducing their costs, increasing the credibility of decisions made, and – perhaps most important – raising the government's legitimacy (Pollitt 2003: 100; OECD 2001b: 1). In fact, the reforms are a reaction to changes in society (as outlined in the section above), while in turn they are also affecting the position of governments in this environment.

Within TPA, interaction between governments and the environment was limited. Citizens voted and governments protected their rights. Within public organizations, there was a strict split between politics and administration (Lane 2000). The bureaucratic system ensured that policies were implemented effectively by emphasizing values like equality, while politics reflected the citizenry through the representative system. Public service delivery processes were hierarchically organized, with governments being the single or central actor delivering services. Civil servants (or public professionals) had a central role in the service delivery process: they were the experts, and their professional standards, knowledge, experiences and insights determined good service quality (Pestoff 2015).

However, in the 1980s this idea was criticized. Because of its assumed efficiency the market was perceived as a better alternative to governmental production. So, within NPM, the government's role has reduced "from rowing to steering" and the private sector has taken over, for example through contracting out and public-private-partnerships (Gilbert 2005; Peters 2010). Citizens are perceived as customers similar to their role at the 'normal' market, meaning that they are given the opportunity to express their opinion by choice and exit options but not really by having their voices heard (Van der Meer 2009; Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011). Since

service quality was assumed to originate from (market) competition, professional standards became less crucial. Instead of acting in a system of command and control, public professionals had to focus on competition between different service providers (Pestoff 2015). So, within NPM, the output of the service delivery process has been perceived most important; mainly in terms of efficiency but also with respect to citizens' choice and exit decisions.

Gradually, however, in the dominant viewpoint the process and outcomes of service delivery have become more important, with more emphasis on citizens' rights (Pestoff 2015). Although governments still perceive citizens as customers, they additionally search for new forms for these citizens to get involved in the actual delivery and not just in the consumption phase (Alford 1998). Within NPG services are often delivered within horizontal networks, with governments no longer being the main or central actor. Citizens-users' perspectives and experiences are more prominent as ideally they are given the opportunity to directly provide input in the service delivery process alongside the public professionals regularly producing the service (Radnor, Osborne, Kinder and Mutton 2014). For the public professionals, this new discourse implies a shift in their mindset from competition to collaboration. The nature of the mutual dialogue between professionals and citizen-users is the key to service quality (Pestoff 2015). Collaboration, negotiation, and communication are important skills.

Thus, the three paradigms reflect a movement in which governments became more and more interconnected with their environment, and now ideally produce their services in collaboration with the different actors in that environment. For public professionals this means their role and tasks changed similarly; from command and control to a collaborative mindset. Co-production clearly fits in the NPG paradigm, as it stresses the notion that services are no longer produced *for* but *by* the public (Bovaird and Löffler 2012b: 1121), and regular producers (i.e., governmental agencies or public professionals in these agencies) collaborate with the citizen co-producers (cf. definitions by Brandsen, Pestoff and Verschuere 2012; Brandsen and Honingh 2016). Consequently, public professionals need to open up their work processes to citizens. However, are they willing and capable to deal with these new challenges? Current co-production literature pays limited attention to

this, and does this mostly from a theoretical perspective (cf. Brandsen and Honingh 2013; Moynihan and Thomas 2013). In line with the central aim stressed in the first section of this chapter, the second sub research question is aimed at increasing our insights on professionals' engagement in co-production. The third sub research question will investigate how mutual perceptions of both professionals and citizens on this engagement is reflected in the collaboration. But before introducing the dissertation's outline (section 1.5), first the subsequent sections delve deeper in the concept of co-production, and the relevance and value of the dissertation.

1.3 THE RISE OF THE CO-PRODUCTION CONCEPT

The last section shows that the ideas behind the concept of co-production coincide with some larger debates in society and academia on the (ideal) role of citizens and government. After a first wave of attention in the late 1970s/1980s, the concept of co-production experienced a true revival during the 2000s and 2010s in both academia and practice. This popularity was stimulated by, among others, financial concerns (i.e., the economic crisis put financial pressures on governments), citizens' call for more/better services at a lower cost, social challenges such as the ageing population, and a legitimacy crisis of both the government and the market. Presenting co-production as the go-to solution for these challenges, the concept has become the subject of many ideological and political debates, such as the 'Big Society Debate' in the United Kingdom (Ishkanian and Szreter 2012; Cameron 2010). The normative nature of these more political debates is to some extent reflected in the academic literature, where in the normative assumptions underlying co-production it is stated that co-production ensures the delivery of better outcomes, the inclusion of more human resources, encouragement of self-help and behavior change, a better use of scarce resources, the growth of social networks to support resilience, and improvement of well-being (Boyle and Harris 2009: 19-20).

During the past decade, one of the important streams in co-production literature is focusing on the question if co-production indeed does reach some of these effects. The conclusions derived by different scholars are mixed. Vamstad (2012), for example, concludes that co-production can result in better quality,

as the quality of co-operative childcare in Sweden is perceived higher compared to childcare solely organized by municipalities. But the literature also hints at some pitfalls when delivering services through co-production. Fledderus (2016) investigates whether co-production can increase trust between citizens and the public organization, and concludes that this is much more complex than often assumed. Brandsen and Helderman (2012), and Rosentraub and Sharp (1981; as referred to by Porter 2012), raise the issue of equity: services provided might not be equally accessible to all potential users and also the co-production process itself might not encourage all groups of citizens to take part. As a consequence of these pitfalls in the co-production process, co-production might not reach its potential for social innovation.

In addition to the search on how to address the shortcomings and therefore how to increase the effectiveness of co-production processes, another important stream of current co-production literature relates to the question of what co-production actually is. Since the start of the 21st century especially, the number of academic studies on the topic of co-production boomed, and with that also the number of definitions increased. An overview of the definitions that were developed lies behind the scope of this study (see for example Brandsen and Honingh 2016; Van Kleef and Van Eijk 2016; Osborne, Radnor and Strokosch 2016). In general, however, it can be argued that in the 1980s the term was more economically-oriented with a focus on how to increase the efficiency of service delivery processes (e.g., Brudney and England 1983), while during the 2000s emphasis changed to a more political-administrative approach focusing on the efforts provided by the different actors and the dynamics and interactions between them (e.g., Bovaird 2007). Yet, full consensus is not reached on who these actors (particularly the co-producers) are, the extent to which direct interaction between the co-producer and regular producer is required, and the phase of the service delivery process in which co-production can take place.

1.4 DEFINING CO-PRODUCTION

To start with, scholars deviate in their interpretation of who the co-producer is.

Some scholars define the co-producer solely as (individual) citizens (e.g., Ostrom 1996; Pestoff 2012; Brandsen and Honingh 2016), while others (also) include collaboration with other public agencies, third sector organizations like charities and non-profit associations, and for-profit organizations (e.g., Alford 1993; Pestoff 2009; Baars 2011; Tuurnas, Stenvall, Rannisto, Harisalo and Hakari 2014). In this dissertation I follow Pestoff (2012), who argues that co-production is about the collaboration with (individual) citizens, thereby excluding the collaboration with third sector organizations.

Another point on which the literature deviates, is whether co-production requires direct interaction between the different actors. For Alford (2002a), for example, this is not required, coming up with examples like filling in tax forms or writing postal codes on envelopes. Authors like Bovaird (2007), Brandsen, Pestoff and Verschuere (2012), and Brandsen and Honingh (2016), argue to the contrary that co-production is about 'a long term relationship' and 'mixing activities'. I follow these authors, as without interaction there is no collaboration – one of the features of co-production.

Finally, no agreement exists to the question in what phase of the service delivery process co-production can or does take place. Some scholars argue co-production can only occur during the delivery phase, thereby limiting co-production to actual *production* or *implementation* (e.g., Brudney and England 1983; Alford 1998). More recent literature shows, however, that co-production can also be of added value to other phases in the delivery process: co-production "can extend across the full value chain of service planning, design, commissioning, managing, delivering, monitoring, and evaluation activities" (Bovaird 2007: 847). I follow this broader approach, as citizens can also provide input (and so help produce the service) during the planning or designing phase of a service. In some instances such as the delivery of health care, citizens lack the capacities to fully co-produce during the implementation phase. Yet, when they provide input during the design or planning phase, this can still be perceived as co-production.

Thus, in this dissertation, I define co-production in line with the definition by Brandsen, Pestoff and Verschuere (2012: 1). Co-production is "the mix of activities" of both public service professionals ('regular producers') and citizens

('co-producers') that aim at enhancing the quality of the services produced. Hereby, co-producing activities can take place in different phases of the delivery process, including the planning or designing phase and the actual implementation (Bovaird and Löffler 2012a).

The final element in this definition that has not yet been discussed, concerns the second actor in the collaboration, namely the regular producer. The regular producer is defined as 'public service professional'. In literature on professionalism, 'professional' is a specific term. Although some scholars argue a wide variety of tasks and job positions can be assigned to professionals (cf. Hupe and Van der Krogt 2013), others are rather specific on the features of these jobs (cf. Freidson 1994; 2001; Noordegraaf and Steijn 2013). In co-production literature the term professional is most often loosely used as it simply refers to 'all kinds of employees working for the (semi-)public organization involved' (Brandsen and Honingh 2016).

Traditionally, public service professionals are vital for the provision of several public services. They are in charge of planning, producing and delivering services. Through co-production, however, more actors get involved as co-producers: service users, their relatives, and volunteers, among others, become regular producers'partners (Bovaird and Löffler 2012a). The growth of interdependence between citizens and professionals does not (necessarily) mean, however, that citizens are substituting the professionals: most often they become complementary. This could either mean that public professionals still perform the core activities of the delivery process whereas co-producers perform more secondary tasks, or that co-producers are involved in the core activities under 'supervision' of public professionals. Both relations can be illustrated with examples found at primary schools, where parents often perform different tasks. Sometimes these are more at the sideline of the core pedagogical process, such as organizing activities and maintenance (Pestoff 2012: 19-20) or discussing the management of the school in a representative advisory council (similar to the client council in health care organizations presented in Text box 1.2). In other instances, the activities are more at the core of the process, for example when parents help pupils read books (Brandsen and Honingh 2015). Yet, in both cases teachers remain responsible for the pedagogical activities, and the parents only perform activities in collaboration

with the professionals.

1.5 GAPS IN CURRENT CO-PRODUCTION LITERATURE

Although the different empirical chapters in this dissertation will present a more detailed state-of-the-art overview of the co-production literature, it is useful to briefly mention some of the limitations of co-production literature in this introduction, as the contribution of this dissertation needs to be perceived in light of these limitations. So, before presenting in the next section what contributions are made (both theoretically and methodologically) in this dissertation, first this section discusses some important gaps in the current co-production literature relevant to this dissertation.

As mentioned above, at the start of this study, the dominant focus in the co-production literature was on collaborative networks, processes and organizations (cf. Brandsen and Van Hout 2006; Joshi and Moore 2004; Alford 2009). Because the individuals involved were scarcely taken into account, little was known about how the co-producers and professionals involved perceived co-production processes. More specifically three gaps can be distinguished: related to the co-producers, public professionals and the collaboration between them.

1.5.1 First gap: co-producers' motivations are scarcely taken into account

To start with the co-producers, the very few times their motivations were mentioned in the literature, it was mostly from a theoretical point of view. Alford (2002a) derives co-producers' motivations from the specific role or background they can have. That is, co-producers can be involved as clients, volunteers or citizens, depending on the extent to which they (directly) benefit from the service produced. Clients are motivated to be involved in co-production because of material interests: they directly benefit from the service provided and so receive private value. Volunteers do not consume the service themselves, and so the assumption is made that they feel responsible for others. Citizens' involvement results in a 'collective public value', and so their motivations are similar to these found for processes of citizen participation, namely feelings of responsibility for both the service itself and fellow

citizens (Alford 2002a).

Yet, this analytical distinction between clients, volunteers and citizens is difficult to apply to actual co-production processes, as co-producers can often be assigned multiple roles. Consider, for example, unemployed people participating in activation programs. Since they directly benefit from the program, they can be perceived as clients. But when their efforts result in a new job, this definitely is also of benefit to the wider community: collective public value produced by citizens. Likewise, parents involved in school gardening at their children's school do so on a voluntary basis, but one can discuss whether or not they also consume the service themselves. The school garden is first of all aimed for the children, but since parents and children are closely related the parents might also be perceived as clients in this example.

Instead of linking motivations to co-producers' background or role, Pestoff (2012) refers to the concepts of salience and ease when hinting at co-producers' motivations: the closer the service to potential co-producers, and the less effort required to get involved, the more likely a person will join the co-production process. However, salience and ease concern conditions under which co-producers can decide to get involved rather than reflecting motivations. The theoretical assumptions of both Alford (2002a) and Pestoff (2012) have not been tested empirically.[2] Moreover, it was not questioned whether co-production can indeed be compared with citizen participation or volunteering; in other words: if the motivations identified in these related streams of literature can also explain co-producers' motivations.

In the last couple of years, in the field of co-production a "significant body of research has … begun to mature" (Osborne, Radnor and Strokosch 2016: 640). One of the topics that gradually receives scholars' attention relates to the question what motivates citizens. Recent studies by Jakobsen (2013); Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado (2015), and Thijssen and Van Dooren (2016) can be perceived as important first steps in this highly understudied theme within the field of co-production.

2 Alford (2002a) includes some cases in his article, but they are more illustrative than an actual test of the theoretical arguments provided.

1.5.2 Second gap: the perspective of the individual public professionals is scarcely taken into account

The second limitation concerns our knowledge on the public professionals being involved in co-production processes. Co-production has important implications for the way in which service delivery processes are organized. Brudney and England (1983: 64), for example, argue that co-production "requires a 'critical mix' of regular producer and consumer (citizen) activities." Similarly, Pestoff (2012: 19-20) notes that public professionals are no longer the central authority delivering all services as they are complemented by citizens' input. Also, Bovaird's (2007: 857) statement that in co-production, "typically, no one actor has the power to dominate outcomes, whereas all have significant influence" clearly hints at some changes in the service delivery process. With this statement, Bovaird suggests that the interaction between public professionals and citizens is direct and (most often) lacking an explicit top-down relation.

However, although several scholars notice that co-production requires a different relation between regular service providers and citizens, and as such implies a changing role for these professional service providers, little attention is provided to the actual implications for the individual professionals involved. The way in which these professionals perceive the changes to the service delivery process is beyond the scope of most studies as well.

Only recently, some scholars (e.g., Ewert and Evers 2012; Brandsen and Honingh 2013; Moynihan and Thomas 2013) acknowledge that co-production – or the more general trend of NPG – directly affects the position of public professionals. Legitimacy, for example, is not only based on the organizational output and professional standards, but also on the communication skills of the professionals involved (Brandsen and Honingh 2013: 882). Yet, although valuable, their work discusses the topic only from a theoretical perspective. The recent study by Tuurnas (2015: 583) forms an exception to this, as it empirically investigates "how public service professionals cope with co-production as a way to produce and develop public services", and what organizational structures and managerial tools are needed to support professional co-production. Her study can therefore be seen as an important first step in the up till now underdeveloped stream of literature

concerning the professionals involved in co-production.

1.5.3 Third gap: dominant focus on either co-producers or public professionals instead of on the collaboration between them

Finally, a third gap can be identified in the current co-production literature. Most studies tend to focus on *either* co-producers (e.g., Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado 2015; Thijssen and Van Dooren 2016) or professionals (e.g., Cepiku and Giordano 2014; Tuurnas, Stenvall, Rannisto, Harisalo and Hakari 2014) rather than on the interactive collaboration between them. Hereby, scholars focus for example on how the environments in which one lives – in terms of neighborhood characteristics – influence citizen participation in co-production (Thijssen and Van Dooren 2016). Or, they question how the complexity of the network in which the interaction takes place impacts on the co-production process, for example by causing organizational and professional interests to determine the outcomes of the service delivery process (Tuurnas, Stenvall, Rannisto, Harisalo and Hakari 2014). The logical consequence of these kinds of questions is that the main focus is on only one of the involved actors instead of on both simultaneously, requiring also that data is collected for only citizens or professionals at a time.

Some of the studies in the co-production literature do collect empirical data on both actors (i.e., citizens and professionals). Still, these authors mainly focus on only one actor or on the process of co-production. Fledderus (2016: 84-86), for example, integrates both co-producers and professionals in his study, but the study's focus is on *citizens'* trust in services. Needham (2008) collects data from workshops with both co-producers and regular producers participating, but she focuses on the improvement of public services. So, although in both instances data collection involves citizens and professionals at the same time and useful insights are gathered, the authors' focus is not on the actual collaboration.

1.6 SCIENTIFIC RELEVANCE AND VALUE OF THE DISSERTATION

The previous section identified some important gaps in the current co-production literature. At this point, it should also be noted that the co-production literature

suffers from a methodological gap. Current co-production literature is dominated by single case studies (cf. Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers 2015). If we want to fill in the gaps addressed above, other methodologies will be necessary. This section outlines how this dissertation contributes to current co-production literature, both theoretically and methodologically. Together the steps outlined below help to achieve the central aim pointed out at the beginning of this introduction, namely to provide insight into what motivates citizens and professionals to engage in co-production processes, and to better understand how mutual perceptions of the co-production partners' engagement are reflected in the collaborative process. In the next section, I will formulate the sub research questions and present the dissertation's outline.

1.6.1 Increasing our insights in why citizens are engaged

Starting again with the citizens, in the last section we saw that the very few theoretical considerations on citizens' motivations published a couple of years ago put the issue on the research agenda, yet that the insights were mainly derived from literature on citizen participation and volunteering. Because we do not know whether the context of co-production is similar to citizen participation and volunteering, we also do not know whether these insights indeed can be (directly) applied. The present study started in that vacuum, and, therefore, firstly searches for factors unique to co-production processes; secondly seeks to combine these factors identified with insights from citizen participation and volunteering in one theoretical model to test whether they do apply or not; and thirdly investigates whether motivations for co-production differ between contexts (i.e., countries). These three steps are elaborated on below. The case selection and methods used will be briefly hinted upon; a more thorough discussion can be found in the empirical chapters.

Since our insights on citizens' motivations are limited up till now, this study uses a grounded approach to identify the factors unique to co-production processes. More specifically, a Q-methodology study is conducted in the field of health care. The case concerns client councils in organizations for elderly care. This case is chosen, because in this policy domain traditionally there is a strong relation between patient and health care provider (see Text box 1.2). The obligation to install

client councils ensures the co-production process is to a large extent organized similarly across different organizations (i.e., the legal rights and duties are the same for all client councils). Yet, although the *council* itself is mandatory, the *individual clients* can voluntarily choose whether or not to join the council. In other words, their motivations to engage can still differ.

Through the mandatory element, client councils reflect a particular kind of co-production processes. Van Kleef and Van Eijk (2016) show in their typology of co-production that these client councils are an example of co-production processes that are not voluntarily initiated and organized, and in which the co-producers are capable of producing the output themselves to a minimal extent. That is, co-producers do provide useful input in the service delivery process, yet they are highly dependent on the professionals to produce high quality health care. In this dissertation I will also focus on another kind of co-production, namely one in which the low ability to self-produce is combined with non-mandatory participation by co-producers. Co-production processes can, namely, also be very loosely organized, without (strict) legal requirements. A clear example of this are neighborhood watch schemes, where citizens collaborate with the police and municipality to achieve a safe and livable environment. But as demonstrated in Text box 1.1 at the beginning of this chapter, although legal regulations are not at play, citizens are dependent on professional expertise and support.

So, to ensure that the theoretical model is not biased to one specific kind of co-production, the model will also be tested in the context of other co-production processes. Hereby, a co-production case is added that is similar to client councils in health care, yet in another policy domain (i.e., representative advisory councils at primary schools) and a case that is different with respect to the mandatory nature (i.e., neighborhood watch schemes). These cases also differ with respect to the activities performed by the co-producers (i.e., co-planning versus co-implementation).

The third step taken in this dissertation concerns the objective to investigate whether motivations for co-production differ between contexts. Given our limited knowledge, again a Q-methodology study is conducted, but this time not in one single country. A cross-country comparison is made between the Netherlands and

Belgium. The co-production process of interest is neighborhood watch schemes. For many decades, citizens have been engaged in safety issues in different ways; thereby some of the activities performed can be more easily perceived as co-production than others (compare for example neighborhood watch schemes with installing alarm systems). It is therefore interesting to incorporate literature on volunteer policing or community policing. Yet, as will be demonstrated later on in this dissertation, this literature has been dominated by a focus on the US or Anglo-Saxon context. The comparative study conducted in this dissertation does, therefore, contribute in two ways to the current literature: by investigating motivations to co-produce safety in a specific European context different from the US or Anglo-Saxon context, and by applying a comparative design in a research field mainly dominated by single case studies.

1.6.2 Increasing our insights in why public professionals are engaged

Above, we saw that our knowledge on the public professionals being involved in co-production is limited. Although within the literature it is recognized that co-production implies a changing position for these professionals, we do not know what exactly these changes entail and how the individual professionals deal with it. Yet, we do know that professionals' level of engagement with the process has implications for example for co-producers' motivations. When professionals are personally involved with co-producers, they are more able to create feelings of reciprocity among the co-producers (Fledderus 2015a: 561). Given this importance of professionals' engagement, the present study seeks to explain why professionals are engaged in co-production.

To explain why professionals feel engaged with co-production processes, insights are integrated from the broader public administration and public management literature. Briefly stated, within these streams of literature evidence can be found for how public employees (e.g., professionals, street-level bureaucrats) deal with different actors in their environment, and how they might perceive the consequences of the interaction with these actors. For example, Lipsky (2010) considers how civil servants as street-level bureaucrats frequently and intensively interact with clients during policy implementation, and how this impacts issues like

managerial control and professional autonomy. Bozeman (2000) discusses how interaction with stakeholders can result in increased red tape, and according to Florin and Dixon (2004) the potential increase of red tape and expected complexity is even the reason why managers of health care services are skeptical about new public involvement arrangements. Administrative costs are found to negatively impact on public managers' attitude towards civic engagement in more broader terms as well (Moynihan 2003; Yang and Callahan 2007). However, the willingness to engage the public can also be positively affected by a consistency between the public managers' values on the one hand and the organizational values and culture on the other hand (Huang and Feeney 2016).

This dissertation seeks to investigate whether these kinds of arguments also apply in co-production. More specifically, it questions whether individual professionals' engagement can be explained by three work environment characteristics: perceptions on their autonomy in performing their job, the extent to which they feel supported by their own organization, and perceptions on administrative burden (i.e., red tape).

Based on the broader public administration and public management literature, a theoretical model will be built-up and tested by conducting survey research. The respondents questioned are professionals collaborating with client councils in organizations for elderly care. The case of health care is relevant for this study, because as mentioned earlier, the councils are regulated by law. This means that all professionals involved in the co-production process (i.e., the managers of the organization for elderly care) have to deal with the same context in terms of for instance the establishment of a council, requirements on what information needs to be shared, and the issues on which client councils have the right to consent. Yet, despite this mandatory nature, still the individual professionals involved can perceive the collaboration in different ways: some professionals feel more engaged with the process compared to others.

1.6.3 Increasing our insights in the collaboration between co-producers and public professionals

When we have more insights in why co-producers and professionals feel engaged

with co-production, we are able to take the next, final step in this study. This step relates to the third limitation mentioned in section 1.5, namely that current co-production literature is mainly concerned with either co-producers' or professionals' perspective rather than with the interaction between these actors, and the perceptions of both co-producers and professionals on this interaction. This dissertation seeks to investigate the role of engagement in the collaborative process: how are differences in (perceptions on) individual engagement reflected in the collaboration between co-producers and professionals? Hereby, the perspectives of both citizens and professionals will be equally considered and merged in the study.

In order to achieve this objective, data will be collected of both citizens and professionals being involved in the same co-production process. The mechanisms behind the collaborative process will be identified through an in-depth case study. The case selected concerns neighborhood watch schemes. This case is suitable for this part of the research, as within one municipality different neighborhood watch schemes can be investigated that all operate within the same institutional context, and are subject to the same level of facilitation provided by the municipality and police. However, the lack of strict regulations allows diversity in the specific set-up, and in the way in which team members and professionals give meaning to their own roles. The members of the teams and the individual professionals of both the municipality and police show diversity in how they perceive their own role and the role of the other actor they are collaborating with.

Besides the above-mentioned theoretical contributions, the separate elements of the described study also contribute to the current co-production literature from a methodological perspective. As mentioned by Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff (2012), and Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers (2015), co-production literature is dominated by single case studies and qualitative research methods. Quantitative methods, comparative studies (both cross-sectional and cross-national) and comparisons among research findings are rare. To further develop the field, Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff (2012) argue that more methodological diversity is needed. Recently, some first attempts have been made, for example by Jakobsen (2013) who conducted an experiment, and by Fledderus (2015b) who applied an

experimental vignette study.

The underlying dissertation is conducted in the same time period in which these innovative methods were introduced to the field of co-production. By adding Q-methodology, a comparative research design, and survey research the dissertation adds further diversity to the methods currently used within the field, as such making it possible to answer different types of research questions and gather new insights. Taken together, the empirical chapters reflect a mixed method design, in which both qualitative ('theory-building') and quantitative ('hypothesis testing') approaches are integrated (cf. Haverland and Yanow 2012; Creswell and Clark 2011).

1.7 OUTLINE OF THE DISSERTATION

Resulting from the theoretical and methodological contributions outlined in the last section, in this section I will formulate the sub research questions that need to be answered in order to achieve the study's objectives, and introduce the different chapters in the dissertation. The next section concludes with the practical relevance of the study.

1.7.1 Sub research questions

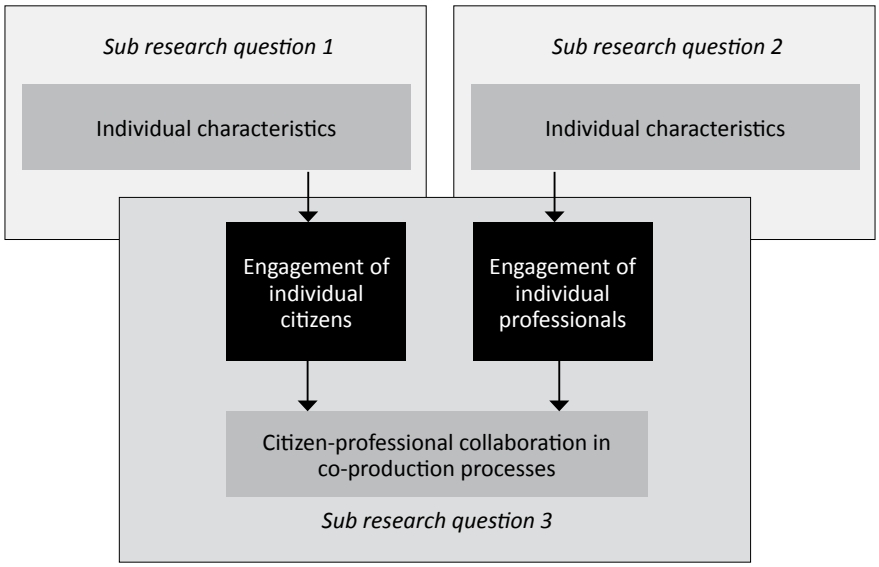
As introduced in the first section of this chapter, the main research question of this dissertation is: W*hat are the motivations for individual citizens and public professionals to engage in the co-production of public services, and how do mutual perceptions of the co-production partners' engagement influence the collaboration?*
In order to provide an answer to this main research question, three sub research questions are formulated:

1. **Why do individual citizens engage in the co-production of public services?**
2. **Why do individual public professionals engage in the co-production of public services?**
3. **How do mutual perceptions of the co-production partners' engagement influence the collaboration?**

Each of these three sub questions focuses on another element of the entire

theoretical model, as reflected in Figure 1.2. The dissertation is constructed around the sub research questions to be answered; the five empirical chapters together help answer the main research question. Table 1.1 presents more detailed information on each chapter, including the specified question addressed and the research design. Because at the start of this dissertation's study the insights on co-producers were highly underdeveloped, I decided to first pick up this research challenge, and then – with a more thorough understanding of the co-producers in mind – to continue with the public professionals involved in co-production.

Figure 1.2 Key variables and mechanisms investigated throughout the dissertation's study divided among three sub research questions



Before introducing the separate chapters in more detail, it should be noted that this dissertation is based on academic articles published in or submitted to international, peer-reviewed journals.[3] As such, each chapter can be read independently, exploring a distinct aspect of the main research question. However, when reading the entire dissertation, this makes some overlap between the

3 Chapters 2 and 3 are co-authored by T. Steen. Chapter 4 is co-authored by T. Steen and B. Verschuere. Chapter 5 is co-authored by T. Steen and R. Torenvlied.

chapters unavoidable, particularly regarding definitions, case descriptions and some (theoretical) arguments.

1.7.2 Overview of chapters

The first empirical chapter (*chapter 2*) starts with the identification of the factors explaining citizens' motivations to engage which are unique to co-production. Given the limited existing insights, an initial response to sub research question 1 is – as explained above in section 1.6 – answered using a grounded approach, namely Q-methodology. By focusing on the specific case of client councils in Dutch organizations for elderly care, in this chapter co-production is approached as a deliberate choice to increase citizens' involvement. The chapter specifically addresses the question why citizens are willing to actually take up this challenge, and results in the identification of four different perspectives (or discourses) on engagement. As such, the chapter shows that co-producers cannot be perceived as 'one single group' or 'entity', but that they differ in their motivations and incentives.

Based on both a literature review and the specific motivations and incentives that drive the different groups identified in chapter 2 to engage in client councils, *chapter 3* builds a theoretical model explaining citizens' engagement in co-production processes. The model's usefulness is demonstrated with empirical evidence – collected through focus groups – from four co-production cases in the Netherlands and Belgium, namely client councils in organizations for elderly care (NL), representative advisory councils at primary schools (NL), neighborhood watch schemes (NL), and user councils in health care organizations for disabled people (BE). These cases reflect both co-production processes that are bound by law and as such are strongly regulated, and cases that are rather loosely organized. This research design allows for a cross-sectional and cross-country comparison.

The attentive reader will notice that chapter 2 refers to *co-planning*, while chapter 3 is about *co-production*. The reason for this is that the second chapter focuses on a case (i.e., health care) that is more about the involvement of citizens in the planning phase rather than the implementation phase, making a narrower term more appropriate. The cases included in the third chapter reflect both co-planning and co-implementation, so here the broader term of co-production is used.

A third answer to sub research question 1 is provided by asking whether citizens' self-reported motivations differ between contexts. In *chapter 4* the comparison is not between different cases, but between different countries (i.e., the Netherlands and Belgium) for the same policy domain (i.e., safety). To date, the literature on citizens' involvement in the domain of safety is mainly dominated by research in the Anglo-Saxon context. Yet, more recently the idea of neighborhood watch schemes also set foot ashore several European countries.

In *chapter 5* the focus moves towards the public professionals being involved in co-production to answer sub research question 2. The chapter explains professionals' engagement in co-production processes by their perceptions on the work environment characteristics of autonomy, organizational support and red tape. This is studied in the context of client councils in Dutch organizations for elderly care; so similar to chapter 2 the focus is on co-planning activities. Because of the mandatory nature of this co-production process, this case is useful to test why some professionals (i.e., location managers of the organizations) are more open to the obligatory collaboration (which is similarly organized in all organizations) compared to others. Data is collected by surveying these location managers.

Until now, the different empirical chapters put the main focus on either citizens or public professionals. In *chapter 6*, the two actors are brought together as this chapter focuses on the collaborative process (in line with sub research question 3). The qualitative case study concerns neighborhood watch schemes in a Dutch municipality. The specific nature of this case (e.g., being bottom-up organized and scarcely regulated) makes this case suitable to identify the mechanisms behind the collaborative process. Moreover, in this case different actors collaborate with each other. As Text box 1.1 at the beginning of this chapter illustrates, citizens collaborate with each other, with civil servants from the municipality, and with the police. The chapter investigates how differences in individual engagement, or rather, how citizens' and professionals' perceptions of their co-production partners' engagement influence the collaboration. This is done through interviews, focus groups, participation observations, and document analysis.

Finally, the concluding chapter (*chapter 7*) provides an answer to the main research question. Here, the insights of the separate empirical chapters are

Table 1.1 Overview of the empirical chapters in the dissertation

Chapter ***(Published in)***	**Specified research question**	**Result**	**Research design & case(s) investigated**	**Theoretical variables**
2. Why people co-produce *(Public Management Review)*	What motivates citizens to engage in co-planning of health care services?	Description of **citizens' self-reported motivations**	**R:** Q-methodology study **C:** Client councils in organizations for elderly care (NL)	None specified – grounded approach
3. Why engage in co-production of public services? (*International Review of Administrative Sciences)*	Why do citizens engage in the co-production of public services?	Theoretical model for **citizens' engagement**	**R:** Literature review & focus groups **C:** Client councils in organizations for elderly care (NL), representative advisory councils at primary schools (NL), neighborhood watch schemes (NL), user councils in health care organizations for disabled people (BE)	Self-interested and community focused motivations, salience, perceptions of the co-production task and competency to contribute to the public service delivery process
4. Co-producing safety in the community *(Local Government Studies)*	Why do citizens co-produce in the policy domain of safety, and what differences and similarities exist between the Netherlands and Belgium?	Description of **citizens' self-reported motivations compared between different contexts**	**R:** Comparative Q-methodology study **C:** Neighborhood watch schemes (NL & BE)	Self-interested and community focused motivations, salience, perceptions of the co-production task and competency to contribute to the public service delivery process
5. Public professionals' engagement in co-production *(Under review)*	How do location managers' perceptions of their autonomy, organizational support, and red tape explain their engagement in co-planning with client councils in Dutch organizations for elderly care?	Theoretical and empirical study of **professionals' engagement in co-production**	**R:** Survey among location managers / multivariate (OLS) regressions **C:** Client councils in organizations for elderly care (NL)	Characteristics of professionals' work environment: perceived levels of autonomy, perceived organizational support for co-production, and perceived red tape
6. Helping Dutch neighborhood watch schemes to survive the rainy season *(VOLUNTAS)*	How do citizens' and professionals' perceptions of their co-production partners' level of and purposes for engagement influence the collaboration?	Theoretical and empirical study of **co-producers' and professionals' perceptions of the collaboration**	**R:** Single, explorative case study / interviews, focus groups, participant observations, document analysis **C:** Neighborhood watch schemes (NL)	Co-producers' and professionals' perceived engagement in co-production

pulled together and theoretically discussed in the context of the broader field of co-production and public administration literature. The chapter also discusses the limitations of the study, proposes suggestions for further research and considers the implications for practice.

1.8 PRACTICAL RELEVANCE

Nowadays, it is hard to imagine public services being solely produced by governments. Co-production is often perceived as an inherent characteristic of public service processes (cf. Osborne 2010). Or, to use the words by Alford (2002a: 33): many public services "( ) simply cannot function without client co-production." But being inherent or not, co-production processes do not occur automatically. All actors involved need to invest efforts. Moreover, these invested efforts must not be wasted by the public agencies or professionals in these agencies; something that happens (too) often (Bovaird and Löffler 2012b: 1136). Within one of its *Handbooks*, the OECD (2001a) notes that governments, in order to be successful in incorporating citizens, need to carefully design the collaboration process. For instance, it is important for governments to be clear and specific about the objectives they want to reach, but also to know the public they want to address. Although these recommendations are about government-citizen relations in more general terms (including more political forms), we can expect they also fit to co-production processes.

Public agencies that are collaborating with citizens during co-production need to know the public and "start from the citizen's perspective" (OECD 2001a: 93). However, as explained earlier, the current co-production literature does not sufficiently address this issue at the moment. In other words, from a scientific point of view, practitioners have not yet been provided with enough tools. This dissertation provides some important insights for practice, as it offers lessons for public organizations and their employees on how to encourage (potential) co-producers. The assumption that all citizens are automatically motivated to get involved, does not hold true. On the contrary, public organizations are often in need to find ways to motivate them (cf. WRR 2012; OECD 2001a). Having a better understanding of who the co-producers are and what motivates them can help to

improve incentivization strategies.

Another practical relevance of this dissertation is connected with the insights delivered on the professionals being involved. In order to make the co-production beneficial and successful, both citizens' and professionals' input is required (Ostrom 1996; Loeffler and Hine-Hughes 2013). As will be illustrated in chapter 6 especially, for the collaboration between co-producers and professionals it is important that professionals have an open-mind and feel engaged with the process. When professionals feel less engaged, they will not only be less willing to invest efforts in the collaboration, their attitude will most likely also negatively impact on co-producers' motivations. The empirical chapters in this dissertation will illustrate that for many citizens it is important that they are heard, valued and trusted by the professionals. This study provides more insight into *why* individual professionals feel more or less engaged with co-production. As such, it also provides some guidelines for public organizations on how to positively influence professionals' attitudes, or the other way around, on how to prevent their willingness from being hindered since, as chapters 5 and 6 will demonstrate, the organizational culture and formal rules can both stimulate and hinder public professionals in their collaborative efforts.

CHAPTER 2

Why people co-produce: analyzing citizens' perceptions on co-planning engagement in health care services

This chapter is co-authored by Trui Steen and has been published as:
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Chapter 2 – Why people co-produce: analyzing citizens' perceptions on co-planning engagement in health care services

ABSTRACT

The aim of this chapter is to comprehend the motivation of citizens to co-produce. More specifically, it considers citizens' motivations to engage in co-planning activities of health care services. The chapter brings together theoretical insights and empirical data. First, we integrate insights from different strands of literature. We combine literature on citizen participation, political efficacy, co-production, volunteerism, public service motivation, and customer engagement to offer a first understanding of citizens' motivations to actively engage as co-producers of public services. Next, empirical data are derived from one specific case: citizens participating in client councils in health care organizations. Q-methodology, a method designed to systematically study persons' viewpoints, is used to distinguish different perspectives citizen have on their engagement in co-production. Our analysis of citizens' motivations to engage in client councils enables us to identify four types of citizen co-producers, which we label: the semi-professional, the socializer, the network professional, and the aware co-producer. Implications for future research studying citizens' motivations in a broader range of co-production cases are discussed.

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In a context of financial crisis, austerity in public finances, and legitimacy crisis of both the public sector and the market, engaging citizens in the production of public services is an important topic of discussion; both from an ideological (cf. 'big society' debate) and academic perspective (cf. Alford 2009; Ishkanian and Szreter 2012; Pestoff, Brandsen and Verschuere 2012). Co-production refers to

> "the mix of activities that both public service agents and citizens contribute to the provision of public services. The former are involved as professionals, or 'regular producers', while 'citizen production' is based on voluntary efforts by individuals and groups to enhance the quality of the services they use" (Brandsen, Pestoff and Verschuere 2012: 1, based on Parks et al. 1981).

In co-production, both citizens and government are involved. This positions co-production against other (recent) developments in 'active citizenship', such as citizens producing public value without government (see, for example, on social entrepreneurs: Dees (2001); Marinetto (2003), and Santos (2012)).

Definitions of co-production vary widely. Strict definitions limit the concept to the service delivery phase (Alford 2009). Others find the concept of co-production to be relevant not only to the service delivery phase, but to refer to service users being part of service planning, delivery, monitoring and/or evaluation (Bovaird and Löffler 2012a). Co-production is studied as an inherent characteristic of public service processes (cf. Osborne 2010) and the literature indicates that many public services "(...) simply cannot function without client co-production" (Alford 2002a: 33; Alford 2002b). How this client co-production is organized can differ widely, however. Next to "full user / professional coproduction" (Bovaird 2007: 848) in which service users and professionals both function as co-planners and co-delivers of the services, other types of co-production exist. Bovaird and Löffler (2012a) summarize a range of service activities each emphasizing different elements of co-production, such as co-planning, co-design of services, co-prioritization, co-financing and co-delivery.

In this chapter, we focus on a specific type of co-production, namely co-planning of services. We analyze citizens' perceptions on co-planning engagement in health care services through client councils. In these councils, citizens deliberate the management of the organization and the quality of health care. Clearly, citizens do not participate in the provision of the service (i.e., elderly care) itself. Rather, their co-productive task is to provide advice to the management.

Existing studies of co-production generally focus on collaborative networks, processes, and organizations (cf. Brandsen and Van Hout 2006; Joshi and Moore 2004). However, conditions for successful co-production also need to be studied at the level of the individuals involved. Individual characteristics, such as the capacity and willingness of citizens to co-operate, are likely to strongly affect the course and outcomes of co-production processes; yet only scarcely empirical attention has been paid to this. The central question of this chapter therefore is: *What motivates citizens to engage in co-planning of health care services?* The chapter contributes to the co-production literature in an important way, because it provides useful empirical insights on citizens' motivations to co-produce; a topic that has been studied only rarely. Focusing on the specific case of health care client councils, in this chapter co-production is approached as a deliberate choice to increase involvement of citizen-users and the question why individuals take up this challenge is both of theoretical and practical relevance.

As the concept of co-production is "at the crossroads between several academic disciplines" (Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012), we first outline potential motivations different streams of literature suggest. Next, empirical data are derived from one specific case: citizens participating in client councils in health care organizations. Q-methodology, a method designed to systematically study persons' viewpoints, is used to distinguish different perspectives citizens have on their engagement in co-production. Our data analysis leads to the identification of four different types of citizen co-producers and a discussion of different motivations found to drive citizens' engagement. Finally, we discuss theoretical and practical implications, and consider avenues for future research.

2.2 THEORETICAL INSIGHTS INTO CAPACITY AND WILLINGNESS TO CO-PRODUCE

The literature on co-production provides some first, yet still limited insights on citizens' motivations to actively co-produce. In a presentation of the current state of the art, Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff (2012) relate main theoretical considerations to the work of Alford (2009) and Pestoff (2012). Citizens are motivated to engage because of certain incentives (Alford 2002a; 2009). First, from an economic perspective people are assumed to seek material rewards like money, goods or services. Second, solidary incentives derive from associating with others. Third, expressive incentives relate to feelings of satisfaction when contributing to a worthwhile cause (Sharp (1978a) in Alford (2002a)). In addition, Alford distinguishes intrinsic rewards, for example enhancing one's sense of competence and self-efficacy, and sanctions resulting from legal obligations as possible sets of motivators for client co-production. Next to this, Pestoff (2012) points at the importance of both the ease of becoming involved in the process and the salience of the services delivered. This relates to circumstances hindering or facilitating co-production (Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012). It can also be argued, however, these are *necessary conditions*. Before motivations are put into practice, attention is paid to the possibility of becoming involved. Without finding (or *perceiving*) it easy enough, a citizen will not consider the option of taking part. In the current co-production literature, however, it remains unclear how these conditions relate to individual behavior, how motivations result in behavior, and how ease and salience influence that process.

Input for solving this gap could be provided by related strands of literature. Different literature streams, next to research on co-production specifically, have a potential to provide insights into citizens' engagement in the co-production of public services (Van Eijk and Steen 2012b). The literature on government-citizen relations, citizen participation, and active citizenship focuses on capacities of individuals to act. As co-production is a kind of engagement with society, we expect similarities in the motivations citizens have to engage in other ways with society. The *political participation* literature points at socioeconomic variables (Sharp 1984; Timpone 1998) and networks (Amnå 2010; Putnam 1993). Additionally, the concepts of salience (Verhoeven 2009), and internal and external efficacy (Andersen, Kristensen

and Pedersen 2011) are derived from this literature strand. Salience points at the necessary condition citizens' attention is directed to the possibility of becoming involved. Only when citizens argue a topic "salient enough" they will have a willingness to consider active engagement and weigh up the investments of efforts. Internal and external efficacy reflects citizens' perceptions about, respectively, their competences to understand and to engage effectively, and the usefulness of investigating all the necessary efforts (Craig, Niemi and Silver 1990). Citizens' trust in government to deliver services and to provide opportunities to meaningfully engage (Craig, Niemi and Silver 1990) can also help explain citizens' willingness for co-production.

Next to this, the concept of *public service motivation* (PSM) has a potential for contributing to our understanding of citizens' motivations for co-production, as it offers insight into community-centered motivation: a focus on the public interest, where this focus originates from and how it influences behavior (Perry and Hondeghem 2008). PSM has been used to explain public sector employees' engagement not only in their daily tasks as public sector employees but also in meaningful civic action (Brewer 2003; Pandey, Wright and Moynihan 2008). There has been an impressive increase of knowledge about the (public sector) motivation of public servants, yet this has not yet been paired with studies of the (public service) motivation of citizens.

Closely related is research on *volunteerism* that has extensively focused on motivations to volunteer. Studies of volunteerism suggest altruistic/egoistic motivations – in addition to contextual opportunities, such as the demand for voluntary work, and larger social forces – to be explanatory to voluntary efforts (Dekker and Halman 2003; Reed and Selbee 2003; Steen 2006). The study of volunteerism can also shed some light on the motivations to co-produce. It should be noticed, however, that although strongly related volunteerism and co-production differ in an important respect: citizens efforts in processes of co-production are not solely directed to the benefits of others as citizen co-producers often are also users of the public services. Furthermore, co-production reflects the interaction between citizens and professionals; regular voluntarism does not take place in similar professionalized service delivery processes (Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff

2012). As such, we can expect not only altruistic motivations but also more self-centered motives to drive the engagement of citizens in co-production, as already mentioned by Alford (2002a).

Next to research on volunteerism, links can be made with another research field outside of public administration research: service management and marketing research that study customer engagement or interactivity between customers and a company. The service dominant logic finds that, through the service encounter, customers are an integral part of service delivery and thus every customer is also a co-creator (e.g., Vargo and Lusch 2008). Other scholars have a more narrow view of customer engagement, making the question what drives customer engagement more pertinent. Next to firm- and context-based constructs, reference is made to individual constructs. Both self-centered explanations for customer behavior, e.g., maximizing consumption or relational benefits, and altruistic motivations such as providing useful suggestions to other customers or helping service employees to better perform their job, are discussed. Next to this, trust and previous experiences with a firm or brand are found important. Furthermore, reference is made to customer resources in terms of time, effort, and money (for an overview, see Van Doorn et al. (2010)).

In conclusion, while specific insights in citizens' motivations for co-production is still limited, related streams of literature point at factors that have a potential for explaining citizens' decision to become active co-producers. The literature indicates that both capacity and willingness (motivation) are important in explaining why citizens participate in co-production. Capacity relates to both human capital (socioeconomic variables, such as income and education) and social capital (belonging to networks, availability of time). Capacity is expected to affect the likelihood that a citizen will find it relevant (salient) to engage, and how he/she will judge his/her competences to do so (efficacy). Next, literature distinguishes self-centered (egoistic) motivations, such as acquiring new skills or material incentives, and community-oriented (pro-social) motivations, such as PSM. Our research aims to provide a more systematic and empirical basis for those considerations. We not only study citizens' motivations empirically, we also do this using a grounded method hereby gathering insights that can add to the current literature.

2.3 METHODS AND DATA

Empirical data is derived from one specific case, citizens participating in client councils in Dutch health care organizations. Q-methodology, a method designed to systematically study persons' viewpoints, is used to distinguish different perspectives members of health care client councils have on their engagement.

2.3.1 Client councils in health care organizations

While being inherently central to health care, patients role in relation to both health care organizations and professionals has changed over time. In the Netherlands, since the last decades particularly, patients are perceived as active participants and partners of professionals rather than merely passive patients in a paternalistic relation (Van den Bovenkamp 2010: 81). This also impacted the way in which citizens – or patients – became involved in health care. Although patient organizations representing patients with specific diseases (e.g., cancer) or belonging to specific groups in society (i.e., elderly) are still important, citizens now are also able to get involved in health care organizations on an individual basis. Patient organizations have had an important say in this development. In the 1980s and 1990s, they started to co-operate within larger networks, they institutionalized and as a result became jointly responsible for governmental policy-making, implementation and service delivery. Due to this (corporatist) position, the patients' representatives contributed to some major reforms in the health care system such as the introduction of client councils (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid (WRR) 2004: 169).

Client councils within health care were introduced by the *Wet medezeggenschap cliënten zorginstellingen* (Participation by clients of Care Institutions Act)[4]. This act obliges all health care organizations to have a client council but does not subscribe the (minimum) number of members or who those members should be. Every provider of health care services is required to make its own specific rules on those issues (Overheid.nl 2012a). As a result, client councils not only consists of patients or direct users of the services provided but also of spouses or other family members of the patients and volunteers (Zuidgeest, Luijkx, Westert and Delnoij 2011). We even found neighbors of the organization being

4 This Act dates from February 29, 1996 (Overheid.nl 2012a).

member.

The main task of the council is to deliberate the management of the organization and the quality of health care. To enable clients to fulfill this task, the council holds the right to be informed (Rijksoverheid [National Government] 2011). The management should inform the council at the earliest phase as possible about new policy plans, so the council has the opportunity to deliberate the plan and advise about it (Overheid.nl 2012a; Zuidgeest, Luijkx, Westert and Delnoij 2011). The council's right to advise makes that councils can advise both asked-for and unasked-for on issues like policy changes, policy aims, mergers with other organizations, a movement of the organization to another location, financial issues, and issues concerning the daily-care of patients. On the latter, in particular, the management cannot ignore the given advice due to the council's right to consent. Plans regarding for example safety, hygiene, food and drink, leisure, and recreation should be approved by the client council; without this approval the management is not allowed to implement changes (Overheid.nl 2012a; Zuidgeest, Luijkx, Westert and Delnoij 2011).

2.3.2 Q-methodology

In order to examine the motivations of client council members, we use Q-methodology, a method designed to systematically study persons' viewpoints. The method makes use of statements that are formulated by the respondents themselves instead of statements that are a priori developed by the researcher (cf. Van Exel and De Graaf 2005). As such, it looks somewhat like 'grounded-theory' as the researcher goes into the field with an open mind to explore the issue at hand. In addition, the results can be surprising, running contrary to the researcher's expectations (Dryzek and Berejikian 1993: 50). In contrast to techniques concerned with patterns across variables, Q-methodology is concerned with patterns across individuals (Dryzek and Berejikian 1993: 50). Therefore, after having collected statements through (group)interviews, we asked a second set of respondents to rank statements. As respondents are asked to evaluate statements in relation to other statements, the method produces a comprehensive view of an individual's viewpoint (Brewer, Selden and Facer 2000). Q methodology measures perceptions

rather than actual behavior. Factor analysis is used to identify groups of respondents who rank statements in a similar way, and so to identify different viewpoints that exist on the topic studied. While Q-methodology is concerned with studying subjectivity, it is constrained by using statistical tools. This makes the method also explicit and replicable. In public administration studies, Q-methodology has for example being used to investigate how public employees and students of public administration and government view motivations associated with public service (Brewer, Selden and Facer 2000).

2.3.3 Concourse, Q-sample, and P-sample

We started with the collection of a diverse set of statements about the motivation to engage in co-production. As it is important that statements represent existing opinions and arguments from relevant actors (Van Exel and De Graaf 2005: 4), we organized two open-ended group interviews in which client council members were invited to talk freely about their engagement in the client council. A first meeting was organized in a nursing home in Haarlem. One resident and three caregivers (*mantelzorgers*) of ex-residents took part in the interview. Second, an interview was organized with two client council members of an assisted living center in Alphen aan den Rijn. Here, one interviewee was a resident of the center, and another was a caregiver of an ex-resident. We made literal notes of the discussion in these focus group interviews and transcribed all literal statements made by the respondents, resulting in a list of 182 statements. We used a residents' magazine of an assisted living center in Heemstede (Heemhaven 2009) to see if additional viewpoints could be distinguished, which resulted in 14 extra statements being added to the concourse.

Next, out of the total of 196 statements formulated in the concourse, we gathered a subset of 45 statements. We will refer to this selection as the Q–sample. Although this selection is "of utmost importance" it "remains more an art than a science" (Brown 1980: 186). One general rule of thumb is that a subset should be selected that is both representative for the interviews and includes statements differing widely from each other. To make sure the selection of statements is not done arbitrary we used "a discourse analysis matrix" (cf. Dryzek and Berejikian 1993). The

matrix, as shown in Figure 2.1, consists of the discourse element (columns) and type of argument (rows). For the first dimension, we have chosen to include motivations, behavior, and tasks/responsibilities. These elements are relevant in relation to the topic we are investigating (i.e., citizens' motivations) and the context we are looking at (i.e., client councils in health care organizations). The second dimension is based on the type of claims that can be made and includes designative, evaluative, and advocative arguments. This dimension is inspired by the matrix as developed by Dryzek and Berejikian (1993). To come up with a Q-sample of 45 statements, we placed five statements within each cell. In order to do so, we first labelled each of the 196 statements with the letter of a cell. Some statements turned out to be unclear and so not useful. They were not labelled and removed from the list. After all statements were labelled we selected five per cell. In this selection, we made sure the chosen statements were well-written and obvious in meaning, different from each other, and as diverse as possible. This selection resulted in a list of 45 statements as shown in Table 2.1.

Figure 2.1 Discourse analysis matrix

Discourse element	**Motivations**	**Behavior**	**Tasks / Responsibilities**
Type of argument			
Designative	a	b	c
Evaluative	d	e	f
Advocative	g	h	i

Table 2.1 Selected 45 statements	
1	*Je groeit er eigenlijk een beetje in zeg maar.* You grow into becoming a council member.
2	*Je kijkt regelmatig rond en ziet dingen die anders kunnen.* You look around regularly and see things that could be done differently.
3	*Je kan het niet loskoppelen, cliënten en verzorging.* You cannot separate clients and care.
4	*Voor je het weet ben je lid, maar daar leer je natuurlijk ook van.* Before you actually realize you have become a member. But of course you learn of those experiences.
5	*Er kwamen best zware klachten binnen, die moet je dan proberen af te handelen.* We received some quite heavy complaints that we should try to solve.
6	*Je krijgt ook heel veel papiermassa binnen over nieuwe regels enzo, dus dan moet je wel goed papieren kunnen lezen, dossiers kunnen lezen en over dingen mee kunnen praten.* You receive a lot of documents, about new policies for example. You must be able to read these documents and to discuss the issues at hand.
7	*Je moet wel over voldoende vrije tijd beschikken om dit te kunnen doen.* You need to have enough free time / leisure to do this.
8	*De cliëntenraad moet opletten of cliënten geen problemen hebben en er geen klachten zijn.* The council has to make sure to notice if clients are facing troubles or having complaints.
9	*Als voorzitter moet je ook soms met de hamer slaan.* As a chair, sometimes you have to gavel.
10	*Ik zeg altijd je moet wel rechtvaardig zijn.* I always say: you need to be fair.
11	*Toch heel prettig om erbij te horen, ja, vind ik wel.* It is nice to be part of it, yes I think so.
12	*Het blijkt dat de CR met de bewoners daadwerkelijk invloed kan uitoefenen op (de gang van zaken en) het beleid.* It turns out that client council and residents together can have a real influence on the policies.
13	*Toen (Als) ik hier mijn vrouw bezocht (famielid bezoek) zag ik wel eens wat en dan grijp je in.* When I am visiting my family relative here, sometimes I see things happen and then I step in.
14	*Het is ook een kwestie van ervaring.* It's also based on experience.
15	*Ik ben gewend te vergaderen, dat is niet zo moeilijk voor mij.* I am accustomed to attend meetings. That is not difficult to me.
16	*Het is de taak van een cliëntenraad verbeteringen aan te dragen.* It is the council's task to suggest improvements.

17	*Je hebt niets aan mensen die alleen maar meekomen voor de gezelligheid.* It is useless when people come here only because they are finding it cozy.
18	*Als lid probeer ik dingen aan te dragen.* As a member I try to contribute ideas.
19	*Je kunt dan een beetje meer sturen.* You can steer.
20	*Je bent natuurlijk sterk afhankelijk van het management.* Of course you are very dependent of the management.
21	*Het moeten mensen zijn die toch het een en ander kunnen.* It should be people who possess some skills.
22	*Ik zou eigenlijk wat meer mensen vanuit het huis willen hebben.* I would like to have more people coming from the organization itself.
23	*Ik denk dan 'we moeten samenwerken, we werken samen voor de cliënten van dit huis en jullie werken niet zelfstandig en wij ook niet'.* I think we need to do this together. We have to work together for the clients in this house and you do not work on your own and we do not either.
24	*Je moet wel sociaal zijn.* You have to be social.
25	*Het is belangrijk dat je je makkelijk tussen de mensen begeeft.* It is important that you easily mingle with other people.
26	*Wij mogen ons met stevige veranderingen bemoeien.* We may meddle in substantial changes.
27	*Dit is pure liefhebberij.* This is pure pastime.
28	*Je moet natuurlijk vertrouwen krijgen.* You should receive trust.
29	*Het is natuurlijk heel belangrijk dat inzicht in de zorg.* Having a clear understanding of health service is very important.
30	*Ik vind het makkelijk om een praatje te maken en dan hoor je nog eens wat.* I easily talk with other people and then you hear what is happening.
31	*Als je iets ziet dan steek je je kop ertussen natuurlijk.* When you see things happen, you do not stick your head in the sand.
32	*Het vraagt ook best een heleboel werk.* It requires a lot of work.
33	*Als we samen niet door één deur kunnen, dan was ik zo weg.* If we as members would not match, I would leave soon.

34	*Ik heb geleerd dat ik voor mezelf moet opkomen.* I have learned how to stand up for myself.
35	*Informatie, zoals over de kleinschalige zorg die onlangs is ingevoerd, dat horen we vooraf te krijgen.* We must receive information beforehand, for example regarding the newly implemented small-scale care.
36	*Ik vind het in ieder geval heel belangrijk dat (nieuwe) leden menselijk zijn.* I find it very important that (new) members are human.
37	*Het is belangrijk dat de communicatie met de zorg heel open en eerlijk is.* It is important for communication in health care to be open and honest.
38	*Ik zie ook dat het nuttig is.* I also find it useful.
39	*Ik vind het ook gezellig.* I find this enjoyable.
40	*Ik denk: 'wat staat mij straks te wachten als ik oud ben?'* I think: 'what is going to happen when I am old?'
41	*Je moet er soms wel voor knokken.* Sometimes, you have to fight.
42	*Je raakt geïnteresseerd.* You simply become interested.
43	*Ik vind zelf dat we heel veel hebben bereikt.* I think we have achieved a lot.
44	*Organiseren is echt mijn ding.* I love organizing. Organizing is a real passion.
45	*De cliëntenraad moet de belangen van de bewoners behartigen.* The client council should represent the residents' interests.

Third, the selected statements were presented to a second group (the P or person sample), consisting of 32 respondents from six different client councils in Haarlem, Heemstede, Leiden en Noordwijkerhout. Although perhaps at first sight limited, for Q-methodology a P-sample of about 30 respondents is typical. The respondents are as diverse as possible, as the method's intention is to identify the different perspectives that exist among the population. The respondents, however, need not necessarily be representative for the larger population, nor are they randomly assigned (Van Exel and De Graaf 2005). As a consequence, the results

of the Q-methodology study cannot be generalized to a larger population. Follow-up survey research is generally suggested in order to test the importance of the different perspectives among the overall population.

The respondents were asked to rank the statements according to a suggested quasi-normal distribution ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (see Figure 2.2), resulting in 32 Q-sorts. After the sorting, we invited additional comments from the respondents about the reasons for their selection of statements they agreed or disagreed with most. To check the representativeness of the statements, we asked the respondents if they missed any aspect they believed to be relevant to their motivation for engaging in the client council. No major contributions to the existing statements were made. Finally, additional demographic information was asked. These questions include information on gender, age, education, job sector (i.e., public, private, non-profit), job group (e.g., management, industry, arts), and participation in other voluntary activities.

Figure 2.2 Distribution of statements

Disagree					*Neutral*					*Agree*
-5 (1)	-4 (2)	-3 (3)	-2 (5)	-1 (7)	0 (9)	+1 (7)	+2 (5)	+3 (3)	+4 (2)	+5 (1)
--	-- --	-- -- --	-- -- -- -- --	-- -- -- -- -- -- --	-- -- -- -- -- -- -- -- --	-- -- -- -- -- -- --	-- -- -- -- --	-- -- --	-- --	--

Q-sort directions

1. There are 45 cards numbered from 1 to 45. Read the cards and order them in three groups: agree with, disagree with and neutral.
2. From those cards you agree with, select the statement you agree with most and put this one in the +5 box. Repeat this for the statement you disagree with most and place that one in the -5 box.
3. Select the two statements you now most (dis)agree with and place those in the +4 and -4 boxes respectively.
4. Repeat this until you have filled in all cards you agreed or disagreed with.
5. Now turn to the group with neutral statements. Place those statements in the remaining boxes (in the boxes 0, -1, +1).
6. Now, you should have rank ordered all statements. You should have no cards left and no blank spaces in the form.

Table 2.2 Factor loadings for 32 Q-sorts*

Q-sort	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
1	-0.4840X	0.3013	0.0919	0.2062
2	-0.0707	0.4307X	0.2941	0.0977
3	0.2737	0.3178	0.2568	0.5698X
4	0.4296X	0.0855	0.0544	0.1634
5	0.0969	0.1220	0.2589	0.4261X
6	0.4106	0.2314	0.2520	0.5958X
7	0.1232	0.4565	-0.0764	0.4426

8	0.3491	0.1461	0.3760	0.3926
9	0.3924X	0.2801	-0.0135	0.1787
10	-0.0147	0.0934	0.2995X	0.2131
11	0.1537	-0.0987	0.6840X	-0.0493
12	0.5687X	0.1294	0.3730	-0.0104
13	0.1264	0.2791	0.3263	0.4487X
14	0.2677	0.0879	0.2483	0.6285X
15	0.1386	0.4951X	0.0027	0.1362
16	0.5717X	-0.0212	0.0839	0.0777
17	0.2344	0.1119	0.4830X	0.3668
18	-0.0943	0.1416	0.4755X	0.0618
19	0.2758	0.0385	0.5233X	0.2256
20	0.2110	0.1835	0.0893	0.4550X
21	-0.0122	0.1450	0.1851	0.3888X
22	0.2035	0.3497	0.4863X	0.2349
23	-0.0584	0.0600	0.3200X	0.2558
24	0.3073	0.0261	0.7451X	0.1359
25	0.1414	0.2966X	-0.0861	0.0159
26	-0.2085	-0.1579	0.5873X	0.3715
27	0.5913X	0.2605	0.0221	0.2367
28	0.0873	0.3341X	0.0819	0.1295
29	0.1979	0.4640X	0.1985	0.2107
30	-0.0510	0.0162	0.0051	0.5503X
31	-0.2070	0.5605X	0.2159	0.1944
32	-0.0289	0.5904X	-0.0047	-0.0145

*Note: * X indicating defining sort*

2.4 ANALYSIS

We calculated the correlation among the Q-sorts of all participants, resulting in a 32 x 32 matrix, reflecting the similarities and dissimilarities in viewpoints between the respondents of the P-set. Using PQMethod,[5] we factor analyzed the matrix with a QCENT factor analysis[6] and varimax rotation (cf. Abdi 2003). Here, "(...) the objective [is] to identify the number of natural groupings of Q sorts by virtue of being similar or dissimilar to one another, that is, to examine how many basically different Q sorts are in evidence" (Van Exel and De Graaf 2005: 8). All respondents who load significantly on a factor hold similar viewpoints on engagement in co-production. The analysis resulted in four distinct factors, as concluded out of the Eigen values and the so-called 'flags' (i.e., a factor needs to have a substantial number of associated respondents in order to be recognized as a distinctive factor). Table 2.2 presents factor loadings for each of the 32 Q-sorts, indicating the correlation of each Q-sort with the four factors, and representing the individual's viewpoints on engagement in co-production.

Next, factor scores were calculated in order to form the ideal-model Q-sort for each factor and to make visible how an 'ideal' respondent with a 100 per cent score on that factor would have sorted all the statements. This is done through calculating the Z-score: "(...) the normalized weighted average statement score ... of respondents that define that factor" (Van Exel and De Graaf 2005: 9). The four ideal model Q-sorts are presented in the Table 2.3. The table indicates the extent to which each of the statements characterizes each of the four factors, and therefore is basic to our interpretation of results (Brown 1993; 1996).

2.5 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the four ideal type Q-sorts, we can identify four different discourses or perspectives on engagement. After describing these perspectives, we focus in more detail on the specific motivations and incentives that drive the different groups to engage in client councils.

5 Downloaded from http://www.lrz.de/~schmolck/qmethod.
6 We used the Brown QCENT analysis instead of the Horst.

2.5.1 Four perspectives on engagement in co-production

Our Q-method-based analysis of citizens' motivations to engage in health care client councils specifies four different perspectives on co-production. This enables us to identify four types of citizen co-producers, which we label: the semi-professional, the socializer, the network-professional, and the aware co-producer. Each type of co-producer reflects a unique set of perceptions on motivations and engagement in client councils. In the description of these discourses, we will refer to the statements as presented in Tables 2.1 and 2.3.

Table 2.3 Factor scores ideal model Q-sorting

Statement	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
1	0	3	0	-1
2	1	-2	2	-1
3	1	0	1	4
4	-4	1	-4	-4
5	0	-1	0	-3
6	1	-2	1	1
7	-3	-3	-2	-1
8	2	2	1	0
9	-2	-3	0	-2
10	1	3	0	1
11	2	3	-5	0
12	3	2	3	3
13	-3	-5	-2	-2
14	2	-2	-1	0
15	2	-4	0	1
16	5	2	4	2
17	-5	0	0	-2
18	3	0	2	4
19	0	0	1	-2

20	-1	0	4	-1
21	-2	-1	-1	0
22	-1	-2	-1	1
23	-2	1	3	2
24	0	2	0	1
25	1	-1	-1	3
26	4	-2	3	0
27	1	-1	-3	-5
28	-1	4	1	1
29	3	0	-1	2
30	-1	2	-3	2
31	-1	-4	2	-4
32	-1	0	0	-1
33	-4	-1	-2	-3
34	-2	0	-4	-2
35	-3	1	0	2
36	0	1	-2	-1
37	2	5	2	3
38	4	0	2	1
39	1	-1	-2	0
40	0	-1	-3	-3
41	-2	1	1	-1
42	0	1	-1	0
43	0	1	1	0
44	-1	-3	-1	0
45	0	4	5	5

Discourse 1: the semi-professional

Individuals loading on the first factor are much concerned with the impact they can make through the client council. The client council focuses on improving the functioning of the health care organization and helps introduce changes (statements 16 and 26). The individuals feel they are actively taking part in this by making suggestions for improvement (statement 18). They feel that their efforts are making a difference, as the client council can really impact on the health organizations' policy (statement 38 and 12). Also, they agree that in order to make this difference, knowledge of the health care sector is needed (statement 29). We label client council members adhering to this discourse 'semi-professionals', as they are primarily concerned with the contribution they can make to the well-functioning of the health care organization through their involvement in the client council, and feel that basic knowledge of the sector is a prerequisite for this. Semi-professionals see their involvement in the client council as a deliberate choice. They did not by accident become a member of the client council (statement 4). Their engagement is strictly instrumental, as having some minimal social accordance among the client council members is not found to be important for their personal engagement (statements 33). Despite the focus on the results of their engagement, the social aspect is not put aside. In contrast to their personal, instrumental focus, the semi-professionals believe that other members who are mainly driven by social motivations can still make a valuable contribution (statement 17). Table 2.4 presents the statements highlighting discourse 1.

Table 2.4 Identifying statements Discourse 1 – The semi-professional

Statement		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
16.	It is the council's task to suggest improvements.	5	2	4	2
26.	We may meddle in substantial changes.	4	-2	3	0
38.	I also find it useful.	4	0	2	1
33.	If we as members would not match, I would leave soon.	-4	-1	-2	-3
4.	Before you actually realize you have become a member. But of course you will learn of those experiences.	-4	1	-4	-4
17.	It is useless when people come here only because they are finding it cozy.	-5	0	0	-2

Table 2.5 Identifying statements Discourse 2 – The socializer

Statement		Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
37	It is important for communication in health care to be open and honest.	2	5	2	3
45	The client council should represent the residents' interests.	0	4	5	5
28	You should receive trust of course.	-1	4	1	1
15	I am accustomed to attend meetings. That is not difficult to me.	2	-4	0	1
31	When you see things happen, you do not stick your head in the sand.	-1	-4	2	-4
13	When I am visiting my family relative here, sometimes I see things happen and then I step in.	-3	-5	-2	-2

Discourse 2: the socializer

Individuals ascribing to discourse 2 are concerned with building trust relations between the client council and the (management of the) health care organization. Open and transparent communication is an important instrument for this (statements 37 and 45). Interest representation is a major concern for the client

council (statement 45). Yet, this is not done through ad hoc actions when one notices a malfunctioning in the organization (statements 31 and 13). In contrast to the semi-professionals, these respondents which we label 'the socializers' do not feel that the client council can make a major impact in the health care organization, as the client council is not involved in major reforms (statement 26). The socializers do not feel they possess professional competences such as knowledge of organizing and managing, or experience with meetings (statements 44 and 15), nor do they feel much free time is needed in order to be a member of the client council (statement 7). Based on the additional questions asked, we found that all respondents belonging to this discourse are retired. Almost all are themselves residents of the health care organization and non-active in other volunteering activities. A potential explanation could be that these respondents have both time available for and easy access to the client council, yet do not put much real effort in it nor look for other opportunities for co-production due to their rather passive attitude. In line with the importance attached to smooth relations and the rather passive stance towards the contribution they can make as client council members, the socializer does not expect the chair of the client council to gavel (statement 9). Table 2.5 presents the statements highlighting discourse 2.

Discourse 3: the network professional

Similar to the socializer, individuals loading high on discourse 3 find interest representation to be a major concern for the client council (statement 45). However, they highly contrast with the socializers on their assessment of the impact that the client council can make and their personal involvement herein. This group, which we label network professionals, shares a similar view with the semi-professionals on the functioning of the client council. The client council is there to improve the functioning of the health care organization and does so through introducing changes (statements 16 and 26). The network professional feels that, in collaboration with the patients, the client council indeed has an impact in the health care organization (statement 12), albeit that the client council is strongly dependent on the management of the organization (statement 20). Similar to the semi-professionals, the network professional did not become a member of the client

council by accident (statement 4). Their engagement is a deliberate choice aimed at having an impact for the patient; it is not just a hobby or a social activity (statements 4 and 11). Elements of a PSM can be detected among the network professional, as they disagree with egoistic-based motivational statements (statement 34 and 40) and primarily see the client council as a means to do good for the benefit of the clients in general. Interestingly in this respect is that most respondents in our panel adhering to this discourse are active also in other volunteering activities, for example in cultural, sports, or religious organizations, and that the respondents still active on the job market are all working in the non-profit sector. Table 2.6 presents the identifying statements of discourse 3.

Table 2.6 Identifying statements Discourse 3 – The network professional

Statement		**Factor 1**	**Factor 2**	**Factor 3**	**Factor 4**
45	The client council should represent the residents' interests.	0	4	5	5
16	It is the council's task to suggest improvements.	5	2	4	2
20	Of course, you are very dependent of the management.	-1	0	4	-1
4	Before you actually realize you have become a member. But of course you will learn of those experiences.	-4	1	-4	-4
34	I have learned how to stand up for myself.	-2	0	-4	-2
11	It is nice to be part of it, yes I think so.	2	3	-5	0

Discourse 4: the aware co-producer

The individuals loading high on discourse 4 again find interest representation to be a major concern for the client council (statement 45). Similar to the network professional, the aware co-producers disagree with egoistic-based motivational statements, such as a concern for their own future as potential clients (statement 40) or having to stand up for one's own interests (statement 34); although this feeling is much stronger compared to the network professional. The engagement of the aware co-producers certainly is not a mere hobby (statement 27) or something

that happened by accident (statement 4), and social relations among the members of the client council are not felt to be a prerequisite for the functioning of the client council (statement 33). Similar to the semi-professionals, the aware co-producers feel they are actively taking part by making suggestions for improvement (statement 18). Yet, this is not be achieved by ad hoc interfering in the organization (statement 31). The individuals belonging to this discourse are the only ones mentioning the importance of clients having a voice: clients and health care cannot be separated (statement 3). This combination of viewpoints makes us to argue that these individuals are very conscious about their engagement in the client council and what they can contribute to the well-functioning of the health care organization and its residents. Therefore, we labelled these individuals the aware co-producers. Table 2.7 presents the statements the aware co-producers (dis)agree with most.

Table 2.7 Identifying statements Discourse 4 – The aware co-producer

Statement		**Factor 1**	**Factor 2**	**Factor 3**	**Factor 4**
45	The client council should represent the residents' interests.	0	4	5	5
3	You cannot separate them, clients and care.	1	0	1	4
18	As a member I try to contribute ideas.	3	0	2	4
4	Before you actually realize you have become a member. But of course you will learn of those experiences.	-4	1	-4	-4
31	When you see things happen, you do not stick your head in the sand.	-1	-4	2	-4
27	This is pure pastime.	1	-1	-3	-5

2.5.2 Capacities and motivations for engagement in co-production

The factor analysis revealed that engagement in client councils is driven by different motivations, as it distinguished four different discourses or perspectives. In this section, we analyze the link between these four perspectives and the insights debated in the theoretical framework. The question is: what drives the semi-

professional, socializer, network professional and aware co-producer?

Community-centered motivations

All four groups attach importance to the contribution client councils can make to the functioning of health care organizations. Most specifically, the high factor scores on statement 45 ('The client council should represent the residents' interests.') for discourses two, three and four, stand out. While the semi-professionals are neutral towards this statement, they do feel strong about the impact of the council, as the statements they agree with most relate to the client council being able to improve the functioning of the health care organization and help introduce changes (statements 16 and 26). We can conclude that for all groups, even for the socializers who we defined as rather *passive co-producers*, the engagement in a client council is explicitly defined by the mission of the client council and the pro-social output that the council can produce in the organization.

The picture is less clear in terms of supporting the interests of the health care organization's patients in general versus supporting specific (individual) client interests, although a more community-centered motivation seems to prevail. Factor scores are neutral or slightly positive on statement 8: "The council has to make sure to notice if clients are facing troubles or having complaints". The factor scores for all four groups are negative on statement 13 ("When I am visiting my family relative here, sometimes I see things happen and then I step in."), yet are mixed on statement 31, which is similar to statement 13 as it relates to taking ad hoc actions when one sees a mis-functioning in the organization, yet does not refer to a family-bond with the patient at hand.

Self-centered motivations

The four groups all tend to disagree with, or at best to be neutral towards egoistic-based motivational statements, such as a concern for their own future as potential clients (statement 40) or having to stand up for one's own interests (statement 34). Issues as engaging in a client council in order to have a hobby (statement 27), to make social contacts and find a pleasant environment (statements 33 and 39; an exception being statement 11 with positive factor scores for discourses one and

two), or to learn (statement 4) in general also have negative or neutral factor scores.

Human and social capital, internal efficacy

The interpretations of the discourses are based on the characteristic statements of the factor, those statements that rank highest or lowest (highest negative value) in the composite sort. When discussing differences and similarities among the four perspectives, it is also interesting to see which statements are not defining features for any of the four discourses found. A substantive number of statements collected through the focus group discussions relate to the competencies needed of client council members, supporting the importance attached to 'capacity' in our theoretical discussion. It is interesting to find that these statements in general did not stand out as statements characterizing the perspectives. Statements concerning the need for council members to have general competencies (statement 21), being able to build on experience (statements 14), or being knowledgeable about the dossiers discussed (statement 6) do not seem to provoke explicit viewpoints. An exception is found among the semi-professionals who find knowledge of the health care sector to be necessary (statement 29), while, in contrast, the socializers explicitly disagree with the need to possess professional competences such as knowledge of organizing and managing, or experience with meetings (statements 44 and 15). Furthermore, statements that relate to finding social competencies important, such as being strong in social contacts (statements 24 and 25), being just (statement 10) and human (statement 36) do not stand out as characterizing one of our four perspectives found. In general, we find that individuals loading high on one of the factors/perspectives do not seem to explicitly agree, nor do they explicitly disagree with the notion that competences are important for individuals engaging in a client council. While in the group interviews feelings of personal competence were discussed as being relevant drives for engagement, our Q-analysis does not confirm the importance attached to the concept of 'internal efficacy' – defined in our theoretical framework as the co-producers' feelings of personal competence to understand and affect the delivery of the service at hand and to participate in the mechanism of co-production.

2.6 CONCLUSION AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Our research on motivation for engagement in co-production reveals four perspectives. We distinguished the semi-professional who wants to contribute to health care organizations and is focused on the structures and policies. Competences are important and efforts are not ad hoc. The socializer is much more passive. Trust and open relations between members and between the organization / residents and the council are important. The network professional wants to improve the functioning of the health care organization and approaches the council as a mean to do good for the benefit of the clients in general. Elements of PSM are detected in this perspective. Finally, we distinguished the aware co-producer who is also opposing egoistic motives. Patients and health care cannot be separated and so the aware co-producers want to take part actively by making suggestions for improvement, yet feels this should not be done through ad hoc activities.

Relating these perspectives with the theoretical framework, we found that all groups adhere more to community-centered than self-centered motivations. In general, little importance is attached to competences. The literature on political participation, PSM, volunteering, and customer engagement provided useful insights that help us to better understand engagement in co-production. Yet, at the same time, our case study of individuals engaged in health care client councils shows that what drives these individuals cannot be understood by reference to active citizenship or customer behavior only. Interesting is also that, through the use of Q-method, different perspectives, and thus different drivers for engagement, are found.

While our study provides first insights into the motivation of citizens to engage in co-production, it opens up different avenues for future research. Additional research is needed to assess the importance of the four perspectives found among co-producers. Q-methodology can assure that the discourses found actually exists, as it “will generally prove a genuine representation of that discourse as it exists within a larger population of persons” (Dryzek and Berejikian 1993: 52). Q-analysis, however, cannot eliminate the possibility that other discourses exist among persons outside the sample. Small but diverse P-sets are sought to minimize this treat (Brewer, Selden and Facer 2000: 262; Dryzek and Berejikian 1993: 51). In

our study, we tried to find a diverse set of respondents as we contacted different types of health care organizations in different cities of different sizes. Furthermore, the insights of Q-methodology cannot be generalized to a larger population. In order to have more insight on the proportions of the general population of client council members sharing these discourses, a follow-up sample survey is needed. Moreover, our study is limited to one type of co-production: engagement in client councils of health care organizations. In order to have a more general impression of motivations of co-producers, research in different types of co-production initiatives is needed. We also focused on studying people that are already engaged in co-production. In future research, it would be interesting to contrast the insights found with the perspectives of people who are not active in co-production. Finally, it should be taken into account that the four perspectives or discourses found reflect different perceptions on motivations and engagement, rather than real behavior. Another question which has not yet been addressed therefore is on the consequences of the perspectives held: how do these different perspectives affect the behavior of co-producers?

Our research provides important insights for practice, as it offers lessons for organizations on how to encourage public service users to co-produce. In the case of client councils in health care organization this is especially relevant as the number of clients participating is too low rather than too high, and organizations are in constant need to find ways to motivate clients to participate in the council. As different perspectives exist on engagement in co-production, organizations need to emphasize different motivational incentives in their communication to potential new client council members. For example, some people would appreciate to make new social contacts (i.e., socializer) while others certainly do not see their engagement as pastime (i.e., aware co-producer) or something cozy (i.e., semi-professional). Different discourses emphasize the contribution that the council can make in enhancing the quality of the health care service provided. Moreover, open and honest communication is appreciated in all discourses. The organizations should therefore take care in enabling the council to have a real impact, and open communication between regular producers and co-producers is essential for this.

CHAPTER 3

Why engage in co-production of public services? Mixing theory and empirical evidence

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Chapter 3 – Why engage in co-production of public services? Mixing theory and empirical evidence

ABSTRACT

Through processes of co-production, citizens collaborate with public service agents in the provision of public services. Despite the research attention given to co-production, some major gaps in our knowledge remain. One of these concerns the question why citizens engage in processes of co-production of public services. In this chapter, a theoretical model is build that brings the human factor into the study of co-production. The model explains citizens' engagement in co-production referring to citizens' perceptions of the co-production task and of their competency to contribute to the public service delivery process, citizens' individual characteristics, and their self-interested and community-focused motivations. Empirical evidence from four co-production cases in the Netherlands and Belgium is used to demonstrate the model's usefulness. The academic and practical relevance of the findings and suggestions for further research are discussed.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In both practice and scholarship, the attention given to *co-production* is growing (Alford 2009; Pestoff, Brandsen and Verschuere 2012). Citizens collaborate with public sector professionals (the 'regular producers') in service delivery processes, with the aim of enhancing the quality of the services produced (Parks et al. 1981). They may take part at the invitation of government, or take the initiative themselves. Although governments are seeking ways to engage a broader range of citizens, only a small number of citizens respond to such initiatives (WRR 2012). Knowing why some citizens are willing to actively take part in the co-production of public services while others do not can help to improve the methods of participant recruitment and the design of co-production processes. Although research on co-production of public services is growing, little is known about what drives citizens to participate in co-production. This chapter aims to reduce this gap in theoretical and practical knowledge by answering the research question: *Why do citizens engage in the co-production of public services?*

Because the insights on citizens' motivations in the co-production literature are limited, we develop a theoretical framework that builds on insights from different streams of literature. Next, we present qualitative data derived from three cases in the Netherlands – i.e., client councils in health care organizations for the elderly, representative advisory councils at primary schools, and neighborhood watches – and a fourth case in Belgium concerning user councils in health care organizations for disabled people. The data are used to further strengthen the theoretical model.

3.2 TOWARDS A THEORETICAL EXPLANATION OF WHAT PROMPTS CITIZENS TO ENGAGE IN CO-PRODUCTION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

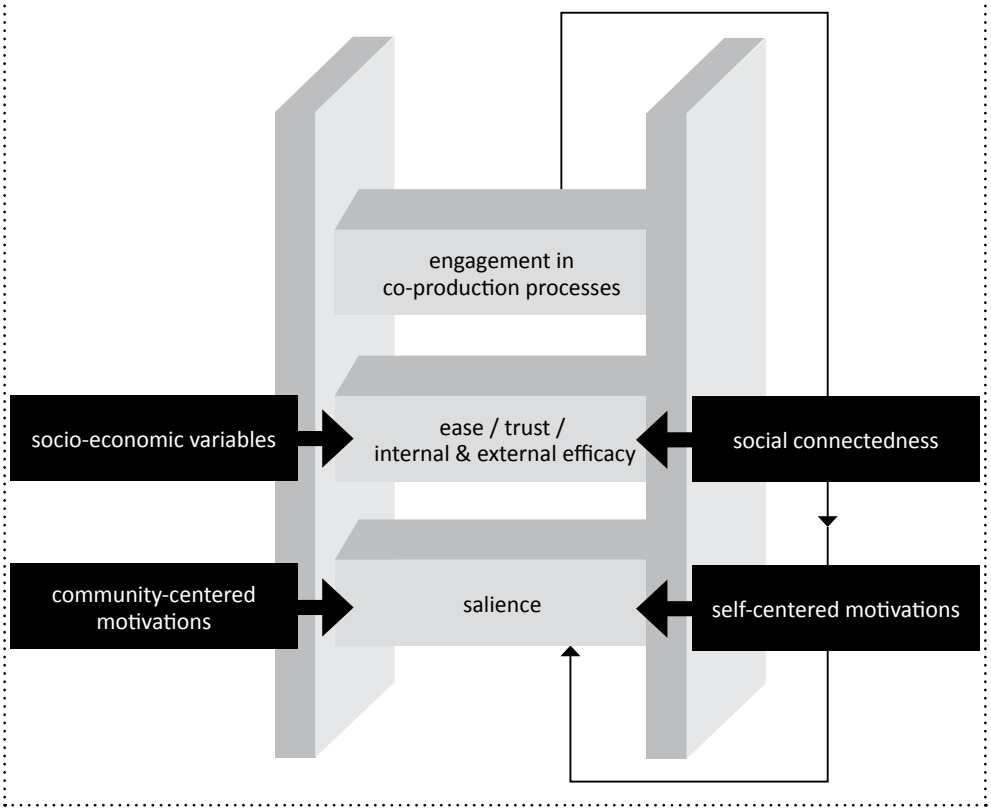
Definitions of the term 'co-production' differ widely. In line with Bovaird and Löffler (2012a: 39), we argue that the concept reflects many different activities (e.g., co-planning, co-prioritization, co-managing, co-delivery and co-assessment) that together aim at the engagement of professionals and citizens in the commissioning ánd provision of public services.

Despite many studies in the field, we know little about what drives individuals

to engage in co-production. This paradox can be traced back to the focus of the current literature, which typically describes interactions at the (inter-)organizational level. Citizens' motivations to co-produce are discussed merely theoretically, and empirical research is even scarcer; although for scholars to better understand co-production processes and for governments to address a broader range of (potential) co-producers more insight into this topic is essential. This chapter seeks to make a contribute to that endeavor.

Since a straightforward theory to empirically test is not available, we refer not only to the co-production literature, but also to insights from related fields of interest, such as political participation and volunteerism. Integrating these literatures into one model (see Figure 3.1), we identify three sets of factors that we expect to be important in one's willingness to engage in co-production: (1) perceptions of the co-production task and competency to contribute to the public service delivery process, (2) individual characteristics, and (3) self-interested and community-focused motivations. In the sections below, we discuss the different elements step by step. After that, we present the results of a first empirical test of the model. These results provide input for further research, and as such can foster the development of a theory on citizens' motivations to engage in co-production.

Figure 3.1 Theoretical model to explain citizens' motivations to take part in co-production



3.2.1 Socio-psychological factors for engagement

Citizens' decisions on whether to engage in co-production can be seen as different steps on a 'decision-ladder'. People cannot pay attention to every topic and every potential way of involvement, and are often engaged in an ad hoc manner. Studies of citizen participation, for example, find that political involvement depends on a specific problem and is limited in time (Verhoeven 2009). Thus, a first step on the decision ladder concerns the *salience* of an issue. Salience refers to citizens perceiving a topic as important enough to consider active engagement and weigh the investment of effort. 'Personal salience' depends on the individual's perception of how the service affects him/herself, family, or friends (Pestoff 2012). 'Social salience' is the perceived importance of the issue to one's neighborhood, community or even

society at large. Salience helps explain interest in less ad hoc, longer-term forms of co-production in social services, such as those involving childcare, education, or preventive and long-term health care (Pestoff 2012).

A second step involves considerations about the effort necessary to engage and the potential results. Weighing pros and cons, four different – but interrelated – considerations stand out: ease, internal efficacy, external efficacy, and trust. *Ease* refers to the effort required to become active. If more effort is needed, this decreases the likelihood of involvement. This relates to issues such as the distance to the service provider (Pestoff 2012). In addition to transaction costs, ease also refers to perceptions about the simplicity or difficulty of the task.

Related to ease is 'internal political efficacy', a concept used in the political science literature to understand voting and other political behaviors. It refers to "beliefs about one's own competence to understand and to participate effectively in politics" (Craig, Niemi and Silver 1990: 290). In the context of co-production, *internal efficacy* refers to citizens' feelings of personal competence to understand and participate effectively in the delivery of the service at hand.

Citizens not only consider their personal competencies, but also the potential results of their engagement. 'External political efficacy' is another political science term that refers to "beliefs about the responsiveness of governmental authorities and institutions to citizen demands" (Craig, Niemi and Silver 1990: 290). So, in the context of co-production, a third step involves considerations about *external efficacy*: 'does government, as the regular producer of public services, provide room for my interaction, and if so, will my interaction matter in their decision-making and service provision processes?'

Most likely, answers to these questions are based on personal experiences; similar to the way in which supporting (democratic) institutions are judged to be worthwhile (Ariely 2013). A crucial element, herein, is the quality of the bureaucracy, since people face representatives of bureaucracy more often than they engage in political activities. As such, *trust* in the public sector or government is also affected by this judgment of the quality of bureaucracy (Ariely 2013: 752). We expect that the extent to which citizens trust government[7] and, especially, the extent to which

7 Yang (2005) shows the importance of this relationship the other way around: public administrators' trust in citizens helps explain citizen involvement efforts.

they feel government to be responsive, will influence their willingness to engage in co-production processes.

In short, as shown in Figure 3.1, we expect citizens' judgments about salience, internal efficacy, and external efficacy to be important factors explaining their engagement in co-production. These perceptions relate to the apparent ease of the task and the trust in the regular producer. The feedback loop in our model indicates that we expect that, once engaged in co-production, individuals make an assessment of their actions and that this affects further engagement.

3.2.2 Socioeconomic variables and social connectedness

In the domain of political science, *socioeconomic variables* are found to be important explanatory variables for citizen behavior. Differences in electoral turnout can be explained by differences in gender, race, incomes, and levels of education of individual citizens (Timpone 1998). For citizen-initiated contacting of public officials, socioeconomic variables such as income and education have an influence (Sharp 1984), while levels of income and education and professional position help explain volunteering (Dekker and Halman 2003). However, we should take into account that the typical profile of the co-producer might differ from that of the active citizen engaged in political participation or volunteering. Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado (2015), for example, find that women are more involved in individual co-production than men, although this gender effect disappears when collective forms of co-production are considered.

Where one lives might also matter in determining engagement in co-production. Citizens in socioeconomic homogeneous neighborhoods are found to be less active (Oliver 2001). Likewise, the number of neighborhood initiatives can help explain who takes part in co-production (Thijssen and Van Dooren 2016). This refers to the importance of *social connectedness*: the environment in which you are living and the networks in which you are engaging. For example, church attendance, group membership, and marital status are found to influence the decisions made by individuals (Amnå 2010; Timpone 1998) and the extent to which social capital is developed (Putnam 1993). Networks can be a constraining factor for participatory behavior - e.g., when deciding how to balance between family,

work and society – yet, they also expose people to opportunities for participation. Contextual opportunities, such as being asked to volunteer, play an important role (see Steen 2006). Paradoxically, research indicates that the busier people are, the more they come into contact with opportunities to volunteer and positively respond to these (Brown 1999). Finally, the dynamics between networks and trust should be considered. In order to function effectively, networks need high levels of trust among their members. However, the more intimacy among members, and the higher the level of trust, the greater the risk that people will start to distrust others outside the network (Fledderus, Brandsen and Honingh 2014: 436). This can constrain engagement in other networks and activities.

As shown in Figure 3.1, we expect individual characteristics, including both socio-economic variables and social connectedness, to impact on the variables discussed earlier (i.e., internal and external efficacy, ease and trust). In other words, the perception variables are – to some extent – fed by more 'objective' factors such as education and being part of a network.

3.2.3 In-between self-interest and community-centered motivations

Fellow-feeling with other citizens and identification with public purposes can encourage citizens to self-organize (Alford 2012). The literature discussing individuals' commitment to political participation, volunteering, or self-organized collective action refers to this as altruistic or *community-centered motivations*. Volunteers are found to hold an ethos that includes the belief that individuals have responsibility for contributing to the common good (Reed and Selbee 2003). We expect that people with a higher orientation towards society are more likely to judge participation in co-production processes as salient and to consider the opportunities for engagement.

Deeper insight into the dynamics of community-centered motivations is offered by the rapidly expanding Public Service Motivation (PSM) literature (see Perry and Wise 1990; Perry and Hondeghem 2008). One stream links PSM – an orientation towards the public interest – with 'citizenship behavior' shown by (public service) employees both inside and outside the workplace. Employees with a high level of PSM not only put emphasis on their role within the organization,

but also emphasize their responsibilities and duties as citizens when interacting with others outside the office (Houston 2008; Organ 1988). In the words of Pandey, Wright and Moynihan (2008: 91-92; emphasis added), "(…) PSM actually represents an *individual's* predisposition to enact altruistic or pro-social behaviors *regardless of setting.*" Thus, we expect that a higher level of PSM increases the likelihood that a citizen wants to take up his/her responsibilities in the public domain and engages in the co-production of public services.

However, the literature on volunteerism points out that engagement may be based on *impure* altruism: while doing good for others, citizens gain personal rewards, such as developing new competencies, making social contacts, or gaining a feeling of personal fulfillment. Co-producers are often users of the service or benefit from it in another direct way (Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012). It is not surprising, therefore, that within the co-production literature different types of *self-centered incentives* are identified: material incentives (money, goods or services), solidary incentives (rewards of associating with others, such as group membership), expressive incentives (the sense of satisfaction of having contributed to attaining a worthwhile cause), intrinsic rewards (enhancing one's sense of competence), and avoiding sanctions resulting from legal obligations (Alford 2002a).

These self-centered motivations should not be perceived as negative per se. Engagement in co-production is not limited only to the direct beneficiaries of the services; e.g., in social services family members, relatives, friends or neighbors help attain better services for persons in their direct environment. Similarly, the pursuit of self-interest can also be collective, when an element of common benefit is found. In collective action specifically, collective self-interest is pursued through the achievement of common goals that are impossible for unorganized individuals to attain (Pestoff 2012).

To conclude, as shown in Figure 1, both altruistic and self-interested motivations help explain why individuals co-produce. We expect motivations to be of relevance especially when explaining whether citizens' attention is directed towards co-producing activities, since motivations determine how willing people are to reach their goals and what is important to them (Locke and Latham 2002; Latham 2007), and which decisions should be made in concrete situations (Tasdoven and

Kapucu 2013).

In sum, our model posits that socio-psychological factors (i.e., perceived salience, ease, internal efficacy, external efficacy, and trust), socioeconomic variables and social connectedness, and self-interested and community-centered motivations work together to influence one's decision to participate in co-production. In the following sections of this chapter we compare this model with empirical data. First, we specify our research method.

3.3 QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

We provide a first test of the model using empirical evidence from four different cases. In the Netherlands, we investigated citizens' engagement in client councils in health care organizations, representative advisory councils at primary schools, and neighborhood watches. In Belgium, we studied user councils in health care organizations for disabled people. These four cases allow us not only to compare between countries, but also between cases within a country. The health care and primary schools cases are similar in terms of tasks and responsibilities of co-producers. These cases substantially differ, however, from the case of neighborhood watches; e.g., with regard to the nature of the services produced ('hard' vs more 'soft' services), the role of government and society in the delivery process (services produced by public organizations solely vs traditionally including involvement of semi-public and civil society organizations), the actor initiating the co-production process (bottom-up initiated by citizens vs top-down regulated by law), and the aim of the co-production process (actual service delivery vs quality improvement through providing input for management). Before describing the cases and the data, we briefly describe the method used.

The co-production literature merely discusses citizens' motivations, and empirical evidence is scare; therefore, a survey is not the appropriate method to test our model at this stage. With a survey, all variables need to be included beforehand by the researcher; eliminating the possibility of finding other variables of relevance. For that reason, we looked for a method that would allow co-producers to express their own viewpoints. Focus groups have the advantage of making it possible to

get better insight into citizens' personal motivations, attitudes and perceptions, while keeping the discussion as close as possible to respondents' perceptions and language. Also, the 'risk' of getting socially desirable answers is minimized. However, because of the small *N*, conclusions cannot be generalized (Vandenabeele 2008; Vaughn et al. 1996; Morgan 1998).

Table 3.1 Overview of focus groups and respondents

Case	Number of…		Type of respondents included
	focus groups	**respondents**	
The Netherlands			
Client councils health care	2	6	Members of councils: (ex)voluntary care givers, residents, family members of residents
Representative advisory councils primary schools	3	20	Members of councils: parent members, employee members, board members
Neighborhood watches	2	10	Active patrol members, an organizer of telephone circles, a chairman, a police officer
Belgium			
Client councils health care	3	19	Members of councils: parents of disabled residents, residents

For each case, we organized two or three focus groups, depending on the number of respondents included in the focus group (see Table 3.1). In the case of representative advisory councils in schools, both parents and professionals took part in the focus groups.[8] Since we are mainly interested in parent members, the total number of respondents is larger than for other cases. In the Belgium case on client councils, the total number of respondents is high too, since communication

8 The underlying study on citizens' motivations is part of a larger research project that also studies professionals' perceptions of co-production. Therefore, in the case study on primary schools, both parents and professionals were included in the focus groups.

with the mentally disabled residents was difficult and required additional data collection.

The design allowed in-depth insight into citizens' viewpoints. Respondents were invited to talk about their participation and their motivations to engage in particular co-production activities. In a relaxed and spontaneous atmosphere, the respondents talked about issues relevant to them. Since we were interested in their opinions, we did not use a comprehensive list of questions but started from a general question: 'what are your motivations for taking part in this activity?' When discussion in the group died down, we used more specific questions such as 'what are the responsibilities of [the co-production process]?' and 'what do you think of [something a respondent said before]'? The discussions were recorded and transcribed word by word. To analyze the data, we filtered and coded statements from the notes.

3.4 GIVING THE FLOOR TO CO-PRODUCERS

For each case, after a short case description, we present findings on tasks, efficacy, salience, motivations, past experiences (feedback loop) and other issues raised by the focus group participants. Using verbatim statements from the focus group discussions, this provides a general overview of the issues and concerns raised by our respondents. In the next section, we discuss these findings and connect them with the theoretical model.

3.4.1 Dutch client councils in health care organizations

Since 1996, Dutch health care organizations have been obliged to have a client council. Patients, spouses or other family members, voluntary care givers, and even neighbors are involved. The council deliberates the organizations' management and quality of the care provided. By law, client councils are provided with the rights of information, consultation, approval and investigation (Overheid.nl 2012a; Rijksoverheid 2011).

Different perceptions exist regarding the tasks and capacities needed. Some respondents argue that they are not familiar with client councils or health care in

general, but do not feel concerned about this: 'During membership, knowledge and experience will grow.' Other respondents argue that knowledge, experience and skills are important: 'You should not think your membership is nothing special.' Experience in and knowledge of health care are mentioned most often, followed by being familiar with reading policy documents and working with computers. One of the respondents refers to her job: 'I am familiar with being in meetings.' Being active in other voluntary organizations is also perceived as supporting the role of co-producer. Through this, respondents have learned to be helpful or gained managerial experience.

Many respondents mention that previously they were neither aware of the existence of client councils, nor of its tasks and responsibilities. After a family member has become a resident in the organization or a member of the client council told them about it, they wanted to know more, became interested and then decided to become a member. With their membership, they hope to represent the residents' interests and to 'do something good for the organization' to which they feel committed. They want to solve problems and improve the quality of the services. A respondent who is herself a resident says that she not only wants to receive care, but wants to give something in return: 'I not only want to live here but also want to do something useful.'

The commitment to the organization is almost entirely based on oneself or a family member being resident, however. When the family member passes away, commitment often declines. One respondent is still a member of the council, although his relative passed away. 'But I get less and less information about what is going on and since I do not have the commitment anymore, I experience being less motivated to stay on the council.' The implication is that members often resign, and when the council is not able to get (enough) new members, this can threaten the dissemination of information.

3.4.2 Belgian user councils in health care organizations for disabled people

Since 1990, clients have been involved by law in the management of health care organizations for disabled persons in Belgium. Via user councils, mainly family members (the guardians) but also residents themselves take part. The members

are elected for a period of four years. They are responsible for representing all the clients, asking questions, and giving advice. Some decisions cannot be made by management without permission from the council. In practice, however, most issues dealt with by the council seem to be of a very practical nature (e.g., material that needs replacement), rather than concerning major issues in policy or management of the organization (Vlaanderen.be 1990; VAPH 2009; GRIP 2009).

Notable, although not surprising, is the difference between residents and parent members. The mentally disabled residents who take part in our focus groups have no well-formed ideas about the tasks and responsibilities of the user council. It is more an opportunity to meet people and to build friendships: 'I like it because it is so cozy.' The parents, on the other hand, find it important that users' interests and opinions are incorporated into the organization. Since their children are not able to fully participate themselves, they engage in the council as guardians 'in their children's name'. This is also reflected in the skills perceived to be necessary. While residents do not consider this, parents do so explicitly. For them, the user council is an opportunity to learn and to use the experiences and capabilities developed elsewhere. Skills developed in their job, combined with their users' interests and the insights of other respondents, allow them to take initiatives 'that cannot be taken by management'.

Parents taking part in client councils do not seem to have any doubts about their engagement. 'You just do this; that is normal.' They perceive it as a responsibility to their children and part of their role as parent. Their membership is also an opportunity to meet 'parents in adversity'. They also receive information via the council, e.g., on financial issues. In addition, they want to improve contact between residents and management, and between residents themselves. Only a few observe a more negative atmosphere when considering the relation with management. This is also the responsibility of co-producers: 'If you start picking at them, this will not be pleasant to them.' Most respondents feel their engagement is useful, and find this to be important since 'if you can improve the whole, your child is doing fine as well.' There is a large interdependence between being motivated for the well-being of their child and serving the general interest. However, parents do not want to solely represent their child's interests. 'One should not reflect the

interest of one's own child; one should reflect the general interest and keep the broader picture in mind.'

3.4.3 Dutch representative advisory councils at primary schools

Representative advisory councils at Dutch primary schools, formalized in 1981, consist of members elected out of and by the employees and the parents/guardians. Their main task is to deliberate with the school board about all relevant issues, including finances, (voluntary) parental contributions, teaching methods, time tables, and educational improvement and reforms. The councils are provided with legal rights of information, advice and approval (Overheid.nl 2012b; Ministerie van OC&W 2011).

The respondents have clear ideas about their tasks and responsibilities. They want to control and critically judge the school's policy and management, and perceive the council as an instrument to get support for and legitimize decisions made by the school board. The council has a broad responsibility in society, not limited to education only: 'It should build a bridge among different groups in the local community.' Respondents want to improve contacts among parents, and between parents and the school. One respondent finds that parents often are very critical towards the school but 'do not want to be engaged in or do something for the school.' It should be the councils' task to stimulate a more active attitude. The reasons why other parents are not active, according to this respondent, are: lack of time, not feeling competent, differences in cultural background, and lacking familiarity with participation.

Feelings of competency are considered. One respondent argues that professionals should make the decisions 'because I do not have the necessary knowledge and experiences.' Others do not agree. They got involved because of their (perceived) competencies. 'I have become a member because they were looking for someone with experience.' 'Subconsciously, people who become a member share certain competencies.' The competencies perceived to be needed are knowledge of rules, the ability to read (financial) policy documents and the capacity to consider policies over a longer period of time.

One respondent argues that having influence is not the reason for his

participation: 'I just want to help the school.' This opinion is not shared, however, by other respondents: 'I have become a member to have a say.' Yet, the actual influence is perceived to be small. Perceptions differ from 'I hope the school board will use our input' to 'the director decides' and 'I think this job is thankless'.

Nevertheless, the respondents like their role as co-producer, are 'proud' and feel emotionally committed. Some respondents perceive this commitment to be entirely linked to their own children: they participate to ensure that their child has the best education possible. Others argue that 'you are doing wrong if you are a council member because of your own children only.' 'You are a member of the community, receive benefits from that and should also invest efforts to improve education and society.'

3.4.4 Dutch neighborhood watches

Neighborhood watches co-deliver an outcome (safety and a 'livable' neighborhood), rather than plan activities or provide input for management. They collaborate with the police and municipality and are organized at the local level, without prescription under (national) law. Often, citizens themselves take the initiative. The co-producers' tasks range from taking part in telephone circles to active patrolling the neighborhood. Municipalities support citizens, for example, through education.

The respondents hold different perceptions about their responsibilities and tasks. Some argue they 'only have to support a livable area', while others perceive themselves to be 'the police's eyes and ears' or argue that the neighborhood watch is an instrument to build cohesion within the community. Respondents share the opinion that job or personal background are far less important than having skills to communicate, judge the (human) character and be unafraid.

Developing these skills is an important motivation for some respondents. The courses facilitated by municipalities make this possible. Another motivation broadly shared relates to social factors. Respondents appreciate the contact with other members and people in general: 'They know me because I am a member of the neighborhood watch and when we meet later on they strike up a conversation with me.' Others focus on youths hanging around on the streets. The respondents like to hear their story, and inspire them. Some respondents get self-confidence

out of their role as co-producer: 'The elderly in particular acknowledge that I am doing well for community'. The patrol clothes worn strengthen the idea of doing something important.

Other respondents are motivated out of dissatisfaction with the current situation. They want to have a safe environment and want their children to be able to have a night out safely. A burglary nearby can be a direct reason to engage in the neighborhood watch. Some respondents engage out of dissatisfaction with the police who they believe are not able to respond on time and in an appropriate way. Other respondents have a more nuanced understanding: because of austerity in public finances, the police and citizens must work together. 'Pressure on government is increasing and then you want to take on your responsibility' and 'you have own responsibilities as well for the safety in your own environment.'

Co-producers work in close collaboration with the municipality and police. As one respondent says: 'Police cannot do without neighborhood watch and neighborhood watch cannot do without the police.' They share information, and citizens need police protection when facing troubles during patrols. However, respondents stress their independence since this eases contacts with youth. Collaboration with the police is judged differently. Some members are very positive: 'The collaboration is very good and the municipality is glad we are doing this'. Others feel collaboration could be improved by receiving more feedback about how the police deals with the information received from the neighborhood watch. Almost all respondents feel that their 'job' is useful: 'we achieve results' and 'we make a difference'. As one respondent said: 'When there are no incidents anymore, why should I continue my membership?'

3.5 DISCUSSION: CONNECTING EMPIRICAL DATA AND THEORY

Connecting theory and data, it is interesting to see which variables derived from the interdisciplinary approach are validated by the cases and what new elements, not included in the theoretical model, pop up.

Based on the data, *salience* can indeed be seen as a starting point for a citizen's consideration about whether to engage. The only case were salience was

not explicitly mentioned is that of the representative advisory councils in primary schools. It seems that, in general, parents are aware of the councils' existence. In the case of Dutch health care organizations, several respondents explained that at first they were not familiar with the existence of the client council, but after learning about it, they began to consider participation. How their attention is drawn to the possibility of becoming a co-producer differs, yet it is often through family or a council / neighborhood watch member.

On the second rung of our model, we placed internal and external efficacy, trust and ease. *Ease* is not explicitly mentioned in the four cases. Respondents from client councils and advisory councils mention that it is important to have enough time available. This can be approached as a 'transaction cost' but makes the definition of the concept of ease rather limited. In contrast to the other variables in the theoretical model that relate to individual characteristics or perceptions, ease is more about the characteristics of the field in which co-production processes take place. With the exception of neighborhood watches, citizens' input is required by law in the cases studied. This might imply that the co-production process is institutionalized and facilitated in such a way that ease becomes less of a question. *Internal efficacy* was mentioned in all four cases. Respondents who are members of a representative advisory council argue that many parents might not take part because they feel incapable. The co-producers who do take part think they certainly need some skills to do so. This is also strongly visible in both health care cases. The co-producers mention skills developed during paid jobs or voluntary activities, and argue that through the council they use this knowledge and these skills in order to do something valuable and improve the quality of health care.

External efficacy was also mentioned in all cases. The respondents feel that the council allows them the opportunity to change the organization and control management. Through the council they have a voice within the organization. In the case of neighborhood watches, respondents feel they have the opportunity to collaborate with the police to solve problems and contribute to the community. The final variable defined on the second rung in the model is *trust*; operationalized as trust in the 'system' perceived when deciding about whether to engage. This is not validated by the cases, however. None of the respondents mention trust in the

organization or in professionals as part of their decision to engage. However, what they do mention is the trust they hold once they have become a co-producer. In all four cases, the relationship with the professional (i.e., management or police) is mentioned. And, as expected in the model, this is strongly connected with the consideration of external efficacy. In both health care cases, respondents find it important that the management is open and willing to listen to their ideas and concerns. This is also true for the representative advisory councils, although here co-producers seems to have a more 'natural' critical attitude. For neighborhood watches, trust mainly means that information is shared.

Based on the theoretical model, we expected individual characteristics (i.e., socioeconomic variables and social connectedness) to impact on internal and external efficacy, trust, and ease. *Socioeconomic variables* are mentioned in both health care cases and the advisory councils. Respondents mention that they make use of skills developed in other volunteering activities or paid jobs. Based on these three cases, we might conclude that socioeconomic variables only relate to internal efficacy: because of the skills developed, the respondents argue that they feel capable of becoming a co-producer. Links with external efficacy, trust and ease are not mentioned. *Social connectedness* is mentioned in the cases of Dutch client councils and representative advisory councils; however, this is not related to the variables on the second rung. Instead, respondents say how their network (family, people being a co-producer already, people they meet during other activities at school) made them aware of the possibility to engage or stimulated their interest in the organization and its management. *Being asked* is an important incentive to take part. This suggests that social connectedness might be related with salience. In line with our model, we found that networks can also be constraining; e.g., not having enough time available. Or as one participant in a neighborhood watch says: 'People around me question why I am doing this'.

According to the model developed, motivations impact on salience. *Self-centered motivations* are mentioned in the cases of representative advisory councils, neighborhood watches and user councils. However, self-centered motivations are not mentioned in a negative way. They refer to such aspects as developing oneself through courses, feeling acknowledged or meeting other people (who are in the

same situation in the case of user councils). The latter links with the 'coziness' that is mentioned by some respondents in these three cases. Egoistic motivations such as representing the interests of oneself or ones family are rejected by almost all respondents. Your commitment with the organization might be based on a family member, but once you are a co-producer you should consider the general interest.

Community-centered motivations are mentioned in all cases. Co-producers find it important that interests of all clients are heard, quality is improved, communities have a higher quality of life, and that they can help in times of financial constraints. 'Community' is defined in a narrow way: the organization and the direct environment co-producers are living in. Co-producers want to improve education in one particular organization or improve the quality of life in their own area. When a family relative who is resident of a health care organization dies, commitment declines and so does the motivation to remain as a member of the council. Thus, although respondents argue that they want to take up their responsibility 'as a citizen', their actual engagement seems to be more related with specific interests at a lower level. Based on the data, we cannot establish whether both types of motivations indeed impact on salience; nevertheless, they have a role in co-producers' engagement.

Interestingly, we found four other elements to be impacting on salience. First, *networks* turned out to be important: in both health care cases, it is often through family members or a person who is a member already that respondents became aware of the possibility of engagement, feel committed, and perceive the council to be something relevant and important. Second, except for the case of representative advisory councils, *actual problems* play a role. Citizens see things going wrong or face troubles themselves (e.g., a burglary) and become aware they can contribute to the solution of these problems. Third, and related to the former, except for the client councils, respondents take part because they *want to know what is going on* in the organization. A role as co-producer provides the opportunity to get information directly from the management. Fourth, in the case of neighborhood watches, *feelings of anxiety* are mentioned as ways in which attention is placed on the possibility of engagement. Respondents have feelings of dissatisfaction and then decide that the neighborhood watch is a way to do something with these

feelings: 'You should not complain but do something and help the police.'

Finally, we expected a *feedback-loop*. Respondents' decision to continue their engagement is indeed influenced by their experience. They reflect on how their input is used, the quality of relations with management and colleague co-producers, and whether or not they still feel committed to the organization. When their family member is no longer a resident/student, often the commitment declines.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Integrating insights from different fields of research, we assumed three sets of factors to impact on citizens' decision to engage in the co-production of public services: 1) perceptions of the co-production task and competency to contribute to the public service delivery process, (2) individual characteristics in terms of socioeconomic profile and social connectedness, and (3) self-interested and community-focused motivations. Insights from focus group discussions in four co-production cases confirm the theoretical expectations to a large extent. However, we also find that some variables are interpreted differently by respondents, some new elements can be added to the model, and differences exists between types of co-production.

Explanations for citizens' engagement differ between the case of neighborhood watches and the other cases studied. In particular, a difference is found for 'trust', which might be explained by the dependence existing between regular producers and members of neighborhood watches. Also, this case points to a new element: dissatisfaction as a motivation for engagement. The feedback loop seems stronger in the case of neighborhood watches. These respondents clearly focus on the output delivered, while this seems less important for respondents taking part in councils. A possible explanation is that co-producers' engagement within councils feels less like a choice: as a parent or family member you have to do something.

Differences between cases in citizens' viewpoints, expectations and the conditions under which they expect co-production to hold potential might also be traced back to the co-production design and characteristics of the policy sector itself. Following Bovaird and Löffler (2012a), we used a broad definition of co-production.

This means, however, that citizens' involvement varies among cases. Neighborhood watches differ substantially from our other cases. While neighborhood watches entail citizen-initiated co-delivery, the councils in health care and primary schools are examples of institutionalized co-planning and co-management.

During the focus group discussions, citizens' motivations and incentives to take part were discussed. The method allows us to keep an open mind and to keep the discussion as close as possible to citizens' perceptions. However, particularly due to the limited scale, the method is not representative for the larger population of co-producers. Because of this, the method is less useful in helping to achieve a full insight into the variables (e.g., 'socioeconomic characteristics') or the way the variables are related. Further research, preferably using survey material, is necessary to test the model in a more extensive way.

The study provides useful insights into citizens' motivations to engage as co-producers in the delivery of public services. This contributes to the current stage of the literature, as empirical research has only recently started to take off (e.g., Van Eijk and Steen 2014). The chapter can serve as starting point for further research. Related to the above-mentioned limitations of this study, further research – both quantitative and qualitative – is necessary to strengthen and further develop the theoretical model. Including other policy domains and countries in which co-production processes take place in the research can help deepen insight into different motivational patterns across distinct types of co-production. An additional step for research would be to use these insights into citizens' motivations to investigate how these motivations impact on collaboration between citizens and professionals.

Finally, the study has practical relevance given the increasing interest in co-production, which is related to austerity in public finances and the current legitimacy crisis in both the public sector and market. The (public) debate on citizen co-production is mostly driven by ideological stances towards the role of government and civil society, and less by an (empirical) understanding of the motivations for involvement in the joint production of public services. Having a better insight into citizen engagement is crucial for developing tools to raise the commitment of citizens as co-producers and for enabling collaboration between citizens and professionals.

CHAPTER 4

Co-producing safety in the local community: a Q-methodology study on the incentives of Belgian and Dutch members of neighborhood watch schemes

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Chapter 4 – Co-producing safety in the local community: a Q-methodology study on the incentives of Belgian and Dutch members of neighborhood watch schemes

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain citizens' engagement in co-production activities in the domain of community safety. We use a multiple case study design by looking at neighborhood watch schemes in Belgium and the Netherlands. We applied Q-methodology to map the opinions of citizens about their co-productive efforts, and to cluster these opinions into co-producers' profiles. Discussing differences and similarities in profiles enables a more generalized understanding of the reasons why people co-produce. We conclude with some policy-relevant points about incentivization when local governments want to achieve an increase in citizen co-production.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Numerous examples can be found of citizens being involved in the production of public services, especially in the local community. Informal care, poverty associations and neighborhood watch are just a few examples. In all these, citizens cooperate with regular producers in professional (semi-) public organizations. This cooperation can take different forms, from co-planning through co-assessment to actual co-delivery of public services (Bovaird and Löffler 2012a: 39). Notwithstanding these differences, the key feature is that both citizens and professional agents contribute to the provision of public services, and that their collaboration is aimed at enhancing the quality of the services produced. In the literature, this is referred to as co-production of public services (Parks et al. 1981; Brandsen and Honingh 2016).

Acknowledging the societal need to increase the potential benefits of co-production, one important research question concerns the motivations and incentives of citizens to co-produce public services. Gaining more insight into motivations of co-producers holds practical relevance since it can inform governments on incentivization strategies aimed at increasing citizen involvement. Yet, despite this relevance, the current co-production literature has no clear-cut answer as the issue only recently came to the fore. The first, scarce studies discussed the issue from a theoretical perspective (Alford 2002a; Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012). Later studies started to collect empirical insights, for example in the field of health care (Van Eijk and Steen 2014). This chapter focuses on safety co-produced through local neighborhood watch schemes and analyses what drives people to participate. Although being a classical example of co-production, to date, the literature is mainly dominated by research in the Anglo-Saxon (specifically US) context. More recently, however, the idea of neighborhood watch also set foot ashore several European countries; this in line with a changing role of citizens in safety policies more generally (Veldheer, Jonker, Van Noije and Vrooman 2012: 189-194).

The contribution of this chapter is twofold: by investigating citizens' motivations for being involved in the co-production of safety in their communities in a specific European context (i.e., Germanic administrative tradition, Painter and

Peters 2010), and by applying a comparative design since the studies that do exist are mostly carried out in one single case. More specifically, we answer the following research question: *Why do citizens co-produce in the policy domain of safety, and what differences and similarities exist between the Netherlands and Belgium?* In the next section, we combine theoretical insights on police-citizen collaboration with co-production literature. Next, we explain the use of Q-methodology to map opinions of members of neighborhood watches in the Netherlands and Belgium, and to cluster these opinions into co-producers' profiles. After presenting the results, we outline the research's contribution for theory as well as practice.

4.2 LITERATURE REVIEW: CO-PRODUCING SAFETY IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

'Living in a safe environment' is a basic need. It is therefore not surprising that citizens have engaged in safety issues for many decades, performing different tasks, and thereby collaborating with police organizations to different extents. Percy (1978: 488) presented a list of activities in which citizens are involved in the context of safety. New technologies provide even more opportunities for citizen-police collaboration, for example via online discussion groups (Brainard and McNutt 2010) and citizen networks (Meijer 2014). Contrasting these activities with the above-mentioned definition of co-production, some activities can more easily be perceived as co-production (e.g., citizen mobile patrols, police-citizen councils) than others (e.g., locking properties when leaving, installing alarm tools). Within the example of neighborhood watch, the co-production element is prominent: citizens are actively patrolling streets and share information with police officers directly. However, before citizens' motivations are considered from the perspective of co-production, specifically, we first focus on community policing in more general terms.

4.2.1 Co-producing safety

The idea of volunteer policing is certainly not new. In the US context, important studies can be found dating back to the 1970s. The work by Ostrom and colleagues (e.g., Ostrom, Parks and Whitaker 1978; Ostrom 1978), which is also considered as starting point of the co-production literature, includes community-police

collaboration. Early studies provide insight with regard to why, and under which circumstances, citizens collaborate with police units. Sundeen and Siegel (1987: 43), for example, hint at the role of socio-economic variables when concluding that "larger, lower income, heterogeneous communities have been less able to draw upon residents to participate in police auxiliary co-production arrangements." Sharp (1978b) points at the importance of solidary incentives over material ones and contrasts this with American governmental initiatives to stimulate citizen participation based primarily on the provision of material incentives. In the context of "collective, crime prevention effort[s]", however, "a sense of caring about one's neighbors, and a strong social network, which solidary organizations help sustain, is most important" (Sharp 1978b: 55).

As such, 'community feeling' and 'safety' are seen as strongly connected. Community feeling potentially results in more willingness to put efforts in safety increasing activities (cf. Sharp 1978b; Van Eijk and Steen 2013), while similarly, it can be argued that security potentially leads to a more healthy community (cf. Lichterman 2000). Other authors find a strong link between 'community feeling' and 'safety' as incentives to volunteer with the police as well. Kelling and Wilson (1982) argue that volunteers in policing typically are driven by a desire to improve the quality of life in their community, being concerned about social disorder and fearing crime. Zhao, Gibson, Lovrich and Gaffney (2002) show that police volunteers have more fear for crime and property victimization compared to non-volunteers. Social disorder and a will to take action are found to drive volunteers (Guclu 2010). Scheider, Chapman and Schapiro (2009: 700) refer to trust as crucial for building citizen-police partnerships:

> Citizens who do not trust the police are less likely to report crime and to participate in developing solutions to problems. They are also more likely to place blame and sole responsibility for increases in crime on the shoulders of police.

Yet, vice-versa, a fundamental aim of police-citizen partnerships is to enhance public trust in the police (Scheider, Chapman and Schapiro 2009: 700; Kappeler and

Gaines 2015: 171).

The main focus of the above-mentioned studies, often starting from a politicological or criminological perspective, has been on the US context. However, more recently, also in several European countries, a more prominent and explicit desire to actively engage citizens in safety issues is observed. A Dutch governmental advisory body, for example, outlines how citizens' role in safety policies has changed throughout the last decades. To an increasing degree, Dutch government expects citizens to take up responsibilities. The emphasis on values/concepts like 'good citizenship', 'citizen courage', 'participation', 'responsibility' and 'self-management' is growing (Veldheer, Jonker, Van Noije and Vrooman 2012: 189-194). This development is in line with a more general trend in which citizens are encouraged to take up own responsibilities in collaboration with governmental actors.

Against this background, the number of neighborhood watch schemes outside the US is growing (cf. Van der Land 2014a), as well as the number of initiatives engaging citizens using ICT-tools to co-produce safety (cf. Meijer 2014). Coming back to the Netherlands, to an increasing extent, neighborhood watch becomes the 'responsibility' of local governments (e.g., in terms of specific policies and financial support) (Veldheer, Jonker, Van Noije and Vrooman 2012: 193).

4.2.2 Incentives for co-production

Within the current co-production literature, citizens'/users' incentives to co-produce are one of the core themes (cf. Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012). Yet, scholars are still searching answers on the question *what motivates* co-producers. That this is still a puzzle might be the result of most studies theorizing on motivations instead of empirically investigating these, thereby replicating existing arguments (cf. Meijer 2014). Empirical studies on co-producers' motivations are scarce and show that it is very hard to explain who will and who will not take part in co-production activities (Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado 2015). Because the empirical studies that do exist are mostly carried out in other domains than safety (e.g., Fledderus and Honingh 2016; Van Eijk and Steen 2014), the insights on what motivates citizens to co-produce safety through neighborhood watch schemes remain limited furthermore (Van der Land 2014a: 10-11).

Implementing a more grounded approach, this chapter aims to increase our insights. However, before describing the methods we applied, it is useful to present some recent (theoretical) contributions to the scholarly debate on motivations for co-production. In their theoretical model, Van Eijk and Steen (2016) develop a theoretical model to explain citizens' engagement in co-production processes. They identify three sets of factors that are expected to influence one's willingness to engage in co-production: (1) citizens' perceptions of the tasks they have to perform as a co-producer and the competencies needed to contribute to the public service delivery process, (2) citizens' individual characteristics, and (3) citizens' self-interest and community focus.

According to this model, in order to decide to engage in co-production processes, first, the issue at hand needs to be of salience to the person concerned. Also, it needs to be of relative ease to engage in the activity concerned (Pestoff 2012). The latter links with the extent to which citizens feel personally competent to participate (internal efficacy) as well as believe that government, as regular producer of public services, provides room for citizen involvement (external efficacy) (cf. Craig, Niemi and Silver 1990). Closely related to this is citizens' trust in government, or the extent to which one feels government to be responsive.

These perceptions are – at least to some extent – fed by individual characteristics of citizens (Van Eijk and Steen 2016). Socio-economic variables like income, education and professional position are expected to play a role. In addition, social connectedness – the environment in which one lives and the networks in which one engages – is expected to influence (opportunities for) participation in co-production (Thijssen and Van Dooren 2016; Steen 2006).

Willingness to contribute to the well-being of other people and towards society at large is an important element of the concepts of co-production (Alford 2002a), active citizenship (Hermes 2009) and volunteerism (Reed and Selbee 2003). However, while doing good for others through co-production, citizens also gain personal rewards, such as developing new competencies, making social contacts and gaining a feeling of personal fulfilment (cf. Alford 2002a). Moreover, as users of public services, often citizen co-producers directly benefit from an increased access to and quality of public services (Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012).

Although the theoretical model offers useful insights into factors expected to help explain citizen co-production, the model still provides little input for developing hypotheses on what factors are of importance in specific cultural settings or specific policy domains. Our research aims to provide a more systematic and empirical basis for those considerations, gathering insights that can add to the current literature. We do so by comparing two similar cases in two countries. In the section below, we elaborate our research design.

4.3 METHODOLOGY

In line with our central research aim to gather additional insight that can add to the current literature, this study makes use of Q-methodology. After discussing the case selection, this research method is described in more detail.

4.3.1 Case selection: neighborhood watch schemes in the Netherlands and Belgium

In this study, we aim to investigate motivations to engage in the co-production of safety in the European context instead of the American (because most literature today is focused on the US context). Since we expect that the politico-administrative regime of for example the UK is quite similar to that of the US, we selected countries from another politico-administrative regime, namely the 'Germanic' administrative tradition. More specifically, we focus on the Netherlands and Belgium (Flanders), which are both clustered in the Germanic group of countries (Painter and Peters 2010), sharing a consensual political culture (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011) and being labelled as so-called neo-corporatist countries (Esping-Andersen 1990). By addressing the question what incentives citizens have to participate in two countries that are comparable in terms of politico-administrative regimes, we empirically isolate one policy domain in one particular politico-administrative context with the aim to provide a step forwards in theory building on incentives for co-production.

In both countries, local neighborhood watch is performed as a specific form of community policing. In Belgium, this is called *BuurtInformatieNetwerken* (neighborhood information networks), abbreviated to BIN; in the Netherlands, it is

called *Buurtpreventieteams* (neighborhood prevention teams), abbreviated to BPT. Although the actual implementation differs slightly (see Figure 4.1), in general, it can be argued that within neighborhood watch schemes, citizens are expected to keep an eye on their neighborhood. Information is gathered through monitoring and signalling, often via citizen patrols on the streets. If something suspicious happens, members of the neighborhood watch (i.e., the co-producers) contact the police. As a result, municipalities, police and citizens collaborate in order to increase safety, improve social control and stimulate prevention (cf. CCV 2010).

Figure 4.1 Characteristics of local neighborhood watch schemes in Belgium and the Netherlands

Characteristics	*Belgium*	*The Netherlands*
Case	*Buurtinformatienetwerken*, BIN in Flanders	*Buurtpreventieteams*, BPT
Background	About 747 BIN's in Flanders in 2016; 913 in Belgium (De Redactie 2016)	About 700 BPT's in 2016 (Lub 2016)
Product	Neighborhood safety	Neighborhood safety Livable area
Regular producers	Local police Municipal civil servants	Local police Municipal civil servants
Co-producers	Neighborhood inhabitants	Neighborhood inhabitants
Beneficiaries	Neighborhood inhabitants	Neighborhood inhabitants
Co-producers' tasks	Monitoring, signaling, information exchange	Monitoring, signaling, information exchange

4.3.2 Research method

Studying neighborhood watch schemes can help us to increase our insights in what drives citizens to engage in co-production of local safety specifically. As mentioned before, current co-production literature mainly focused on co-producers' motivations in other domains (e.g., Fledderus and Honingh 2016; Van Eijk and Steen 2014). Moreover, after conducting a large-*N* study, Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado (2015: 18-19) conclude that citizens' behavior and motivation to engage

are so complex that "many individual and contextual factors … are bound to go unmeasured in a social survey", as such exposing a need for further in-depth and contextualized research.

In order to gather more in-depth insights in the dynamics behind citizens' engagement, this study takes a more grounded approach. Using Q-methodology, different groups of co-producers can be identified, each sharing a specific viewpoint or 'discourse' on the topic studied. These different groups are identified by asking respondents to rank statements and then conducting factor analysis to identify groups of respondents who rank statements in a similar way. Q-methodology is thus concerned with seeking patterns across individuals rather than across variables (Dryzek and Berejikian 1993; Van Exel and De Graaf 2005). The method has proven its value in several studies, also within the field of public administration, for example, studying motivations associated with public service (Brewer, Selden and Facer 2000), managers' viewpoints about democracy (Jeffares and Skelcher 2011) or citizens' perceptions of engagement in specific services or partnerships (cf. Van Exel, De Graaf and Brouwer 2007; Willis and Jeffares 2012; Van Eijk and Steen 2014).

4.3.3 Data collection and analysis

When a Q-methodology study aims to compare across countries, a "bottom-up approach" is preferred (Dryzek and Holmes 2002: 21), implying that the specific context needs to be taken into account to ensure that no country specific factors are lost. This is achieved by using statements that are as close as possible to respondents' perceptions. Using one set of statements across the countries would require statements at a more abstract level and therefore implies an important loss of information. As an implication, two Q-methodology studies were designed (cf. Brown, Durning and Selden 2008: 725): one concerning Belgian (Flemish) BIN and one concerning Dutch BPT. Initially, the existence of different discourses per country was investigated, followed by a comparison on the level of the results (i.e., the set of discourses per country). That two different sets of statements are still comparable differentiates Q-methodology from survey research, where similar questionnaires are needed in order to make comparisons based on statistics; within Q-methodology, comparisons are made at the level of words or 'discourses' (Dryzek

and Holmes 2002: 21).

For both Q-methodology studies, first a broad set of statements (the Q-set) about citizens' perceptions to engage in co-production was developed. In order to integrate as many diverse possible viewpoints on the topic at hand in our set of statements, we made use of different sources to inform us on the practice of co-produced community safety. The Dutch set of statements (consisting of 193 statements in total) was developed with information from focus group discussions with active citizens both participating in different neighborhood watch schemes and performing different tasks (i.e., 'regular' members patrolling on streets, a chairman and an organizer of telephone circles). The collected statements were compared with insights from academic literature. For the Belgian case, we initially made a list of approximately 100 statements, using popular literature (magazine articles on citizen engagement) and academic literature. As such, we attempted at taking into account the principle of 'universe of viewpoints' (Brown 1980). Although the co-production literature specifically does not provide a clear-cut framework on citizens' motives, related streams of literature (e.g., on citizen participation and volunteering) provide some insights that helped us to further increase the diversity of viewpoints. We believe that this diversity of sources increases the chance that as much as possible viewpoints are integrated in the set of statements, we eventually have presented to the respondents.

After data collection in both countries was independently initiated, the two studies were merged. From the two Q-sets, subsets of statements – labelled the Q-sample – were derived to use for further research. To give guidance in the selection process, both studies applied the 'discourse analysis matrix' presented in Figure 4.2. By doing so, we attempted at a comparable set of statements between the two cases, still allowing for some case specificity between the Belgian and Dutch cases. Inspired by Dryzek and Berejikian (1993), we distinguished statements as to types of argument (i.e., designative, evaluative, advocative), and discourse elements concerned. These discourse elements refer to motivations and incentives to join the neighborhood watch team, concrete behavior/acts of respondents or others (including emotions triggering these acts), and tasks, responsibilities and competences needed to perform these tasks. Based on this discourse matrix, we

developed a contextualized Q-sample including 36 statements for the Belgian (Flemish) case, and a contextualized Q-sample including 45 statements for the Dutch case (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2).

Figure 4.2 Discourse analysis matrix

Discourse element	**Motivations**	**Behavior**	**Tasks / Responsibilities / Competences**
Type of argument			
Designative	a	b	c
Evaluative	d	e	f
Advocative	g	h	i

Third, within both countries, a group of citizen co-producers (the P-set) was presented with the corresponding Q-sample. Since a Q-methodology study does not intend to be generalizable to the larger population, respondents do not need to be representative for the population or randomly assigned (Van Exel and De Graaf 2005). In the Netherlands, co-producers were selected being active in smaller/larger neighborhood watch teams and smaller/larger cities. In Belgium, co-producers were selected from two local communities in which five officially recognized neighborhood watch initiatives are active. In Q-methodology studies, a common number of respondents lies between 30 and 40 (cf. Brown 2002; Dryzek and Berejikian 1993). Within the Belgian study, 30 respondents took part, within the Netherlands 34. All respondents were individually asked to rank the statements according to a suggested quasi-normal distribution on an 11-point scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' (-5) to 'strongly agree' (+5). Their filled paper forms are labelled Q-sorts. After the respondents sorted the statements, they were invited to provide additional comments about their choices.

Next, the analysis was performed per country, using PQMethod. Correlations were calculated among the Q-sorts to get a first insight into the similarities and dissimilarities in viewpoints between the respondents. A Brown QCENT factor

analysis with varimax rotation allowed to identify the number of different Q-sorts or factors (cf. Van Exel and De Graaf 2005). The number of factors that can be identified statistically is often higher than is theoretically satisfying. That is, when too many factors are distinguished, the differences between these factors are so small that they hardly can be explained as distinct discourses. A next step, therefore, was to consider the Eigenvalues and to eliminate these factors of which the Eigenvalue was lower than 1. The additional comments provided by the respondents and the so-called 'flags' presented by PQMethod were considered to determine the final number of factors. Within the 'flagging procedure', per factor, the respondents are signed belonging to that particular factor. Since a factor needs to have a substantial number of associated respondents in order to be recognized as a distinctive factor, this procedure helps to eliminate factors without sufficient explanatory capacity. In the final step, the ideal-model Q-sort for each factor was calculated, visualizing how an 'ideal' respondent with a 100% score on that factor would have sorted all the statements (Van Exel and De Graaf 2005; Brown 1993). The ideal-model Q-sorts (see Tables 4.1 and 4.2) are an important basis to identify what statements are characteristic for the different viewpoints. For each factor, the weight given to the separate statements is listed (ranging from -5 to +5). For example, in Table 4.1, the first statement is weighted -4 by the ideal-type 'protective rationalist', while an ideal-type 'normative rationalist' considers this as almost neutral (weighted +1).

Table 4.1 Ideal factor scores: Belgium

Statement		Factors		
		Task-bounded altruist	***Protective rationalist***	***Normative-rationalist***
1	People who have a lot of spare time do not have a reason not to become a member.	-1	-4	1
2	Everyone has to contribute to preserving the safety of the neighborhood, that's how it should be.	1	-1	0
3	I became a member because social control contributes to my personal safety.	4	-2	-1
4	There have been a couple of burglaries in my house.	-5	4	-5
5	I became a member in order to contribute to the community.	2	-1	1
6	Many people in the neighborhood also became members.	-1	1	-2
7	Thieves and burglars are scared away by the safety network, which gives you enough reason to become a member.	2	1	2
8	The appreciation I get from others for my efforts pleases me.	0	-2	-3
9	I learn from it.	1	3	-2
10	What also motivates me (to become a member) is that I have little trust in the local police services.	-2	0	-4
11	I am a member because there have been several burglaries in the neighborhood and I fear that I will be next.	-2	4	4
12	I have a lot of spare time, so it does not cost me any trouble to become a member and watch over the neighborhood.	0	-2	-4
13	The local police services don't do enough nowadays, that's why I have become a member.	-3	0	0
14	I see a lot of suspicious people in my neighborhood and I do not trust them, so I'm a member.	-4	3	-1

15	It is also the responsibility of my neighbors to preserve the safety in the neighborhood, so they should become members.	-2	-3	3
16	It is obvious to become a member since many people in the neighborhood have already signed up.	-1	0	2
17	If you are almost never home, it is pointless to become a member.	-3	-3	-2
18	Preventing future burglaries at home seems like a good reason to become a member.	1	5	3
19	I know that my efforts are not useless.	0	-1	4
20	I think that people should become a member in order to improve the safety in the neighborhood.	3	2	-1
21	You can also influence the safety policies in the neighborhood by becoming a member.	1	-1	-2
22	Because of my actions (calling when I see something suspicious at my or my neighbors' home), I also encourage other people to become members.	-1	0	5
23	If you want to feel safer, you should become a member.	2	0	0
24	I benefit from a safer neighborhood, which is a critical condition to sign up and stay a member.	3	2	2
25	People who think that signing up will improve the safety in the neighborhood have no reason not to become a member.	0	-1	0
26	I would feel guilty if I did not become a member.	-3	-5	-1
27	I simply want to contribute to improving the safety of my neighborhood.	4	2	2
28	I am afraid of the reactions of my neighbours if I would decide not to become a member.	-4	-4	-3
29	The safety network clearly delivers (since I became a member).	-1	1	0
30	It does not cost me any effort at all to become a member.	2	2	-1
31	You have to be at home a lot, otherwise there is no point in becoming a member.	-2	-3	-3

32	I am a member because neighborhood safety improves.	0	1	0
33	I find it easy to become a member, which is important.	0	0	1
34	I am a social person and I like to keep an eye on the neighborhood for others.	3	-2	1
35	Membership means you have a voice in local safety policies, which gives you enough reason to sign up.	1	1	1
36	A good collaboration between the local police services and the neighborhood safety network is crucial.	5	3	3

Table 4.2 Ideal factor scores: the Netherlands

Statement		Factors		
		Normative partners	***Pragmatic collabora-tors***	***Rationa-lizers***
1	You do not do this for society, you do this for yourself.	-4	-4	0
2	It's instructive, you learn from doing it yourself.	0	1	3
3	What we do is about upbringing.	-1	-1	-4
4	Otherwise, in the evening, all you do is watch television anyhow…	-3	-2	-5
5	I'm very happy with the feedback from the police.	-3	-3	2
6	If you are afraid to do it, you should not join.	-2	1	1
7	You need to have the confidence to confront people.	0	3	0
8	Of course, you always have to do it together.	3	2	2
9	You need to have certain communication skills.	1	0	3
10	I think it needs to link to your personality.	0	0	1
11	You get to follow different courses. Well… that's added value!	0	1	-1
12	Above all, it's about social control.	4	2	-2

13	You can serve the public servants, making them able to be at the right place more easily and faster.	1	-1	-1
14	All that small vandalism. If you can prevent it, it saves a lot of money.	1	2	1
15	That was my driving force: my children being able to walk in the streets safely.	-1	0	0
16	You share part of the responsibility for the security of your own neighborhood.	5	5	0
17	I do like a little bit of excitement.	-1	-1	3
18	It's boring: nothing happens.	-4	-4	-4
19	We're social of course with these boys.	-1	0	-1
20	I do believe this is a task of the neighborhood watch scheme: if you walk along the street in your free time and you see that something is broken, you make a phone call.	1	0	-2
21	You need to have trouble in order to get movement, because in general people only move when there is too much trouble.	-3	-1	-2
22	I think more young persons should join the neighborhood watch scheme.	2	2	1
23	It has to be your own neighborhood alone.	0	-1	1
24	You need to know yourself well.	0	0	-1
25	Professional feedback, explaining what will happen with the information received, is important.	2	3	0
26	You notice that it gets results.	2	1	4
27	There's appreciation for what you do.	1	1	1
28	In fact, it's the common interest that you help to protect.	3	4	-1
29	I would do volunteering work anyhow.	-1	-2	5
30	Simply walking around brings many results.	2	2	4
31	The courses are quite substantive; after all I'm only doing this as a volunteer!	-2	-3	-1
32	The collaboration between one another is important.	2	3	0

33	If you feel unsafe on the street yourself, I think you should stop doing it.	-2	0	0
34	You should not be scared.	-2	4	0
35	As neighborhood watch scheme, we should not try to take over the tasks of the police.	4	0	2
36	Something has to happen, in order for it to stay exciting.	-5	-2	-2
37	In fact, you keep in mind the whole local community and look everywhere.	-1	-1	2
38	I'm afraid that they know where I live and that they will look me up personally.	-3	-5	-3
39	The reason behind it is to do something for society.	1	-1	0
40	The contact with the young, that's what I really enjoy.	-1	0	-2
41	If there's a group of youngsters, you should not think 'oh no'.	0	1	1
42	I want to do something for the local community.	0	-2	-1
43	Oh yeah, those nice jackets of the neighborhood watch scheme have a lot of effect; the clothing is very crucial.	0	-2	-3
44	It's about surveillance.	-2	-3	-3
45	You need some knowledge of people to do this.	1	1	2

4.4 RESULTS

In this section, the different groups of co-producers identified in both Belgium and the Netherlands are described, thereby referring to Table 4.1 and 4.2, respectively.

4.4.1 Neighborhood watches in Belgium

The analysis of citizens' engagement in Belgian neighborhood safety networks results in three groups of co-producers: the task-bounded altruist, the protective rationalist and the normative rationalist.

For the *task-bounded altruist*, the typical statements related to this profile stress different elements. Statement 36 shows that the good relationship and

cooperation between police and citizens is very important for these co-producers. The 'task' – helping to produce safety – is important for these respondents, as it is considered as their valuable contribution to society: optimizing safety in the neighborhood, through social control (statement 3). In statements 20 ("I think people should join to improve the neighborhood safety"), 27 ("I simply want to contribute to improving the safety of my neighborhood") and 34 ("I am a social person and I look to keep an eye for others"), the importance of the societal value and the social aspect of co-production is further reflected: volunteering because of societal-altruistic reasons, with a focus on improving safety for the neighborhood as a whole. This profile becomes even more clear when looking at negatively loaded statements. Personal interest per se is not important to the task-bounded altruist. Also, respondents holding this profile have no (objective or subjective) feelings of unsafety in their neighborhood (statement 4). They tend to trust the good intentions of their fellow inhabitants (statement 14).

The second group of co-producers are the *protective rationalists,* who engage because co-production can increase one's own personal safety, or the safety of the neighborhood they live in (*protective*). These respondents calculate costs (their time and effort) and rewards (safety), and only when rewards outweigh costs, they will co-produce (*rational*). This one-dimensional focus on improving safety in the own neighborhood can stem from recent experiences of unsafety (statements 4 and 11), which has led to joining the neighborhood safety initiative to prevent future calamities (statement 18). *Ceteris paribus*, these persons will not join, and not feel guilty for not joining, when there are no personal experiences of unsafety (statement 26 and 28). On top of that, respondents belonging to this profile claim that everyone has a reason to co-produce, especially people with enough time (statement 1). In other words, everyone has an interest in a safer neighborhood.

Third, the *normative rationalists* want to engage in co-production from the normative belief that it 'should be like that' (*normative*) and combine this with the belief that efforts of joining will also lead to a reward (*rationalist*). Previous own experiences with unsafety are not determining for commitment (statement 4), in contrast to the protective rationalist, but there is a fear for possible future crime (statement 11). Thus, the rationality is in preventing future crime. And according to

normative rationalists, this prevention can best be achieved through co-production with the police (which are highly trusted, statement 10). The rationality is further shown by the belief of these respondents that their efforts will have an impact ('I know that my commitment will not be in vain', statement 19). The normative point is shown by the high loading on the statement that their actions can make other inhabitants to join the initiative (statement 22): co-production is something good, and as many people as possible should take their responsibility, even if this costs valuable spare time (statement 12). Only the collective effort will lead to high levels of safety. In other words, according to these co-producers, only a strong collaboration between police and inhabitants (normative belief in the value of co-production) can lead to a safer neighborhood (rational incentive).

4.4.2 Neighborhood watches in the Netherlands

The analysis of citizens' engagement in Dutch neighborhood watches specifies three groups of citizen co-producers, which we label the normative partners, the pragmatic collaborators and the rationalizers.

Normative partners are convinced that their investments are in the interest of society at large: 'you do not do this for yourself' (statement 1). Persons share part of the responsibility for security of their own living environment (statement 16), and through their engagement in BPTs, they help protect the common interest (statement 28). Normative partners do not overestimate their efforts; it is just about social control and simply walking around brings many results (statement 30). Excitement is also valued less compared to the other groups of co-production. Partnerships with the police are important since you cannot do it alone (statement 8) and are positively evaluated (statement 5). Yet, normative partners also emphasize that they should not try to take over police's tasks (statement 35).

Pragmatic collaborators share many viewpoints with normative partners, for example, their concern for the common interest and feelings of moral obligation to share responsibility rather than self-interest. Pragmatic collaborators, however, create less of an idealized picture. The necessity of collaboration is somewhat less stressed, and their view on the relation with police officers is more critical. They find professional feedback of higher importance (statement 25) yet are much

more critical of the feedback they actually receive from the police (statement 5). Pragmatic collaborators' focus is more on collaboration *within* the BPT (statement 32), thereby emphasizing a separate position from the police. That one might fear for one's own security because of taking part in the neighborhood watch scheme is highly criticized (statement 38); although compared to normative partners, the pragmatic collaborators are more convinced that if you are afraid to take part, you should better not join the local neighborhood watch (statement 6).

Rationalizers are less driven by a normative civic duty and more by the results of their engagement in the BPT: they notice that their activities – however basic, such as simply walking around – lead to positive results (statements 26 and 30). Nevertheless, the rationalizers stay humble about the actual impact; what they do is not as extensive as upbringing the local youth (statement 3) and contrarily to the former groups, social control is not perceived as a central task (statement 12). Also, rationalizers seem less committed with safety. They are convinced that if they would not engage in the neighborhood watch scheme, they would be doing some kind of volunteering work anyhow and, even more than in both other perspectives, they don't feel that otherwise they would not find much better to do in the evenings (statements 29 and 4). Finally, rationalizers find that having skills (e.g., communication and social skills) is important and feel that they learn from taking part in the BPT (statements 2, 9 and 45). Actually, personal development is valued more than the collaboration in itself.

4.5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the previous section, we presented the different groups of co-producers that could be identified in the two cases. Here, we discuss these findings: why do citizens co-produce? How do our findings relate to existing knowledge, and what differences and similarities exist among both cases? We finish by considering the policy implications and providing suggestions for further research.

4.5.1 Comparison to existing knowledge

Previous literature (e.g., Van Eijk and Steen 2016) identified several incentives

and motivations to co-produce. Our research results are summarized in Figure 4.3. The classification 0/1 should be understood as a crude assessment of these incentives and motivations of co-producers found in previous literature, as recently summarized by Van Eijk and Steen (2016), showing which theoretical argument can be found in the empirically observed group of co-producers (1), or not (0). Based on Figure 4.3, four general observations can be made.

Figure 4.3 Indication of the presence of theoretical explanations for citizens' engagement within the two cases

Theoretical factors / *Co-producers' profile*	**Task-related factors (salience, ease, trust, efficacy)**	**Individual characteristics**	**Motivations**	
			Self-interested	**Community-focused**
Belgium				
Task-bounded altruist	0	0	0	1
Protective rationalist	1	0	1	0
Normative rationalist	1	0	1	1
The Netherlands				
Normative partner	1	0	0	1
Pragmatic collaborator	1	0	0	1
Rationalizer	1	1	1	0

First, profiles are not unidimensional. Within many of the identified profiles, different rationales for co-production are combined. Self-interest and community focus coincide sometimes, for example. This suggests that in many cases, the engagement of people to co-produce is triggered by a combination of factors. For example, the profile of rationalizers in the Dutch safety case shows that co-production is triggered by personal attributes, individual characteristics (in terms of mastered skills) and self-interest simultaneously. Similar observations of motivations for co-production that may be more-dimensional were made in earlier studies. Jakobsen (2013) showed, via a field experiment on language support for

immigrant children in Denmark, that the combination of having sufficient resources, being in need of the service in case, and having time to co-produce is determining the level of co-production. Meijer (2014: 19), in contrasts, argues that individual *or* collective interests might be a reason for *different* groups of people to collaborate with the police.

Second, considering the different profiles observed over the two cases, and depending on the case and profile, co-production may be explained by task-related factors, self-interest and community focus, while individual characteristics are less observable. In both countries, in almost all profiles, identified 'task-related factors' are considered to be (very) important for co-production. For example, the rationalizers in Dutch neighborhood prevention are driven by the results that they expect from co-production, which is ultimately increased neighborhood safety. This consideration of external efficacy seems part of the consideration to co-produce. Within the co-producer's perception, the required efforts will be effective and worthwhile to invest. We also discovered different profiles in which co-production engagement is explained by a concern for community-related benefits. Task-bounded altruists in Belgian neighborhood safety initiatives and normative partners in Dutch neighborhood safety are driven by societal values, namely improving safety beyond self-interest.

Third, we observed profiles in which co-production is seen as a way to acquire own (material or immaterial) personal rewards. A profile that (partly) stresses personal rewards is, for example, the protective rationalist in neighborhood safety in Belgium. These respondents aim for personal rewards defined as personal safety in their direct environment. However, we need to be careful with seeing this as purely self-centered and rational approaches to co-production. As a profile like the rationalizer in the Netherlands shows, explaining why people co-produce, even when driven by self-interest, is often more nuanced and complex. Learning processes are personal rewards, but the benefits expand to the community as well.

Fourth, the comparison between countries allows for comparing cases with similar tasks, in the same policy field, but in a different country. In the field of neighborhood watch, we see that almost no differences exist regarding community focus as an explanation for co-production, but that in the profiles discovered for

the Dutch case, the explanations based on self-centeredness are less prominent. Personal attributes (e.g., salience, ease, efficacy) are somewhat more often and explicitly mentioned in the Dutch case than in the Belgian case. Still, it is very difficult, as we mentioned above, to discover the typical profile of volunteers in neighborhood watches that is valid in a country, let alone in both countries. Hence, a European profile of co-producers' motivations is hard to find. Compared to the (mainly) American literature of volunteering in producing safety which points at the interplay between community feeling and safety concerns,we can find some similar European 'profiles' like the Belgian protective rationalist and the Dutch rationalizers. Our study, however, shows that there is no such thing as one profile, but that different people may be driven differently to co-produce safety.

Our (inductive) findings show that explanations for co-production may benefit from frameworks that combine insights from different perspectives. Since neighborhood watch schemes are a classical example of co-production, general insights from the co-production literature can be applied. We are limited, however, in the extent to which we may generalize our insight derived from the study of co-producing local safety to other types and forms of co-production. Future research should focus at unravelling what kind of explanations are valid in what kind of context, with a specific attention for micro-level individual attributes, controlled for the kind of task at the meso-level and the institutional context of policy field and perhaps country at the macro-level. Furthermore, Q-methodology is sensitive to the issues being addressed (or not) in the very first phase of collecting statements. Although we have tried to integrate a wide variety of insights collected from different sources, there is always the potential of a bias. This adds to the need for future research to test the conclusions in other contexts. Due to the methodology we use, we cannot make valid statements about how individual characteristics may explain the co-productive effort. We discovered some ideas about the (potential) effect of individual attributes on the profiles, for example, the level of capacities needed for co-producers to be able to engage in the co-production process in the way they want. Future research should take these shortcomings into account, for example, by collecting quantitative data in a large population in order to study the relationship between individual characteristics (age, gender, socio-economic status,

social connectedness of people etc.) and people's willingness to co-produce; or by using qualitative methods to collect data and evidence about how citizens who differ in terms of individual characteristics perceive co-production to be easy/accessible, trustworthy or effective (from which their willingness to co-produce may stem).

4.5.2 Conclusion and policy relevance

This study increases our understanding of why citizens are triggered to co-produce. These are important insights for governments, especially at the local level, that want to encourage citizens to co-produce. Given the internationally observed trend of increased citizen participation, the growing emphasis on citizens' own responsibilities and the simultaneously expressed concerns about citizens' willingness to participate (cf. WRR 2012), gaining insight in these matters is important. (Local) governments that expect citizens to do part of the job previously done by professional organizations alone (e.g., as a result of deliberate governmental retreat from public service delivery) must be aware of the incentives people have to co-produce public services. Taking into account that citizens may have different incentives, one should for example be careful with introducing the 'compulsory' element. When co-producers do not feel well-understood, this can create negative views against the co-producing organization and so be a threat to the interaction between co-producer and professional (Williams, LePere-Schloop, Silk and Hebdon 2016). People who co-produce from a normative perspective (like the Dutch normative partners or the Belgian task-bounded altruists) do not need to be obliged to take up societal responsibilities they consider as 'normal' and may be offended by such compulsory policies. Rather, these co-producers desire a policy framework that is supportive and facilitating for taking up co-producing tasks. These groups of co-producers may also expect feedback, while a framework making co-production 'compulsory' may be perceived as a framework that wants to 'sanction'. In sum, careful design of co-production policies – including communication – that takes diversity in incentives among citizens into account is necessary, if co-production is to be an effective supplement to professional public service delivery.

CHAPTER 5

Public professionals' engagement in co-production: Dutch elderly care managers' perceptions on collaboration with client councils

This chapter is co-authored by Trui Steen and René Torenvlied, and is currently under review after revisions ('R&R-phase') with an international journal as:
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Chapter 5 – Public professionals' engagement in co-production: Dutch elderly care managers' perceptions on collaboration with client councils

ABSTRACT

In the context of public service delivery, public professionals nowadays intensively collaborate with citizens. The joint, sometimes mandatory, efforts of citizens and professionals to provide public services have become known as 'co-production'. Although co-production directly affects professionals' work environment, professionals' attitudes towards co-production are hardly studied. This chapter explains variation in professionals' engagement in co-production from characteristics of their work environment, specifically their perceived level of autonomy, perceived organizational support for co-production, and perceived red tape associated with co-production activities. Survey research was conducted to question managers of Dutch organizations for elderly care about their interaction with client councils; an example of co-planning activities in the domain of health care. The results show that perceived autonomy in co-production, red tape associated with co-production, and organizational support affect professionals' engagement. Organizational support moreover reinforces the effect of work-autonomy on professionals' perception on the importance of co-production. These findings add to the study of co-production, and can help support public organizations to improve co-production.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

For decades, public administration is struggling with the question of how to bring the general public into administrative processes. Involvement of the public in administrative processes concerns citizens' rights and responsibilities but also how public professionals "view themselves and their responsibilities relative to citizens" (Thomas 1999: 83). Public professionals operate in constantly changing environments; directly affecting their role perceptions *vis-à-vis* citizens (cf. Osborne 2010).

In many administrative systems *co-production* is introduced, sometimes mandatory, to involve the public in public service delivery (Osborne and Strokosch 2013; Osborne, Radnor and Nasi 2012). The development towards co-production is, among others, induced by austerity measures in public finances and associated with a legitimacy crisis in public sector and private market performance. Co-production can be defined as a process in which citizens co-plan, co-design, co-prioritize, co-finance, co-deliver and/or co-assess public services alongside their "traditional" producers (that is public professionals) – with the aim to enhance the quality of public services delivered and produced (Bovaird and Löffler 2012a; Brandsen, Pestoff and Verschuere 2012; Brandsen and Honingh 2016).

The introduction of co-production in the activities of public professionals directly affect their work environment. Co-production requires public professionals to share their power, tasks, and responsibilities with citizen-users. Thus, co-producers and public professionals become collaborators in an effort to secure continuity and quality in the delivery of public services (Ewert and Evers 2012; Brandsen, Pestoff and Verschuere 2012).

Like other kinds of collaboration, co-production implies that public professionals' perception of co-production impacts on the effectiveness of co-production. Walter (1987), for example, shows how public managers create meaning, and clarify roles, in order to stimulate volunteering by citizens. Lemos and Morehouse (2005) argue that demonstrated openness to incorporate stakeholders is crucial for establishing trust and credibility in co-production.

Despite a long-standing co-production research tradition (cf. Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012; Calabrò 2012), the attitudes of public professionals

towards co-production are hardly studied. Indeed, Fenwick (2012) concludes that empirical studies "at the front lines of everyday practice" are rare. This chapter fills this gap by studying public professionals' self-reported engagement in co-production. Engagement in co-production comprises three dimensions: perceived importance and perceived impact of co-production, as well as personal involvement in co-production. This chapter seeks to explain variation in public officials' engagement from characteristics of their work environment, more in particular their *perceived level of autonomy*, *perceived organizational support* for co-production, and *perceived red tape* associated with co-production activities.

Empirically, we study variation in public officials' engagement in co-production in the context of client councils in Dutch elderly care. Client councils in Dutch elderly organizations collaborate with the location manager on issues of organizational (strategic) management and quality of the health care provided to the elderly clients. So, our case is about co-planning as a specific form of co-production. Thus, the research question is: *How do location managers' perceptions of their autonomy, organizational support, and red tape explain their engagement in co-planning with client councils in Dutch organizations for elderly care?* The next section presents theoretical insights that link public professionals' autonomy, and perceptions of organizational support for and of red tape in co-production to their engagement in co-production. For each of these explanations we derive hypotheses. Subsequently, we describe the empirical context of Dutch client councils followed by a section on study design and research methods. Results of the analyses are presented and implications for research and practice discussed.

5.2 ENGAGEMENT IN CO-PRODUCTION

Co-productive public service delivery involves *citizens* (the co-producers) and *public service professionals* as "traditional" producers of public services (Brandsen, Pestoff and Verschuere 2012: 1). In line with co-production literature, the term "public service professional" is used here in a colloquial sense of the word – referring to a person who works for a public or quasi-public organization and is responsible for activities in the public service delivery process (Ostrom 1996; Brandsen and Honingh

2016). This broad definition should not be confused with strict definitions used in for example literature on professionalism (cf. Freidson 1994; 2001). While in literature on professionalism the features on jobs that can be labeled as 'professional' are rather strict, in co-production literature for example also the managers responsbile for collaboration with citizens are labelled professional.

Although many scholars perceive co-production as highly valuable (cf. Calabrò 2012), as such it does not occur spontaneously. To secure benefits from co-production, an essential precondition is that both citizens and public service professionals are truly engaged in co-production (Ostrom 1996; Loeffler and Hine-Hughes 2013). The mutual engagement of citizens and public service professionals can – in part – be stimulated by (selective) incentives (e.g., the establishment of contracts), and emerges when credible commitment and trust between co-production partners is built (Ostrom 1996: 1082).

Engagement in co-production has been, and almost exclusively, studied from the perspective of citizens. Thomsen (2015: 3) for example shows that the effort citizens put into co-production highly varies with individual characteristics (that is, their knowledge of how to co-produce and their self-efficacy). The imperative of collaboration in co-production requires that public service professionals are also engaged in co-production: willing to listen to the ideas and concerns of clients, and actively sharing information. An attitude towards collaboration encourages citizens to keep motivated (Van Eijk and Steen 2016: 13). "Managers who are personally involved with users' activities, who are being helpful and whose leadership style is less hierarchical, are more likely able to create a feeling of reciprocity among the group of participants" (Fledderus 2015a: 561).

Thus, it is important professionals are not just *involved* in co-production but feel really *engaged* with the collaboration with citizens. Involvement means that a professional takes part in the collaboration (for example as the result of a legal obligation). Engagement, moreover, implies that a professional is also willing to actively partake in the co-production effort; convinced that collaboration is important, persuaded by its usefulness and functionality, and committed to collaboration. Hence, even when professionals have little discretion in the process of co-production, their attitude remains highly important for its success.

5.3 CHARACTERISTICS OF PROFESSIONALS' WORK ENVIRONMENT

If then professionals' attitudes towards co-production are crucial, it is important to gain insight into what explains differences in their willingness to engage in co-production activities with clients. We study three characteristics of professionals' work environment as antecedents of their engagement, that is: (a) their work-autonomy in general and related to co-production, (b) their perceived organizational support, and (c) red tape in general and associated with co-production.

5.3.1 Work-Autonomy

The 'reward' of the status as a professional is, among others, the autonomy to carry out the professional work (Bucher and Stelling 1969: 4; Flynn 1999). Some scholars argue that professional (work-)autonomy is a crucial condition for professionals to perform well. Lipsky (2010) argues that street-level bureaucrats need discretion and autonomy in order to be flexible when carrying out daily-work activities. Co-production activities are not exclusively performed by street-level bureaucrats (such as police officers, social workers or health workers) but may be also performed by public managers. In performing their co-production activities, public managers are not dissimilar from classical street-level bureaucrats, defined by Lipsky (2010: 3) as "[p]ublic service workers who interact directly with citizens in the course of their jobs, and who have substantial discretion in the execution of their work."

Indeed, the literature on work engagement suggests that vitality, enthusiasm, and devotion are positively affected by perceived work-autonomy (Saks 2006). In turn, more engaged employees are found to better perform, be more creative, and show a willingness to carry out additional tasks (Bakker and Demerouti 2008). As co-production activities imply innovative ways of delivering services and require additional tasks, we expect that higher levels of perceived work-autonomy positively affect professionals' engagement in co-production activities. Thus, our first hypothesis states that:

> ***H1:*** Professionals' perceived work-autonomy positively affects their engagement in co-production.

However, there is a special twist when it comes to co-production. Co-production decreases professionals' freedom to make individual decisions and, hence, reduces the autonomous role and position of the professional in relation to clients. In the first place, mandatory co-production (enforced by law) limits professionals' options to autonomously decide upon the own work methods. In the second place, co-production affects professionals' autonomous position *vis-à-vis* clients. Brandsen and Honingh (2013) and Moynihan and Thomas (2013) suggest that citizen involvement affects professionals' (level of) expertise, legitimacy, and autonomy. Whereas professionals traditionally were exclusive producer of public services (planning, designing, and implementing public services), more actors become involved in co-production: service users, families, volunteers, neighbors, and other people become partners in the planning, designing, prioritizing, financing, and/or delivery stages (Bovaird and Löffler 2012a). Entering the professionals' domain with a legitimate voice, citizens and professionals become more interdependent (Bovaird 2007; Bovaird, Löffler and Hine-Hughes 2011).

Rather than substituting professionals, citizens are complementary to them (cf. Pestoff, 2012). The professional-client relation changes from a top-down, one-directional relationship (building users' trust in professionals and enforcing compliance), to a collaborative relationship based on user empowerment and interdependence (Ewert and Evers 2012). Co-production obliges the professional to share power, tasks and responsibilities with the "lay" citizen-user (Sharp 1980: 105). It is professionals' new task to stimulate and motivate potential co-producers to pick-up responsibilities within service delivery (Alford and O'Flynn 2012). For professionally involved public servants, this shift implies a loss of managerial control. On the other hand, and paradoxically, with blurring boundaries between professional and laymen responsibilities also comes a reduction in public accountability of professionals (Tonkens, Hoijtink and Gulikers 2013: 174). The more salient this dilemma of a reduction in autonomy in co-production, the less engaged professionals will become. Hence, we formulated the second hypothesis as:

> ***H2:*** Professionals' perceived autonomy in co-production positively affects their engagement in co-production.

5.3.2 Organizational support and red tape

Alford and O'Flynn (2012: 227) argue that for professionals to successfully adapt to their new roles in co-production organizational systems, structure, and culture need to change. Yet, what this change should contain remains unclear. Some studies provide insight in specific factors stimulating or hindering citizen participation or co-production more specifically. Huang and Feeney (2016) report that for public managers who are highly motivated by public values a consistency between their values and organizational values and culture positively affects their willingness to engage the public in activities. Hence, in organizations with a culture supportive of co-production, public professionals will be more convinced of the importance and usefulness of collaboration with clients – thus stimulating their engagement in co-production.

Also organizational procedures, structures and directives may be more or less supportive of co-production. Huang and Feeney (2016), for example, report a negative effect between performance measurement and public managers' attitudes towards civic engagement. Voorberg et al. (2015) report how local civil servants' commitment with social innovation projects is challenged by the city administrative structures. In addition, professionals need resources to perform co-production activities well, such as time and resources to organize and attend meetings. Co-producing clients often must be offered specific training programs. This results in hypothesis 3a:

> ***H3a:*** Professionals' perception of organizational support for co-production positively affects their engagement in co-production.

Organizational support for co-production provides professionals with a solid resource and cultural and organizational backup when interacting with clients in autonomy. Consequently, professionals are better able to counterbalance their loss of autonomy due to client interactions if they are supported by their organization. If organizational support is an important precondition for work-autonomy to affect professionals' engagement, an interaction effect must exist between organizational

support and work-autonomy on engagement. Hence we hypothesize that the positive effect of work-autonomy on engagement in co-production is reinforced by stronger organizational support. This results in hypothesis 3b:

> ***H3b:*** Professionals' perception of organizational support reinforces the positive effect of autonomy on engagement in co-production.

Formal structures and procedures may motivate professionals to engage in co-production activities. However, such structures and procedures may also be perceived as administrative costs and burden. Burdensome rules can also originate outside the organization, for example due to external control or governmental structures and procedures (Bozeman 2000). Administrative burden, also referred to as 'red tape' varies between individual employees (Rainey, Pandey and Bozeman 1995; Pandey and Scott 2002), negatively affecting organizational performance (cf. Bozeman 2000; Gore 1993; Kaufman 1977; Van den Bekerom, Torenvlied and Akkerman 2016).

Red tape can also originate as the result of interaction with stakeholders (Bozeman 2000; Torenvlied and Akkerman 2012), directly impacting upon co-production activities. Indeed, Floring and Dixon (2004: 160) argue that managers of health care services are skeptical about new public involvement arrangements due to the expected complexity and increase of red tape. Similarly, Huang and Feeney (2016) argue that the discouraging effect of performance measurement systems on public managers' motivation to invest time and resources in citizen participation may be further increased if participation is found to come with administrative burden, to be time-consuming or difficult to coordinate. This finding is in line with Moynihan (2003), and Yang and Callahan (2007) who argue that expected administrative costs drive public managers' negative attitude towards civic engagement. This results in our fourth hypothesis:

> ***H4:*** Professionals perceived levels of red tape associated with co-production negatively affects their engagement in

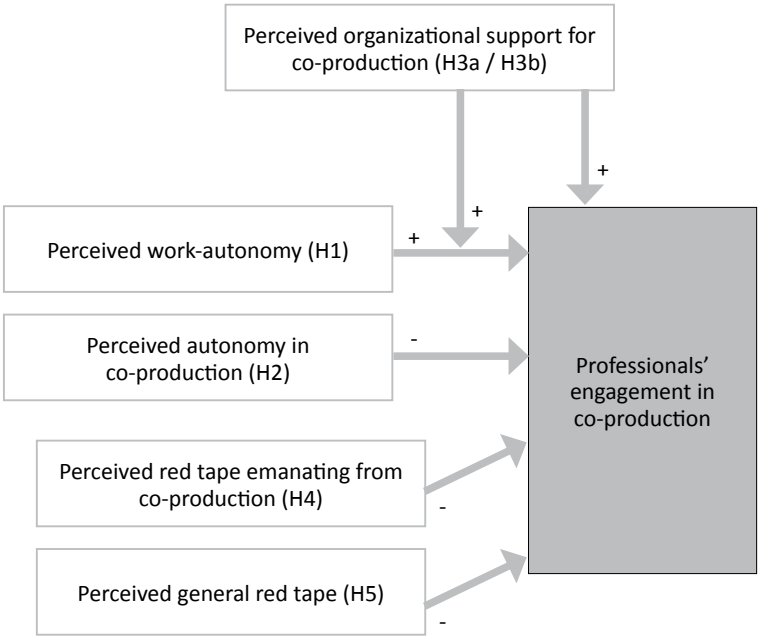
co-production.

Yet, since red tape can also originate from other sources and activities, and in the literature this red tape is found to also negatively impact on professionals' attitudes and performance, we also formulated a fifth and final hypothesis, namely:

> ***H5:*** Professionals perceived levels of general red tape negatively affects their engagement in co-production.

To wrap up, Figure 5.1 presents a stylized model with the hypotheses presented above.

Figure 5.1 Theoretical model explaining professionals' engagement in co-production



5.4 CLIENT COUNCILS IN ORGANIZATIONS FOR ELDERLY CARE

The empirical context of this study is formed by the collaboration between location managers in organizations for elderly care with the client councils in their organization. The Netherlands has a long tradition of patient' involvement. Within the last decades, patients have become actively involved as 'partners' of the professionals (Van den Bovenkamp 2010: 81). An important development in this respect is the institution of 'client councils' in 1996. By Dutch law, all health care organizations are obliged to install a client council (Overheid.nl 2012a). For the present study, this non-voluntary element is important from a methodological point of view, since it prevents biases that would occur if councils were exclusively formed on a voluntary basis.

Members of client councils are very diverse in their background, varying from direct patients (residents) to family members and even neighbors of the organization (Van Eijk and Steen 2014). The councils, thus, are a form of *co-planning by service users*: the council as a co-producer does not directly produce health care, but supports the organization's service delivery process indirectly (cf. Brandsen and Honingh 2016).

Client councils aim to enhance the quality of care provided. Dutch law has established a right of information for the councils. The councils provide input for management through a formal right (and initiative) of advice, at the strategic level as well as regarding the provision of care at the work floor. On some issues, the client council has a right of consent with management decisions. All these formal rights give client councils a uniform, horizontal position in co-production. Despite its legal position, the *de facto* impact of a client council in co-production with management is very much dependent on the perception of the location manager on co-production. This informs the motivation for the present study.

5.5 METHODS

To tap perceptions of location managers regarding co-planning with client councils a survey was sent to all location managers of organizations for elderly care. All types of health care organizations for the elderly were included in the sample, which mainly

vary in the intensity of care. Most nursing homes and centers for elderly care in the Netherlands are members of their sector confederation ActiZ, which is a sector-level partner for politicians and insurance companies (ActiZ 2014). Approximately 70 percent[9] of all organizations for elderly care are member of ActiZ. All contact details of the relevant organizations for elderly care were made available to the researchers, which was subsequently validated and complemented with information from an authoritative list of organizations for elderly care published by the Dutch Health Care Inspectorate (*Inspectie voor de Gezondheidszorg*). For the population we identified all 'locations' of larger-scale nursing homes and centers for elderly care as individual units of analysis. This resulted in 1,970 potential respondents (i.e., location managers) nested in 372 coordinating nursing homes and centers for elderly care.

In 2014, the potential respondents were invited by email to participate in an online survey. Two reminders were sent. After ten weeks, the response rate was 22 per cent (*N* = 430). This response rate is still substantial given the work pressure on location managers, the sweeping reforms they are confronted with, and the prevalence of survey research in the sector. Also note that locations had been merged or that location managers collaborated with multiple client councils.[10] A non-response analysis (see Table 5.1) shows no significant differences between sample and population for some critical characteristics.

The chosen design has the potential for common source bias: a bias that stems from using perceptual measures from the same survey as independent and dependent variables. Unfortunately, there are few ways to unobtrusively, or independently, study professionals' engagement in co-production (in contrast to, for example, performance). It is very difficult to control for common source bias in such a design (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee and Podsakoff 2003). Within a chosen design, only instrumental variables can solve the problem, but these are hard to obtain (Podsakoff, MacKenzie and Podsakoff 2012). Therefore, we cannot rule out

9 Based on the total number of organizations for elderly care mentioned on the websites of the Inspectie voor de Gezondheidszorg (IGZ, Health Care Inspectorate) and ZorgkaartNederland (both consulted January 2014).

10 A response rate of 22 percent is comparable to some other studies among staff of nursing homes for elderly: Goergen (2001) reports 20 percent. Evers, Tomic and Brouwers (2001) report a response rate up to 47 percent but used a quite different research strategy: they held face-to-face interviews with respondents from a very limited number of organizations.

that some of the responses are driven by the chosen survey method.

Table 5.1 Comparison of some major characteristics for the population and sample: one-sample t-tests to check for non-response bias

Characteristic		**Population (*N*=1970)**		**Sample (*N*=430)**	
		Frequency (%)	Mean	Frequency (%)	Mean
Inclusion in coordinating organization (number of locations)					
	1 location	6.7%	.07	6.7%	.07
	2-5 locations	18.7%	.19	18.4%	.18
	6-10 locations	28.0%	.28	30.2%	.30
	≥ 11 locations	46.6%	.47	44.7%	.45
	Total	100%		100%	
Place of business					
	Randstad [a]	38.5%	.39	37.7%	.38
	Not located in Randstad	61.5%	.61	62.3%	.62
	Total	100.0%		100.0%	

*=Significant at .10 level; **=Significant at .01 level
[a] The Randstad is the main urban area in the Netherlands

5.5.1 Measurement of variables

To measure the relevant variables, translated and contextualized versions of validated scales were used where possible. To make sure the compound measurement scale worked out in practice, we held pilot-interviews.[11] Below the variables are discussed step-by-step.

The dependent variable is the location manager's *self-reported engagement with co-production*. Above we defined engagement as a construct that comprises three dimensions. The first dimension is perceived importance of co-production

11 Since we intend to study other cases as well, the pilot-interviews were held in the cases health care, neighborhood watch, councils established as part of the Social Support Act (Wmo), and advisory councils at primary schools.

in terms of the added value for the organization. We developed two items to tap importance (see Table 5.2). We used non-parametric item response scaling for polytomous items (Mokken scale analysis) to assess the scale strength. This measurement model is especially suitable for cumulative scales that aim to tap latent traits of respondents. For a full discussion see Torenvlied, Akkerman, Meier and O'Toole (2013). Both items form a strong scale, as indicated by Loevinger's $H = 0.49$. The second dimension, perceived impact, is tapped by three items (see Table 5.2). Perceived impact pertains to the perceived usefulness and functionality of collaboration with the client council. The three items form a strong scale *(*$H = 0.52$). The third dimension is personal involvement, referring to the self-reported commitment to the client council in relation to the location manager's intrinsic motivation for collaboration. Three items (see Table 5.2) form a scale of moderate strength ($H = 0.40$). To assess divergent validity of the three scales we analyzed correlations between the scales. These correlations are moderate: 0.32, 0.38, and 0.40. This indicates that, in addition to a general tendency for engagement, location managers score differently on aspects of importance, perceived impact, and personal involvement.

Table 5.2 Composition of the three scales of engagement with co-production (*N* = 342)

Subscale	Item	Consistency
Importance		*H* = 0.49
Organizational	"Involvement of users of our services is important within my organization."	
Democratic	"Cooperation with clients is important from a democratic viewpoint."	
Perceived impact		*H* = 0.52
Councils are influential	"Most times, the organization would have made the same decision." (reversed)	
Councils have effect	"Cooperation with client councils increases the quality of service delivery."	
Councils are efficient	"Cooperation with client councils demands more effort than worthwhile." (reversed)	
Councils are genuine	"I view the cooperation with client councils mainly as a legal requirement." (reversed)	
Personal involvement		*H* = 0.40
Stimulate participation	"I involve members of the client council, even when it is not expected of me.	
Satisfactory collaboration	"Professionally, I am satisfied with the collaboration with council members."	

Autonomy. The first independent variable, work-autonomy, was measured using three standard items, taken from Breaugh (1989). We asked respondents for their agreement with the following three statements, on a 7-point scale (varying from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"): "I am allowed to decide how to go about getting my job done"; "I have some control over the sequencing of my work activities – when I do what"; "I have some control over what I am supposed to accomplish – what my supervisor sees as my job objectives." The autonomy scale has a strong reliability (alpha = 0.83).

Autonomy when working with client council. We specifically measured respondents' perceived autonomy in working with the client council using the

following statement: "Due to collaboration with the client council, I experience … possibilities to determine the content and activities of my work." Responses were measured on a 7-point scale, varying from "much less" to "much more". Correlation between the measure for job autonomy and the item co-production autonomy is 0.08, which indicates that general work-autonomy and autonomy in co-production are quite distinct.

Organizational support. To tap the second independent variable, organizational support, we departed from a measure developed by Huang and Feeney (2016) and asked the location manager "To what extent does your organization support your collaboration with the client council?" Answer categories vary on a 7-point Likert scale for three forms of support, distinguishing between: (a) the formulation / adaptation of organizational structures, procedures, and directives, (b) provision of time and resources, (c) stimulating an organizational culture of openness towards co-production. An item-response analysis shows that the three items form a strong scale (Loevinger's H = 0.70).

General red tape. The third independent variable was measured based on Rainey, Pandey and Bozeman's (1995) general red tape measure: "If red tape is defined as 'burdensome administrative rules and procedures that have negative effects on the organization's effectiveness', how would you assess the level of red tape in your organization?" Respondents graded between 0 and 10, where '0' indicates 'no red tape at all' and '10' indicates 'a very large amount of red tape'.

Co-production red tape. We also asked about red tape specifically associated with co-production. We asked location managers "To what extent does collaboration with the client council produce administrative burden for your work?" and used the same 10-point scale. Correlation between "general red tape" and "co-production red tape" is relatively low, 0.26 – indicating that both constructs indeed tap different aspects of red tape in the work environment of the location managers. Tables 5.3a and 5.3b provide an overview of the descriptive statistics for the dependent and independent variables in the study and their correlations respectively.

Table 5.3a Summary statistics for the variables in the analysis (*N* = 280)

	mean	s.d.	min.	max.
Engagement				
1a. Importance	12.50	1.19	8	14
1b. Perceived impact	17.76	3.91	2	25
1c. Personal involvement	11.61	1.56	4	14
Independent variables				
2. Autonomy	18.15	1.77	9	21
3. Autonomy in co-production	4.47	0.98	1	7
4. Organizational support	17.54	2.10	7	21
5. Red tape in co-production	4.44	2.07	0	9
6. Red tape general	7.25	1.60	1	10

Table 5.3b Correlation coefficients

Variable	1a	1b	1c	2	3	4	5	6
1a. Importance	1.00							
1b. Perceived impact	0.38	1.00						
1c. Personal involvement	0.34	0.37	1.00					
2. Autonomy	0.06	0.08	0.13	1.00				
3. Autonomy co-production	0.30	0.43	0.35	0.11	1.00			
4. Organizational support	0.34	0.22	0.27	0.08	0.15	1.00		
5. Red tape co-production	-0.24	-0.39	-0.30	-0.16	-0.21	-0.17	1.00	
6. Red tape general	-0.01	-0.10	-0.03	-0.15	0.00	-0.07	0.28	1.00

Control variables. A number of control variables are included in the study to control for potentially confounding variables. Gender was measured in a dummy variable "female." Education was measured as the highest level of education the respondent had obtained, with three categories: (1) lower, secondary, and vocational education; (2) higher professional education; (5) university. Experience of the location manager is measured as the number of years the respondent is

working in the current function. Five types of elderly organizations are distinguished in the data: nursing homes (25 percent), elderly homes (15 percent), health care center for elderly (54 percent), integrated facility (3 percent), other (3 percent). We also control for interaction frequency with the client council, measured by asking the location manager "how frequently do you meet with members of the client council?" (cf. O'Toole and Meier 2011; Torenvlied, Akkerman, Meier and O'Toole 2013). Responses were recoded in three categories: (a) daily and weekly, (b) monthly, (c) yearly, never, or non-applicable.

5.6 RESULTS

To test the hypotheses we performed a series of ordinary least squares regression models with robust standards errors. The cases (*N* = location managers in the analysis) are clustered in 138 health care organizations to control for statistical dependency. Three analyses were performed, each for a specific dimension of location managers' engagement in co-production: perceived importance, perceived impact, and self-reported involvement.

Table 3 presents the results for the first dimension of location managers' engagement in co-production: a regression of perceived importance of client councils on the independent variables. Two models are presented. Model I presents results for the main independent variables, testing the hypotheses. Model II adds control variables in order to test robustness of effects when introducing potentially confounding variables into the model. Table 5.4 shows that only autonomy associated with the co-production process negatively affects perceived importance of the client councils; work-autonomy has no significant effect. Hence we reject hypothesis 1 while hypothesis 2 finds support in the empirical data. Hypotheses 3a and 3b are both supported by the data: perceived organizational support positively and significantly affects perceived importance and significantly increases the (positive) effect of autonomy on perceived importance of the client councils. Finally, red tape associated by location managers with co-production negatively affects perceived importance of the client councils (supporting hypothesis 4) while perceived general red tape seems unrelated with perceived importance of the

client councils (rejecting hypothesis 5). The effects are robust when controlling for individual characteristics of the location manager and characteristics of the client council and parent organization.

Table 5.4 Perceived Importance of Client Councils: results of OLS Regression (*N* = 276)

	Model I			Model II		
	B	(s.e.)	t	B	(s.e.)	t
Explanatory variables						
Autonomy	0.02	(0.04)	0.39	0.03	(0.04)	0.60
Autonomy in co-production	0.28	(0.07)	4.19***	0.27	(0.07)	3.92***
Organizational support	0.14	(0.03)	5.10***	0.15	(0.03)	5.15***
Support x Autonomy	0.05	(0.01)	3.57**	0.04	(0.01)	3.01**
Red tape in co-production	-0.10	(0.03)	-3.10**	-0.09	(0.03)	-2.72**
Red tape general	0.05	(0.04)	1.22	0.05	(0.04)	1.23
Control variables						
Contact [A]						
Monthly				-0.29	(0.17)	-1.76
Sparsely				-0.20	(0.20)	-1.01
Experience				0.01	(0.01)	0.32
Female				0.07	(0.13)	0.56
Education						
High vocational [B]				-0.05	(0.23)	-0.23
University				-0.07	(0.27)	-0.27
Organization type [C]						
Health care center				-0.27	(0.15)	-1.87
Hybrid organization				-0.84	(0.37)	-2.28*
Other organization				0.14	(0.20)	0.70
Constant	8.56	(0.88)	9.68***	8.54	(1.07)	7.98***
R^2	0.24			0.28		

[A] Daily and weekly contact is reference category; [B] Vocational education is reference category;
[C] Nursing home / elderly home are reference categories.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.
Robust standard errors clustered in 138 organizations.

Table 5.5 presents the results for the second dimension of location managers' engagement in co-production: a regression of perceived impact of the client councils on the independent variables. Table 5.5 paints a slightly different picture than the previous analysis: perceived autonomy in co-production and co-production associated red tape significantly affect the perceived impact of client councils. However, the direct effect of organization support and its interaction effect with autonomy are non-significant. Hence, only hypotheses 2 and 4 find support in the empirical data on perceived impact of the client councils. All other hypotheses are rejected for the perceived impact of co-production. These results are robust when controlling for individual characteristics of the location manager and characteristics of the client council and parent organization.

Table 5.5 Perceived Impact of Client Councils: results of OLS Regression (*N* = 276)

	Model I			Model II		
	B	(s.e.)	t	B	(s.e.)	t
Explanatory variables						
Autonomy	-0.01	(0.12)	-0.06	-0.02	(0.12)	-0.21
Autonomy in co-production	1.43	(0.20)	7.04***	1.36	(0.21)	6.45***
Organizational support	0.18	(0.11)	1.62	0.16	(0.11)	1.41
Support x Autonomy	0.07	(0.05)	1.49	0.06	(0.05)	1.13
Red tape in co-production	-0.55	(0.11)	-5.18***	-0.55	(0.10)	-5.29***
Red tape general	-0.05	(0.12)	-0.43	-0.08	(0.12)	-0.65
Control variables						
Contact [A]						
Monthly				-0.94	(0.51)	-1.85
Sparsely				-1.34	(0.71)	-1.90
Experience				-0.04	(0.03)	-1.44
Female				-0.48	(0.43)	-1.11
Education						
High vocational [B]				0.55	(0.88)	0.62
University				0.90	(1.07)	0.84
Organization type [C]						
Health care center				-0.74	(0.37)	-1.98
Hybrid organization				0.26	(0.86)	0.30
Other organization				1.51	(1.09)	1.38
Constant	11.19	(3.15)	3.55***	13.94	(4.33)	4.33***
R^2	0.30			0.34		

[A] Daily and weekly contact is reference category; [B] Vocational education is reference category; [C] Nursing home / elderly home are reference categories.
* $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$.
Robust standard errors clustered in 138 organizations.

Table 5.6 Self-reported Personal Involvement in Client Councils: results of OLS Regression (*N* = 276)

	Model I			Model II		
	B	(s.e.)	t	B	(s.e.)	t
Explanatory variables						
Autonomy	0.04	(0.04)	1.12	0.05	(0.04)	0.18
Autonomy in co-production	0.43	(0.07)	6.24***	0.43	(0.08)	5.71***
Organizational support	0.15	(0.04)	3.60***	0.12	(0.04)	2.96**
Support x Autonomy	-0.01	(0.02)	-0.37	-0.02	(0.02)	-0.95
Red tape in co-production	-0.16	(0.04)	-3.68***	-0.15	(0.04)	-3.39**
Red tape general	0.05	(0.05)	0.97	0.02	(0.05)	0.43
Control variables						
Contact [A]						
Monthly				-0.37	(0.19)	-1.90
Sparsely				-1.21	(0.30)	-4.06***
Experience				0.03	(0.01)	2.53*
Female				0.19	(0.18)	1.09
Education						
High vocational [B]				-0.01	(0.30)	-0.03
University				0.40	(0.32)	1.27
Organization type [C]						
Health care center				0.05	(0.17)	0.30
Hybrid organization				-0.15	(0.52)	-0.29
Other organization				-0.01	(0.44)	-0.02
Constant	6.68	(1.16)	5.75***	6.85	(1.27)	5.40***
R^2	0.21			0.29		

[A] Daily and weekly contact is reference category; [B] Vocational education is reference category; [C] Nursing home / elderly home are reference categories.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.
Robust standard errors clustered in 138 organizations.

Table 5.6 presents the results for the third dimension of location managers' engagement in co-production: a regression of personal involvement in co-production on the independent variables. Table 5.6 replicates the results of the first analysis, except the interaction effect between organizational support and autonomy. Hence, hypotheses 2, 3a, and 4 find support in the empirical data on personal involvement in co-production, while hypotheses 1 and 3b are rejected.

In summary, the hypotheses about the effects of general work-autonomy (hypothesis 1) and general red tape (hypothesis 5) on location managers' self-reported engagement in co-production are rejected for all three dimensions of engagement. By contrast, autonomy in specific co-production activities positively (hypothesis 2) and red tape associated with co-production negatively (hypothesis 4) affect all three dimensions of self-reported engagement significantly – as expected. Organizational support for co-production (hypothesis 3a) positively affects location managers' perceived importance of co-production with client councils and their personal involvement with these councils. Organizational support significantly reinforces the positive effect of work-autonomy on perceived importance of the client councils (hypothesis 3b).

5.7 CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The present study builds upon the recent co-production literature on the functioning of collaboration between (representatives of) public organizations and co-producers in public service provision. The core assumption in the present study is that co-production entails a collaborative relationship between public professionals and citizen-users. In the extant literature insights in public professionals' attitudes remain limited. We studied the engagement of location managers of Dutch organizations for elderly care in their interaction with client councils.

We explained variation in the self-reported engagement of the Dutch location managers from variation in their perceived work-autonomy, perceived autonomy related to co-production, perceived organizational support, level of red tape associated with co-production, and reported level of general red tape. We included 278 location managers in the study, nested in 138 health organizations for

the elderly. The results of our analyses are a first step towards a better understanding of professionals' stance towards co-production.

A first important finding relates to the concept of engagement in co-production. Our study indicates that professionals' engagement in co-production is not something superficial, induced by a mandatory institution such as the client council. Engagement is no unidimensional concept, but rather builds upon different aspects, including professionals' perceptions of the importance and impact of co-production, and their personal involvement in co-production. Whereas the current literature emphasizes co-producers' 'credible commitment' (Ostrom 1996; Loeffler and Hine-Hughes 2013) our study shows that also the engagement of professionals cannot be taken for granted.

Our study, moreover, shows that engagement varies among professionals – even in a context where professionals' involvement is mandatory. Thus, we prevented a selection bias of including professionals' who are already in favor of co-production. Public organizations that want to implement co-production should take into account that for successful co-production engagement can be a prerequisite, as other studies show (Bakker and Demerouti 2008).

Public organizations are able to affect some of the work environment characteristics that are found to affect professionals' engagement. The results of our study indicate that it is not so much the general work environment (work-autonomy and general red tape) but rather their specifications emerging from co-production itself that affect dimensions of engagement (that is: autonomy in co-production and red-tape associated with co-production). Work-autonomy only positively significantly affects engagement (in particular the importance of co-production) when organizational support is perceived to be high.

Differences between the three dimensions are found regarding perceived organizational support. Organizations, through their structures, procedure and culture, can support professionals in recognizing the dimension of importance and personal involvement in co-production. Organizational support did not significantly affect the second dimension of engagement: the perceived impact of co-production. So, organizations can convince their employees of the importance and relevance of co-production, as well as encourage them to feel personally committed with

the collaboration. Yet, organizations can less influence employees' perceptions on the usefulness and functionality of co-production. We did not explore the role of training to stimulate the emergence of norms supporting co-production. That would be an avenue for further study.

Two important limitations to this study lie in the nature of the data gathered. First, the cross-sectional data makes it possible to observe associations among variables, but not to test causality in the direction of relations. We cannot rule out that causal directions are reversed, for example that a lack of co-production engagement would induce perceptions of red-tape in professionals. However, theoretical claims make it more plausible that the direction of causality is what we tested, rather than reverse. Future research design should include specifically tailored instrumental variables to rule out endogeneity problems. A second disadvantage is linked to the use of surveys as obtrusive instruments for data collection. The present study relies on self-reported data by respondents. The use of self-reported data in this study is valuable, because it focuses on attitudinal and descriptive data on importance, impact, and personal involvement in co-production. Other studies also emphasize the added value of using self-reported cross-sectional data in similar designs, for example testing the relation between Public Service Motivation and perceived social impact of employees' work (Stritch and Christensen 2014), or officer perceptions of community policing (Glaser and Denhardt 2010). The design, however, bears the risk of common method bias. Even though correlations between the dimensions are not high, and correlations between independent variables are generally low, we must be careful in the interpretation and generalization of results of the present study. Future studies may develop instrumental variables, or even an "objective" and independent measurement of engagement. This is an important challenge for future co-production research.

Although the research findings should be put in perspective, given the design limitations, results do contribute to the current co-production literature. Scholars have only recently started to unravel the impact of co-production on professionals' work from a theoretical point of view (cf. Brandsen and Honingh 2013; Alford and O'Flynn 2012). The present study provides new empirical evidence on the correlates of professionals' attitudes towards co-production with characteristics of their work

environment. The dimensions of engagement in co-production can be further developed and refined to further understanding of professionals' attitudes towards co-production. The first results are promising, but should be cautiously interpreted, and we very much encourage further research on engagement in co-production in other contexts.

CHAPTER 6

Helping Dutch neighborhood watch schemes to survive the rainy season: studying mutual perceptions on citizens' and professionals' engagement in the co-production of community safety

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Chapter 6 – Helping Dutch neighborhood watch schemes to survive the rainy season: studying mutual perceptions on citizens' and professionals' engagement in the co-production of community safety

ABSTRACT

Despite the growing research interest in co-production, some important gaps in our knowledge remain. Current literature is mainly concerned with either the citizens or professionals being involved in co-production, leaving unanswered the question how co-producers and professionals perceive each other's engagement, and how this is reflected in their collaboration. This study aims to answer that question, conducting an exploratory case study on neighborhood watch schemes in a Dutch municipality. Empirical data is collected through group/individual interviews, participant observations, and document analysis. The results show that the perceptions citizens and professionals hold on their co-production partner's engagement indeed impact on the collaboration. Moreover, for actual collaboration to occur, citizens and professionals not only need to *be* engaged but also to *make* this engagement *visible* to their co-production partner. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the practical implications of these findings.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Co-production is booming, both in practice (compare for instance debates on 'Big Society' and 'The Right to Challenge') and scholarly debate. During the past years, the number of studies on the topic of co-production has increased substantially (Osborne, Radnor and Strokosch 2016). This broadened our insights on issues like who the co-producing partners are, the objectives of co-production, the specific elements of public services or outcomes that are co-produced, the (potential) results/effects of co-production, and how the co-production process is organized (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers 2015; Loeffler and Bovaird 2016). Gradually, scholars also start to address the question why citizens and public professionals are willing and able to co-produce; or, differently phrased, why they engage in co-production of public services (e.g., Van Eijk and Steen 2016; Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado 2015; Van Eijk, Steen and Torenvlied 2017; Tuurnas 2015).

Earlier studies show that not all citizens and professionals are engaged in co-production equally or for similar reasons (Van Eijk and Steen 2014; Tuurnas 2015). Professionals, for example, differ in the extent to which they are convinced of the importance and impact of co-production, and the extent to which they feel personally involved (Van Eijk, Steen and Torenvlied 2017). Differences in levels of engagement in co-production matter, as the literature assumes that the willingness and ability to co-produce has an impact on citizens' and professionals' contribution to the co-production process (Alford 2009), and these contributions, in turn, influence the (beneficial) effects and outcomes of co-production (Ostrom 1996; Loeffler and Hine-Hughes 2013). When co-producers and professionals do not feel engaged with each other and the co-production process, this can hinder the establishment of a co-productive relationship (Williams, LePere-Schloop, Silk and Hebdon 2016).

However, most studies focus on either the citizens or public professionals being involved in co-production. This is surprising, since co-production inherently is about *collaboration*[12] between public professionals and citizens (cf. Brandsen and

12 The term 'collaboration' in this study should not be confused with collaboration as used in inter-organizational collaboration in public services. Inter-organizational collaboration and co-production are sometimes intermingled; yet these are distinct concepts. In inter-organizational collaboration individuals work together across organizational boundaries and on behalf of their organizations, while in co-production the lay actors are individual citizens or groups of individual citizens who do not represent any organization (Sancino and Jacklin-Jarvis 2016). With the term collaboration I refer to the cooperation between citizens and professionals: the process in which these actors interact and work together to deliver (or 'co-produce') public services.

Honingh 2016). Or, in the words by Nabatchi, Sancino and Sicilia (2017: 4): "state actors and lay actors work together to produce benefits." Yet, the current focus in extant literature on either citizens or professionals leaves unanswered the question of how co-producers and professionals perceive each other's engagement, and how this is reflected in their collaboration. To increase our insights regarding this gap of knowledge, this chapter aims to answer the following research question: *How do citizens' and professionals' perceptions of their co-production partners' level of and purposes for engagement influence the collaboration?* Answering this question will provide useful tools for citizens and professionals involved in co-production, enabling them to better deal with some of the challenges they face. Insights into the role of engagement in co-production collaboration can, for instance, explain why citizens and professionals sometimes feel disappointed in co-production and how this can be prevented.

The research question will be answered through an in-depth case study of Dutch neighborhood watch schemes that operate in one municipality. Neighborhood watch schemes are among the classical examples of co-production (Pestoff 2012; Bovaird 2007; Brudney and England 1983). Studying Dutch neighborhood watch schemes provides the opportunity to investigate different neighborhood watch schemes operating within the same institutional environment of one municipality, and thus including the same levels of support and facilitation provided by this municipality. At the same time the lack of (strict) regulations allows diversity in the specific set-up of the different neighborhood watch schemes within this municipality, and the citizens and professionals involved might be differently engaged.

In the following, I more thoroughly discuss the case and research methods used, and present the empirical data collected through group/individual interviews, participant observations, articles published in local/regional newspapers, and policy documents. Before delving into the empirical part, I start with a brief review of literature on the co-production of community safety, and co-producers' and professionals' engagement.

6.2 CO-PRODUCING COMMUNITY SAFETY

After a first wave of attention in the 1970s/1980s, during the 2000s/2010s particularly, the idea got foothold that public services must be delivered through (individualized) partnerships between citizens and the government, as an alternative to pure governmental or market delivery (Alford 2009). Through co-production, citizens are enabled to directly and actively contribute to public service delivery processes (Brandsen and Honingh 2016). These contributions are often based on voluntary efforts (Brandsen, Pestoff and Verschuere 2012), and can be utilized in different phases of the delivery process, including the planning or designing phase and the actual implementation (Bovaird and Löffler 2012a). Citizens' activities can be either directed at core services of the organization (e.g., tenants of housing cooperatives designing/maintaining their homes) or be complementary to service delivery processes (e.g., parents organizing school excursions) (Brandsen and Honingh 2016).

One example is co-production of community safety through neighborhood watch schemes. Neighborhood watch schemes rely on partnerships between the police, citizens and municipalities with the aim to produce a safe and livable neighborhood. The focus is mostly on prevention of and raising vigilance against crime, and tackling antisocial behavior (cf. CCV 2010). Neighborhood watch schemes can be perceived as co-production in the implementation of core services (Brandsen and Honingh 2016), based on voluntary participation by citizen-co-producers, combined with a large dependency on regular producers (i.e., the police and municipality) (Van Kleef and Van Eijk 2016). Neighborhood watch schemes, for example, lack the authority to make arrests, and need back-up by the police in case a situation turns out violent. Furthermore, neighborhood watch schemes reflect a collective form of co-production, where the efforts of a group of individual citizens are beneficial to the community. "Regardless of which citizens participate in the service delivery process, the benefits accrue to the city [or neighborhood] as a collectivity" (Brudney and England 1983: 64). This contrasts with individual forms of co-production, where the co-producers often are the direct service users who solely benefit from the co-production activities and it is only the spillover that may generate social benefits (Nabatchi, Sancino and Sicilia 2017).

Neighborhood watch schemes are a form of community policing: a collaborative form of policing aimed at problem solving by promoting active partnerships between the police, citizens and eventually public/private agencies like (social) housing offices and schools (Kappeler and Gaines 2015; Friedmann 1992; Cordner 2014). The first example of neighborhood watch schemes is found in the US in the late 1960s. Shortly thereafter the idea spread out over the UK, Canada and Australia (Bennett, Holloway and Farrington 2008). More recently, in several European countries a more prominent and explicit role of citizens in safety issues can be observed as well (Van der Land 2014b). In European countries like Italy and Hungary, local communities fear the citizen patrols because of their aggressive attitude; these patrols are often illegal as they do not operate in collaboration with local authorities (Van der Land 2014a). In other countries, like the Netherlands, the idea of neighborhood watch schemes is quite popular, also among police officers and municipal professionals. In 2016, in almost half of Dutch municipalities a total number of 700 neighborhood watch schemes were active, and this number grows rapidly (Lub 2016).

This growing popularity in the Netherlands can be explained by a long history advocating co-operation in the fight against so-called "petty crimes" (e.g., bicycle theft, shoplifting) (Van Steden, Van Caem and Boutellier 2011: 438). In the 1980s, the national government proposed that this kind of everyday crime was the result of an erosion of communality and solidarity, and that partnerships in the communities were needed to revitalize social bonds (Van Steden, Van Caem and Boutellier 2011; Van Noije 2012). This statement marks a radical shift towards larger responsibility for safety issues by citizens, making the Netherlands an interesting case to investigate.

Yet, although this might suggest neighborhood watch is subject to (national) policies/regulations, the opposite is true. With growing popularity, local governments are increasingly confronted with the question what is their role *vis-à-vis* neighborhood watch schemes, for example in terms of setting up specific arrangements or providing (financial) support (Van Noije 2012). The absence of strict policies/regulations causes a wide variety of ways in which neighborhood watch schemes cooperate with municipalities and the police, raising the question how this

collaboration can best be organized. "[T]he key to [sustained] successful community policing is the relationship between the patrol officer and the neighborhood they serve" (Bickel 2014). It is assumed that only mutual trust between police officers and citizens, and "a true spirit of cooperation" can ensure successful implementation of the philosophy behind community policing (Moon and Zager 2007: 493). However, do citizens and professionals of the police and municipality perceive such a spirit of cooperation or engagement with co-production on the side of their co-producing partners? And how is this reflected in their collaboration?

In the following section, I will summarize why, according to co-production literature, citizens and professionals engage in co-production, and how this might impact on their collaborative efforts.

6.3 BEING ENGAGED IN CO-PRODUCTION

For co-production to succeed, citizens' and professionals' engagement with the process and each other seems crucial, as for example hinted upon by Williams, LePere-Schloop, Silk and Hebdon (2016). Credible commitment, for example, stimulates both actors to contribute effort to the co-production process and also encourages actors to continue their input at the same or higher level when their co-production partner increases his/her input (Ostrom 1996).

Recently, co-production literature has started to address the question of why citizens engage in co-production as co-producer; also in the context of safety (e.g., Van Eijk, Steen and Verschuere 2017). Although it is still hard to explain who will and who will not take part in co-production activities (Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado 2015), studies do identify a number of factors impacting on co-producers' engagement. Foremost, citizens need to be triggered by the possibility of participating. This is labeled salience, and can either concern the importance of the service delivered to oneself or relatives, or to one's neighborhood or community at large (Pestoff 2012). Community-centered and self-centered motivations can help explain this personal and social salience (Van Eijk and Steen 2016). Yet, salience is necessary but not sufficient for citizens to engage in co-production. Citizens also need to be convinced their participation is easy ('ease'), they are able to co-produce

('internal efficacy'), their efforts are worth it as government can/will be responsive ('external efficacy'), and government will perform the required tasks and activities as promised ('trust'). Socio-economic variables and the social networks citizens are part of impact these considerations (Thijssen and Van Dooren 2016; Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado 2015; Van Eijk and Steen 2016; Etgar 2008). In other words, citizens' decision whether or not to engage in co-production is layered: first citizens consider the importance ('salience') of the co-production process, and second they judge the co-production task and their own competency to contribute to the public service delivery process (the related variables 'ease', 'internal/external efficacy', and 'trust') (Van Eijk and Steen 2016).

Gradually, recent studies have started to unravel professionals' engagement as well. In the literature we find examples of professionals who are open, willing to listen and actively share information, who show they are personally involved with the co-producers and their activities, and who are helpful. Their engagement stimulates citizens to feel trusted and valued by their co-producing partner (Fledderus 2015b; Van Eijk and Steen 2016); Etgar (2008) even states that co-producers are more likely to get involved in co-production when they expect to find "empathetic" – or 'engaged' – partners. Studies show that professionals' engagement in co-production is affected by perceptions they hold of their own work activities and the organization they are working for. As a result of the growing interdependency between citizens and professionals (Bovaird 2007; Bovaird, Löffler and Hine-Hughes 2011), co-production is assumed to impact on professionals' autonomy (Brandsen and Honingh 2013; Moynihan and Thomas 2013). When professionals perceive more autonomy in co-production, this increases the likelihood they are engaged in co-production (Van Eijk, Steen and Torenvlied 2017). Furthermore, studies show that organizational culture can be either stimulating or hindering for professionals to feel engaged (Van Eijk, Steen and Torenvlied 2017; Tuurnas 2015). Organizational culture manifests itself in institutions, social relations and habits, and originates largely in management or leadership (Normann 2007: 214-215). Spiegel (1987), for example, illustrates how the mayor's sympathy with the co-production dialogue is essential for it to succeed.

An explorative case-study on co-production of campus safety at an American

university shows the establishment of a co-productive relationship can be hindered when citizens and professionals do not feel engaged with each other (Williams, LePere-Schloop, Silk and Hebdon 2016). In line with a more general finding that citizens are often unaware of the role they should take in service delivery processes (Farmer and Stephen 2012: 89), the campus students did not perceive themselves as co-producers of campus safety. This reflected in their behavior ('being naïve') and in negative perceptions of police officers. Consequently, students and police officers felt disengaged with each other, and perceived an 'us versus them' mentality (Williams, LePere-Schloop, Silk and Hebdon 2016). With the exception of this research by Williams et al., however, current co-production literature does not provide a thorough understanding of how the engagement of citizens or professionals is reflected in their collaboration. This chapter aims to help solve this gap by an in-depth case-study on neighborhood watch schemes.

6.4 RESEARCH METHODS

To increase our insights into how co-producers and professionals perceive each other's engagement and how this is reflected in their collaboration, I conducted an *exploratory case study*. This research design is preferred when examining contemporary events, when relevant behaviors cannot be manipulated, and when the focus is rather on mechanisms and links that needed to be traced over time than on frequencies or incidence (Yin 2003). While the literature reviewed serves as a general basis to understand the main concepts and mechanisms, the empirical data will be leading the analysis, allowing new and relevant variables to pop-up. This section elaborates on the case selection, data collection and data analysis.

6.4.1 Case selection

For the research, one municipality – hereafter called Stadszicht – was selected.[13] Stadszicht is located in the western region of the Netherlands, nearby one of the country's four biggest cities, and has 60,000-80,000 residents. Its neighborhoods are quite diverse when it comes to characteristics like income, ethnicity, and type

13 The real name will not be provided in order to guarantee anonymity of respondents.

of houses (e.g., cheap, social rental homes versus expensive private properties) (CBS 2017). In the Dutch context, Stadszicht has a relatively long history with neighborhood watch schemes: the first teams started in 2009/2010. Recently, the number of teams increased further, partly because of deliberate efforts by the municipality and the police. As a result, in almost all of the twelve neighborhoods (*wijken*) one or more neighborhood watch schemes are active (fourteen in total). This makes comparisons among schemes possible. Stadszicht's strategy to promote neighborhood watch schemes also resulted in having a coordinator in the municipal organization; an office that is not so often installed (Van der Land 2014a). Partly due to the efforts by the municipality and the police, the neighborhood watch schemes reflect a mix of being (mainly) initiated by citizens or by the municipality and/or the police.

6.4.2 Data collection

In order to increase the study's internal validity, a variety of data sources was used, including individual/group interviews, participant observations, policy documents, articles from local and regional newspapers, twitter messages, and a YouTube video posted by one neighborhood watch scheme. The data were collected between summer 2016 – spring 2017. In this period, I systematically scanned the *twitter* accounts of the police unit of Stadszicht and the eleven local police officers in this unit to see if they posted messages on neighborhood watch schemes, and checked whether articles appeared in the *local and regional newspapers* on the topic at hand. The *policy documents* were derived from Stadszicht's website and through the civil servants being interviewed. Most information, however, was derived from *group and individual interviews*, and *participant observations*. Table 6.1 lists the 35 respondents questioned in the study, who can be divided among three groups: representing the municipality, the police, and neighborhood watch schemes. In total, 23 semi-structured individual interviews, three group interviews with two to six respondents, and two participant observations were conducted. Before explaining how respondents were selected, first the design of the interviews and observations is clarified.

Table 6.1 List of interviewees		
Interviewee	**Function/Role**	**Neighborhood watch scheme identification label**
Municipality		
1	Mayor 1 [A]	
2	Civil servant 1 [A / B]	
3	Civil servant 2 [B]	
4	Civil servant 3	
5	Team coordinator & BOA 1 [C]	G / H
6	BOA 2	H
7	BOA 3	B / K
8	BOA 4	A / M
9	BOA 5	E / I / N
10	BOA 6	C
11	Trainer	
Police		
12	Local police officer 1	C / L
13	Local police officer 2	B / F / K
14	Local police officer 3	A / J / M
15	Local police officer 4 (*participant observations*: team meeting with 18 members & patrol with 3 members [D])	L
16	Former local police officer 1	H
Neighborhood watch schemes		
17	Coordinator 1	L
18	Coordinator 2	H
19	Coordinator 3	B
20	(Former) coordinator 4 / current planner	B
21	Coordinator 5	C
22	Coordinator 6	A

23	Member BPT 1	H
24	Member BPT 2	H
25 – 27	Member BPT 3 – 5 (group interview 1)	B
28 – 29	Member BPT 6 – 7 (group interview 2) [E]	A
30 – 35	Member BPT 8 – 13 (group interview 3)	L

[A] Interview held at an earlier stage of the broader research project; no literal transcripts were made
[B] Civil servant 2 took over the job of civil servant 2, when she left the organization
[C] BOA is an abbreviation of *buitengewone opsporingsambtenaren* (special investigating officer)
[D] Informal talk held after the patrol was not recorded
[E] Originally, a third respondent was invited for this group interview

Design of interviews/observations

Individual interviews were semi-structured: a similar set of questions (specified to respondents' role/function) formed the basis of each interview, yet at the same time I was attentive to new potential topics and asked additional questions for clarification or elaboration where needed (cf. Boeije 2010). Participants of *group interviews* were invited to talk about their engagement in the neighborhood watch scheme in a relaxed and spontaneous atmosphere, and to bring in all issues relevant to them. Discussions among the participants were encouraged, as this can result in more viewpoints popping up. In that sense, the group interviews look similar to focus groups (Morgan 1998). The topics of individual and group interviews included, among others, respondent's own motivation/engagement in co-production; the collaboration between the municipality, the police and neighborhood watch scheme; and the collaboration within the neighborhood watch scheme. Individual and group interviews took from one to one-and-a-half hours each. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed.

Participant observations were mostly used as analytic tool. Participating in a team meeting of one of the neighborhood watch schemes and joining them on a patrol (see below), provided an opportunity to get a better grip on the activities and behavior of the people being studied. During observations, the collaboration between neighborhood watch schemes and local police officers was observed in a naturalistic setting. This enhanced the quality of the interpretation of the data

collected via other sources (most notably interviews) (cf. DeWalt and DeWalt 2011). Field notes were made using an observation scheme capturing the behavior/attitude and interaction among participants.

Respondents interviewed/observed

The respondents represent Stadszicht's municipality, police, and neighborhood watch schemes. In the *municipal organization*, I interviewed 1) the mayor, 2) all civil servants responsible for policies on public order & safety and for contacts with neighborhood watch schemes, 3) the trainer hired to teach the members of neighborhood watch schemes some basic skills, and 4) six special investigating officers (*buitengewone opsporingsambtenaren*, hereafter: BOA). BOAs are responsible for the enforcement of issues like parking, garbage, dog dirt, and closing hours of cafes/restaurants. Since September 2015 every neighborhood watch scheme is connected with one BOA. Since there are eight BOAs in office in Stadszicht, this means that some BOAs are assigned multiple neighborhood watch schemes. I invited all BOAs, yet two of them did not want to participate because they were in office for a very short time and/or had not been in touch with their neighborhood watch scheme to provide me with useful information.

In Stadszicht's *police unit*, eleven local police officers (*wijkagenten*) are in office. Local police officers are connected with one or more specific neighborhoods, serve as the central contract point for their residents, and are responsible for a wide variety of police tasks such as social problems and nuisance, small crimes and environmental issues. Performing these tasks, local police officers are in close contact with municipalities and several social organizations (Politie 2017). During the past years, the Dutch police have been confronted with several (national) cutbacks. Given the resulting understaffed situation in Stadszicht's police unit (both with regard to local police officers and first-line police officers who deal with emergency calls), I was not allowed to invite all eleven local police officers. I selected three local police officers, based on a number of criteria, including their connection with multiple neighborhood watch schemes (to allow comparisons) and some characteristics of the neighborhood watch schemes concerned (see below). A fourth local police officer was involved in two participant observations; after the

observations I had an informal talk with him. The local police chief also brought me in touch with a former local police officer – now being stationed in another police unit – who was involved in setting-up Stadszicht's first neighborhood watch scheme. Although I interviewed only a selection of police officers, I do not expect additional interviews would have resulted in additional insights: the interviews with these five police officers became repetitive in nature indicating the main perceptions of police officers about the co-production with neighborhood watch schemes were covered (in other words, I reached the 'saturation point' (Strauss and Corbin 1998).

The final group of interviewees represents the *neighborhood watch schemes*. In Stadszicht, fourteen neighborhood watch schemes are active. These are called *Buurtpreventieteams* (neighborhood prevention teams, hereafter: BPT) and in this chapter labelled *A – N*. Some BPTs are connected with an entire neighborhood; others operate in smaller parts of it (a sub-neighborhood or *buurt*). For practical reasons it was not possible to include all BPTs in this study. In order to get many different perspectives, a selection was made in such a way that it includes BPTs who started recently (*A*, *L*) or some years ago (*H*), who are active in problematic (*J*) or quiet neighborhoods (*C*), and who are exemplary in professionals' perception (*B*, *H*) or are operating with difficulties (*F*, *J*). I added to this selection two more BPTs (*K*, *M*) of which I interviewed both the BOA and local police officer.

The coordinators of these nine BPTs were invited for an individual, semi-structured interview. Two coordinators were not willing to participate, as they told me their BPT (*F*, *J*) (almost) discontinued. Two other BPTs (*K*, *M*) did not respond to my invitations. As BPT *K* and *M* were added later on to the selection, their non-response cannot create a bias to the research findings; the non-response of BPT *F* and *J* might, however, have done so as these BPTs could have provided more insights in why BPTs discontinue. This should be marked as one of the study's limitations.

After contacting the coordinator, I asked him/her to invite some 'regular' members – without any administrative responsibilities such as planning patrols and managing funds as treasurer – to participate in an individual or group interview. Although this selection strategy might potentially result in a bias (due to the role of the coordinator and potential self-selection of enthusiastic members), this was the only alternative available since the contact details of regular members are

not publicly available. After the invitation was sent out, one BPT (*C*) decided that only the coordinator was to participate in the research. In the other four BPTs (*A*, *B*, *H*, *L*) between two and six members responded. It should be noted that some BPTs are larger compared to others; some have only eight members (including coordinator, planner and treasurer) while others have over 30 regular members. When two members responded, I held two separate interviews; when three or more respondents participated, I organized a group interview for logistical reasons. As during coding of the conducted interviews with both coordinators and regular members no new information emerged, I decided it was not necessary to further expand the number of invited neighborhood watch schemes (cf. Guest, Bunce and Johnson 2006).

Table 6.2 Distribution of interviewees to neighborhood watch schemes (BPTs)

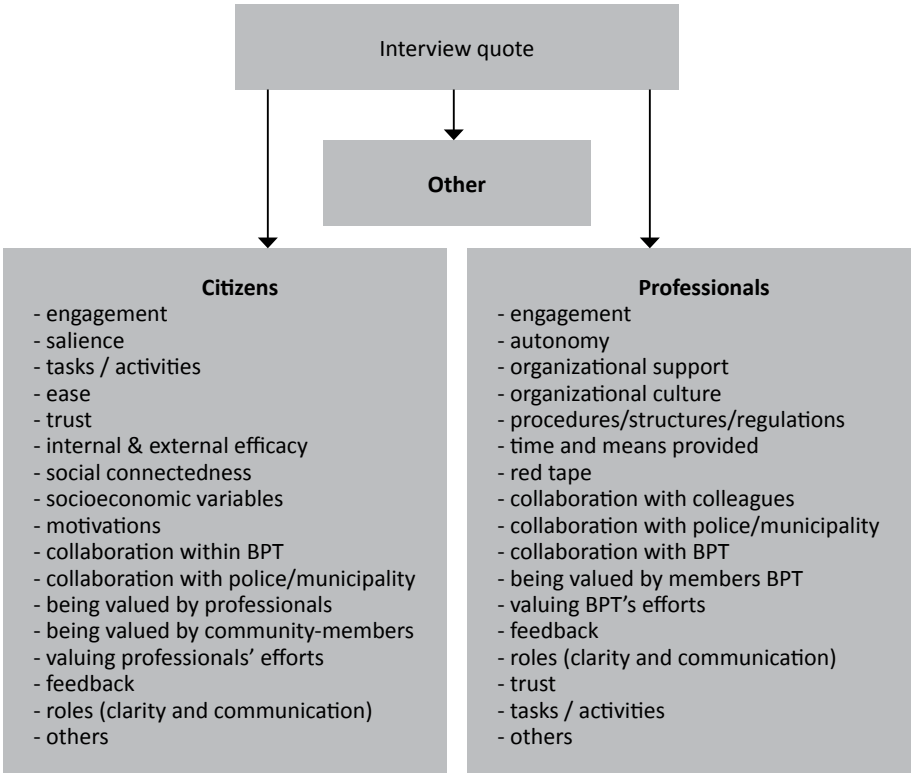
Neighborhood	BOA	Local police officer	BPT		Participant observation
			Coordinator	Regular members	
A	X	X	X	X	
B	X	X	X	X	
C	X	X	X		
D					
E	X				
F		X	*discontinued*		
G	X				
H	X	X	X	X	
I	X				
J		X	*(almost) discontinued*		
K	X	X	*no response*		
L		X	X	X	X
M	X	X	*no response*		
N	X				

Finally, BPT *L* invited me to join them in one of their (bi)monthly team meetings. At this meeting, the eighteen members and local police officer evaluated past patrols and settled the focus for the upcoming months. After this meeting, the local police officer invited me to join him when he accompanied three members of BPT *L* on their patrol. Table 6.2 summarizes the link between neighborhood watch schemes and interviewees.

6.4.3 Data analysis

Ensuring scientific rigor in qualitative research, the coding process of the collected data is pivotal (Boeije 2010). Therefore, considerable attention was paid to coding the interviews. The coding was conducted using the soft-ware program Atlas.ti. To ensure inter-rater reliability, a selection of six interviews was coded both by the author and a research assistant who also transcribed all interviews. When differences in interpretation existed, a shared interpretation was established. The coding of the empirical data started from the coding scheme presented in Figure 6.1, which was established based on the literature review.

Figure 6.1 Coding scheme used for the interviews and participant observations



6.5 PROFESSIONALS AND CITIZENS COLLABORATING IN STADSZICHT

This section presents the empirical data structured along two timelines: starting a neighborhood watch scheme and continuing it over time.[14]

6.5.1 Starting BPTs: importance of professional guidance

BPTs in Stadszicht are initiated by both citizens and the municipality, often after concrete incidents occurred like burglaries or troubles with youth hanging around (Stadszicht 2015). After the idea is suggested, the BPT needs to be founded. The interviews show this is a crucial moment: professional guidance is needed to increase

14 Interview quotes used to support the analysis – in Italics – are translated from Dutch.

members' safety and to clarify roles, and coordinators and regular members notice the need for an active attitude of the municipality especially to ensure the set-up runs smoothly.

First, although members of BPTs are generally not driven by a wish of catching thieves (they mostly focus on livability issues and some even fear potential risks), it is not unlikely they encounter dangerous situations unintentionally. During their patrols, members are highly visible (wearing special jackets, using flashlights, making notes), and "*citizens with bad intentions do generally not distinguish between BPTs and BOAs*" (trainer, Interviewee 11). Professional training on how to act in concrete situations is, therefore, crucial. Professional guidance is also needed to clarify what is BPTs' role. Although members are highly visible, their rights do not exceed these of 'ordinary' citizens. So, when members do something they are not allowed to, it is the professionals' task to call them to account for their actions. The professionals interviewed emphasized that situations like this are rare, but do happen sometimes. A local police officer (Interviewee 14) illustrated:

> *A couple of years ago we started BPT J. At that time, some members hold completely different viewpoints on what is a neighborhood watch scheme. To provide an example, young people that were perceived as suspicious were requested to show proof of their identity. But they [BPT members] are not allowed to do so at all! These issues are discussed with the BPT; the mayor also has been involved. In the end, a couple of members were urged to leave the BPT.*

To clarify roles, all coordinators in Stadszicht are requested to sign a covenant, and each BPT member must follow the first part of the training program and have a test-patrol with the local police officer before starting their activities.

Second, the municipality's active attitude is crucial for establishing a BPT. In addition to signing the covenant, being in training and attending test-patrols, some practical issues need to be arranged like distributing jackets/notebooks/

flashlights, hiring a space to store this stuff and organize meetings, opening an account with a bank to pay rent, and ensuring (potential) members are screened by the police. Although coordinators and regular members agreed most of these activities are useful, they emphasized it is also burdensome ("*Setting-up a team is most problematic*", Interviewee 19-20). Often they have to await the municipality's response. BPT *A* even mentioned it took about one year before they were able to start. Some initiatives to start a BPT did not survive this phase: members drop out before the BPT is officially installed. An active attitude of the municipality is required to keep the members motivated; as the former local police officer (Interviewee 16) said: "Y*ou should actively think along with them*." Though, it seems the civil servant was sympathetic towards and convinced of the importance of BPTs, due to the growth in BPTs she was no longer able to manage everything alone. For that reason, an additional employee was added to the municipal department. Several respondents from BPTs and the police mentioned the situation improved: the civil servant who is now daily in touch with the BPTs is enthusiastic and responds fast. In turn, this civil servant (Interviewee 4) mentioned being inspired by the enthusiasm of the BPTs:

> *Recently, we installed a couple of BPTs. One of these wants to professionalize itself. Three members (treasurer, coordinator and planner) established a committee. They want to improve all kind of things; 'can we do this or that as well?' It proves very infectious. Then I also think 'ok, let's see whether we can grab.'*

6.5.2 Continuing BPTs over time

Valuing each other's efforts

Once the BPT is officially installed, the members start their activities. According to the mayor (Interviewee 1), the beginning is the easiest because people are willing and enthusiastic, "*however, then comes the moment you have to survive the rainy season.*" The latter might be taken literally: especially the first rainy (or winter) season is difficult to survive. Some members drop out because of the weather

and they are not convinced their membership can contribute anything useful. Often, nothing special happens during patrols, they can pay attention to a smaller range of issues (e.g., overhanging trees and open windows are rarely observed), and the chance of meeting other residents is small. Contact with fellow residents can be more easily established during summer (when everyone is outside also in the evenings) and almost all respondents of BPTs mentioned that if you want to increase residents' safety perceptions, it is important they can see you. Moreover, the interviewees feel valued by residents for their activities in the BPT.

Interviews and participant observations show, however, that not only fellow residents' signs of appreciation are important to keep members continuing their efforts. Coordinators and regular members want to be taken seriously and valued by the professionals. Signs of appreciation are derived from explicitly mentioned statements (e.g., the police officer's "*well done*" during one of the participant observations) or from professionals' efforts and activities performed. In this respect, almost all members appreciated information meetings and drinks organized by the municipality, and positively evaluated the attention given by the mayor to BPTs (for instance in the local newspaper). The efforts currently provided by BOAs, however, were negatively evaluated by almost all members. Interviewees 25-27 stated:

> *We also have a dysfunctioning BOA. That doesn't pep up BOAs' image. Our BOA is also not visible. I would think the BOA is in our neighborhood on a daily basis; to observe and to respond to issues. But our BOA is only sitting behind his desk, I guess. I don't know. But we don't see him. It's really a waste of money.*

Some members considered it as a lost opportunity that they have not yet or only once met their BOA: they believed BOAs can provide additional feedback and teach the members important skills (for example when he joins the members on their patrols). Since local police officers are not always able to do so because of time constraints, they hoped the BOA could fill in this gap.

Respondents felt valued to different extents when it comes to the civil

servants and police. Some respondents noticed civil servants can do more, such as attending meetings or giving feedback on reports they write after patrols to share findings with the municipality/police. One of the coordinators (Interviewee 17) noted:

> *Then I asked, for example, whether we also had to send the reports to them [civil servants]. Then they literally responded like: 'Oh well, if you think it's nice to do so…' In other words, I'm not interested in it. But then I think: when I send the reports to you, you should also have a look at them and do something with it. Until now, nothing happened.*

Some interviewees were positive about the contact they have with the police unit. They appreciated to be regularly updated by email, and perceived the police as being open, having a collaborative attitude, and being engaged with BPTs. One of the coordinators (Interviewee 21) was, conversely, not satisfied with the efforts of the local police officer who is currently connected with his BPT: because he does not spontaneously call/email the BPT like the former police officer did, the members start questioning why they are patrolling. Other respondents referred to the understaffed situation in the police unit: due to this, local police officers are often not able to join members on their patrols, while these efforts are highly valued. Moreover, local police officers often switch to another neighborhood or even police unit; some BPTs have been linked with four or five different local police officers in a period of two years. This negatively impacts on the trust relation between police officer and BPT.

Almost all members mentioned that feedback on their reports is important, among others to see that their efforts are useful. However, a majority of interviewed professionals complained about the quality of the reports sent by some of the BPTs. A local police officer (Interviewee 13) compared two of his BPTs. While reports sent by BPT *F* often only include some keywords like 'youth, 10.00 p.m., conversation' and sometimes have to be read twice in order to understand what is listed, BPT *B*:

> *describes the entire situation in great details… 'We have been engaged in conversation with a group of young people (between 15 and 17 years old) in the park. There was some alcohol, and we discussed this with them. Furthermore, someone was smoking a joint.'*

'Badly written reports' are not only difficult to respond to; some professionals were even afraid members' efforts are useless when they do not provide proper reports. Reports are crucial to the output of BPTs as the information can be highly relevant to the police (even at later moments). With low quality reports, local police officers might get the impression they do not receive anything in return for their efforts. The team coordinator of the BOAs (Interviewee 5) stated:

> *When BPTs are asking a lot, but local police officers don't see anything in return, I can imagine police officers perceive they have to put in too much time, effort and energy in the collaboration. In the end, they will no longer try so hard.*

Professionals evaluating collaboration

BOAs did not understand why they are connected with BPTs. Except for the team coordinator, none of the interviewed BOAs was convinced the collaboration with BPTs can add something useful to their daily work. BOAs are – contrarily to local police officers – active in the entire municipality, and information provided by BPTs is not directly needed to perform their tasks. Moreover, announcements that are useful can more easily be sent to the central municipal system (similarly to announcement made by 'ordinary' citizens). BOAs perceived the connection between them and BPTs as a superior order. A BOA (Interviewee 7) mentioned:

> *We have had a meeting once, about what is a BPT and how it works. But they did not explicitly ask things like:*

> *'What do you think you can and want to do?' They did ask our opinion on BPTs. Well… I have to say: at the beginning I was reserved. I already had quite a few tasks. And then this was added with two BPTs. So, I thought I would not have enough time to fill in my role as they at the other side would expect me to do.*

Currently, most BOAs mentioned they are scarcely in touch with their BPT and they are fine with that.

Generally, local police officers are more often in touch with their BPT. The former police officer (Interviewee 16) observed a change in the mindset of the police unit: at the time the first BPT was established, the police organization "*had to get used to this new phenomenon*". Some local police officers and officers at the management level were afraid collaboration with BPTs would increase the (already high) workload, because they expected more things would be reported to the police, and police officers had to keep in touch with BPTs for instance to clarify roles. Their concern was strengthened by the rapid growth in the number of BPTs in the years afterwards. Nowadays, the workload is perceived less to what was expected: information provided by BPTs is also helpful to local police officers' daily activities, and police officers perceive high levels of autonomy, giving them the opportunity to change timetables and organize contact with BPTs in such a way that fits with their other activities. In the time period studied, the police unit expressed its support for BPTs, for example via the local newspaper (the weekly police message regularly includes something about BPTs) and Twitter (e.g., the local police chief retweeted a photo of a local police officer patrolling with his BPT: "*Nice, collaborating with residents to improve safety*").

However, individual local police officers expressed different attitudes towards the BPT. One local police officer (Interviewee 13) stated:

> *My colleague, for example, has a dislike for it. By contrast, I think it's very important they [BPT] know who I am. Or that I know who they are. He thinks it's nonsense and*

> *unpleasant to walk along with the BPT every two months. He thinks it's no police-related task, conversely to me. But that's just our types of personalities.*

The attitude of Interviewee 13 is shared by most interviewed local police officers, and seems to be in line with the police unit's strategy. Collaboration with BPTs is perceived as being of added value, yet at the same time BPTs are considered as a 'citizen initiative', implying they act independently of the police. Local police officers are supportive if needed, for instance when BPTs announce certain troubles. They also try to keep members motivated, for example by asking them to look at specific issues during their patrols or by involving them in specific campaigns in the neighborhood (e.g., increasing awareness among residents of burglaries during vacancies). A third, and final, attitude is reflected by the former local police officer (Interviewee 16): he advocated stronger ties between BPT and police officers, among others to provide them with the skills needed and to make sure "*they have a story to tell to their family and friends*". The BPT "*felt like family*" to him, and although he is now stationed in another police unit, he is still in touch with the members.

All the local police officers interviewed marked members' diverse drives and backgrounds (like level of education, age, competencies). Some members are strongly driven by a wish to solve concrete problems like burglaries or youth hanging around; others became members 'by accident' often after they were asked to participate ("*I sort of blindly joined in*", Interviewees 28-29). Members who decided to join more incidentally are often retired persons, who perceived their membership as a way to increase their own social contacts or to improve their own health (regular patrols ensures "*you keep moving*", Interviewee 24). Local police officers perceive the effects of these dissimilarities in engagement differently. Two local police officers (Interviewees 12 and 14) agreed that in the end all members share the same goal of making their community a better place to live in, but that individual members differ in how they approach situations (e.g., how to communicate with youth) or in their attitude (e.g., active versus awaiting (professional) pressure). Another local police officer (Interviewee 13) marked that

differences do not only occur *in* but also *across* BPTs, particularly with regard to how members perceive their own and the police's role. Some BPTs/members want to do as much as possible, while others want to keep their efforts as minimal as possible; some perceive the police as supportive partners, while others are highly dependent on the police and only want to invest efforts if the police are considered to be active enough. Local police officers should approach these BPTs and members differently, for instance by pushing them more or less or by making it visible that they are performing important tasks.

6.6 DISCUSSION

This study builds upon recent co-production literature that investigates drivers for citizens and professionals to engage in co-production of public services. In existing literature, insights on how differences in levels of and purposes for engagement impacts on the collaboration remain limited, with most current studies focusing on either citizens' or professionals' perspectives. This chapter presents an exploratory case study on the engagement and collaborative efforts of both citizens and professionals in the context of community safety. In a Dutch municipality, I studied how members of different neighborhood watch schemes, municipal professionals and police officers perceived their co-production partners' engagement, and how these perceptions impacted on the collaboration.

Based on the analysis, four observations can be made. First, this study shows that, in a case in which citizens' participation is voluntarily, citizens do not only have different *purposes* for engagement but also show different *levels* of engagement. Previous studies mainly focused on the purposes behind citizens' engagement (cf. Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado 2015; Thijssen and Van Dooren 2016; Van Eijk and Steen 2014), thereby not (explicitly) taking into account that citizens might not all be motivated to the same extent. The citizens being interviewed differ in what drives them to co-produce, but also in how they perceive their role and how much effort they are willing to invest.

Second, differences are observed between the start-up phase and the period afterwards in which collaboration between professionals and neighborhood

watch schemes is continued. To start with, citizens mention the difficulties of organizing a BPT especially in the start-up phase. They do not feel supported enough or even feel hindered by the municipality. Red tape might thus not only be a factor of relevance to professionals' engagement (cf. Van Eijk, Steen and Torenvlied 2017) but also to citizens. In the case studied, the start-up phase is crucial: when (municipal) professionals do not actively contribute and collaborate, there is a high risk citizen initiatives are stillborn. This illustrates that although citizens are highly willing to co-produce, this is not sufficient for successful co-production: also the capacity to co-produce is crucial.

Once the collaboration is established, the connection between professionals and BPT members loosens; because professionals emphasize that members have to act independently and/or members value a more autonomous position. However, even in BPTs that were highly professionalized, citizens continued to appreciate professional support since they were not familiar with the tasks they performed and were in need of regular skills training and feedback on what is their role. Confirmation from professionals that they are on the right track is highly appreciated. In other words, co-production is an undertaking for a long(er) period of time, which points at the need for public organizations to enable their professionals to support the co-production process (for example by providing time and means on a longer term).

Third, current literature provides empirical evidence that individual citizens differ with respect to their motivations to engage and their backgrounds (cf. Thijssen and Van Dooren; Van Eijk, Steen and Verschuere 2017). Based on this study we can add that also among *groups of* co-producers different viewpoints can be dominant. For example, BPT *C* is dominated by members being driven by the social element. The coordinator (Interviewee 21) noticed that membership is based on the slogan "*it is good (for the community), cozy (with your fellow members) and healthy (for yourself)*". During patrols, the members talk a lot (and loud enough "*so that burglars can hear them from great distance*"). Contrarily, the members of BPT *B* are strongly driven by solving and preventing burglaries. Social contacts are not the main issue here. When a specific purpose is dominant among the members, this is reflected in the general atmosphere in the BPT and also in members' role perceptions: BPT *B* perceived the police as a partner to reach their goals, while BPT

C prefers spontaneous communication with the local police officer in order to keep motivated. For professionals and public organizations engaged in co-production processes this entails that different citizen groups might prefer different approaches.

Finally, feelings of appreciation are very important; especially for citizens but also for professionals. When actors get the impression their efforts are not valued or no useful output is provided (e.g., useful reports) they might feel less inspired to actively contribute to co-production. Signs of appreciation can be very diverse, like articles in the local newspaper, organized drinks, feedback or spontaneous emails. Yet, the case also shows that appreciation is only shown by professionals who truly feel engaged with co-production. The BOAs are not convinced of the added value of co-production to their work and their levels of engagement are low. This hinders the collaboration: members do not feel valued by BOAs and, vice-versa do not value BOAs' efforts. When other professionals involved (like police officers) cannot compensate these feelings of disappointment and dissatisfaction, there is a high risk of citizens discontinuing their co-production activities. Furthermore, the BOAs' announced they did not have any say in the decision to collaborate with BPTs, nor that their role had been properly explained. The way in which public organizations take decisions to establish co-production might therefore influence professionals' engagement.

To conclude, citizens' and professionals' perceptions on their co-production partners' engagement impact on the efforts one is willing to invest. When professionals are not convinced of the added value of co-production, do not feel committed, have no open-minded attitude and are not motivated to contribute efforts themselves, citizens will not feel taken seriously and valued. When, vice-versa, professionals perceive citizens to have low levels of engagement, they also will reconsider their co-productive efforts. So, true engagement with each other in the co-production process is crucial for establishing and continuing a co-productive relationship; a conclusion that is in line with Williams, LePere-Schloop, Silk and Hebdon's (2016) study. When partners are no longer engaged and therefore willing to provide efforts, the co-productive relationship will not last long: mutual engagement is required in order to not only survive the rainy but all four seasons.

Figure 6.2 Possible values for the purposes for and levels of engagement

Purpose for engagement			
	'Dislike'	*'Professionalized'*	*'Socialized'*
Local police officers	No police-related task	Supportive but stressing independent position	Advocating strong ties
Citizens	--	Problem solving	Social contacts
Level of engagement			
Local police officers	Low	High / low	High
Citizens	--	High	High / low

As Figure 6.2 illustrates, such mutual engagement can be hindered when professionals and citizens have different 'scores' in terms of their purposes for and levels of engagement in co-production. The simplified figure shows that in a concrete co-production process a 'mismatch' might occur between the engagement of professionals and citizens. Consider for instance BPT *C*: while the members highly valued social contacts with their local police officers ('socialized'), they perceived the current local police officer as someone who emphasized an independent position ('professionalized'). So, two propositions for further research are 1) that when professionals and citizens have different purposes for engagement this negatively impacts on the co-production partners' levels of engagement, and 2) that similar purposes yet different levels of engagement also negatively impact on the co-production partners' level of engagement. In both cases the co-production collaboration is hindered.

This finding links with the idea of 'reciprocity' in co-production, that was advocated mainly in the 2000s.

> Co-production is a process: whatever process is necessary to establish a parity between those two worlds. That process may be one of collaboration or confrontation. It may be smooth and cooperative or it may take the form of a dialectic that yields parity (Cahn 2004: 31).

However, when professionals' and citizens' engagement does not match, parity between them hardly occur; the contact (or lack thereof) between BOAs and BPTs even cannot be described as a 'dialectic'. Parity should not be confused with equality: the co-production partners have their own role and position in the collaboration. Parity refers to a situation of 'giving and receiving' (Boyle and Harris 2009), in which contributions are valued (Cahn 2004), and as such the partners attempt to put their co-production on a higher plane.

The study's conclusion should be perceived in light of its limitations. First, neighborhood watch schemes are among the classical examples of co-production. Yet, insights from this study cannot be generalized to other co-production cases without further investigation. This for example applies to other types of co-production in which citizens' participation is not voluntary. Second, although this explorative case study is based on different sources, there are some limitations in the chosen research design. All neighborhood watch schemes operate in one municipality; further research can test the findings in the context of other municipalities inside and outside the Netherlands. Furthermore, I have not been able to interview respondents from BPTs that recently discontinued or local police officers with lower levels of engagement. Although interviews with other respondents and document analysis provided useful insights, there is always the potential of a bias.

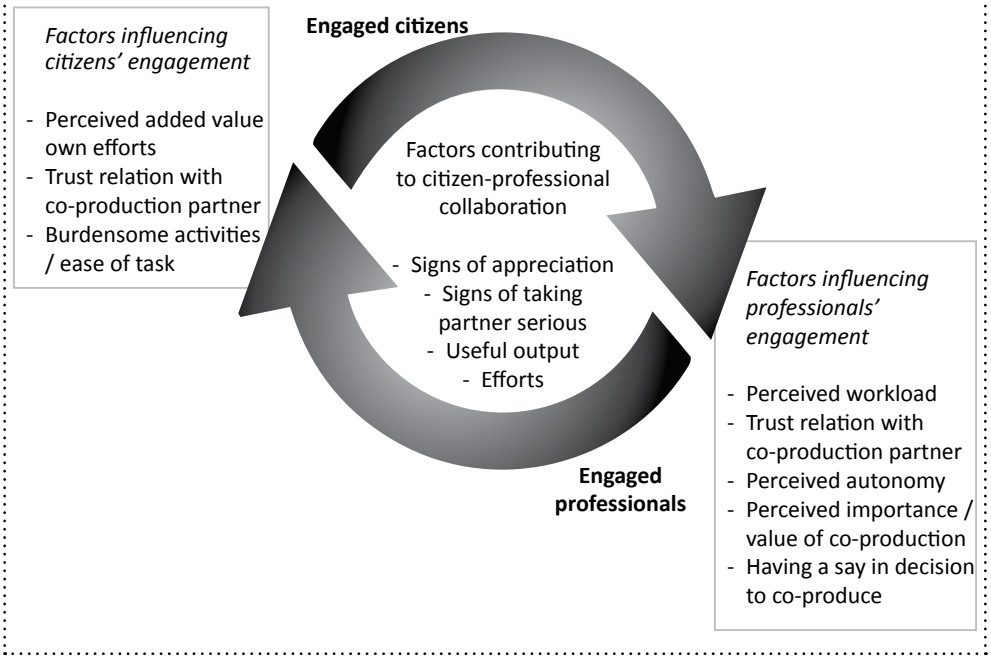
6.7 CONCLUSION

This study increases our understanding of how mutual perceptions on citizens' and professionals' engagement influence the collaboration. Perhaps the most important finding is that for actual collaboration to occur, citizens and professionals not only need to *be* engaged but also need to *make* this engagement *visible* to their co-production partners. Perceptions citizens and professionals hold on their co-production partners' engagement impact on the efforts one is willing to invest, and, especially in the case of citizens, also on the decision whether to remain involved in the co-production process or not.

Figure 6.3 schematizes the main factors which influence citizen – professional collaboration in co-production. Citizens' and public professionals' engagement (both

levels of and purposes for) is impacted on by different factors, such as perceptions on the added value of co-production and trust relations (remember the regular switches of local police officers). The circle in Figure 6.3 shows that high/low engaged citizens and professionals can stimulate/discourage each other; their engagement manifests itself by useful output (e.g., useful reports), signs of appreciation, etc. This visual 'answer' on the research question can be a useful stepping stone for further research on the collaboration between citizens and professionals in co-production, as it presents the key variables that need to be considered in dealing with the relationships between citizens and public professionals in co-production and provide opportunities for hypothesis testing.

Figure 6.3 Graphical model presenting the different factors that influence citizen – professional collaboration in co-production



The insights have some practical implications. An often heard concern is that citizens and professionals feel disappointed about co-production – or sometimes even resist it strongly (Löffler 2010). Even if co-production is based on voluntary efforts by citizens, the process is not without obligations or free of engagement of both citizens and professionals. Co-production partners need to take their activities and each other seriously. Professionals should clarify what is the citizens' role in the service delivery process, and explain how and under what conditions the citizens' input is valuable; citizens need to be enabled to deliver outputs that are crucial for an effective service delivery process. To motivate citizens, professionals can show how they make use of these outputs and express their appreciation. A made-to-measure approach will be necessary in order to do justice to the capacities and demands of individual co-producers. Finally, public organizations that want to incorporate co-production in public service delivery, need to be aware that professionals can only be truly engaged in co-production if they are convinced of its added value to the delivery process and their daily-work activities. One way to increase this conviction is by involving professionals as early as possible in introducing co-production initiatives.

CHAPTER 7

Conclusions and discussion

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This dissertation's central aim was to provide insight into the question why citizens and professionals are engaged in co-production, and to better understand the role of mutual perceptions on this engagement in the collaborative process. Co-production is increasingly introduced in public service delivery processes, as such requiring (more or less intensive) interaction between individual citizens ('*co-producers*') and public professionals ('*regular producers*'). Yet, as outlined in the introductory chapter of this dissertation, an important knowledge gap in current co-production research concerns how these individual citizens and professionals involved perceive their co-production. Questions remained, such as what drives citizens to engage in co-production, and why do citizens sometimes become disappointed and professionals feel constrained in the collaboration?

Therefore, this study attempted to answer the following research question: ***What are the motivations for individual citizens and public professionals to engage in the co-production of public services, and how do mutual perceptions of the co-production partners' engagement influence the collaboration?*** In order to provide an answer to this main research question, three sub research questions were formulated:

1. Why do individual citizens engage in the co-production of public services?
2. Why do individual public professionals engage in the co-production of public services?
3. How do mutual perceptions of the co-production partners' engagement influence the collaboration?

In the previous chapters, a variety of studies were conducted to empirically unravel citizens' and professionals' engagement in the collaborative process of co-producing public services. In this final chapter of the dissertation I will synthesize the empirical chapters and systematically answer the sub research questions in order to provide an answer to the main research question. Based on that answer, I will discuss what contributions are made to the literature, evaluate the study's limitations and provide suggestions for future research. The chapter concludes with

a discussion of the practical implications of the research.

7.2 ANSWERS TO THE RESEARCH QUESTION

This section will first summarize the research findings concerning the three sub research questions and subsequently provide an overall answer to the main research question.

7.2.1 Why do individual citizens engage in the co-production of public services?

In the last couple of years especially, the number of studies in the field of co-production has boomed (Osborne, Radnor and Strokosch 2016). However, at the time this dissertation's study started insights into what factors might explain citizens' engagement were highly limited. For that reason, the first sub research question is concerned with unraveling citizens' engagement (see above). Taking up the challenge to formulate an answer to that sub research question, first a Q-methodology study was conducted to systematically study citizens' viewpoints and distinguish the different perspectives citizens have on their engagement in co-production (reported in *chapter 2*). Specifically, citizens' perceptions on co-planning were investigated in the case of client councils in Dutch organizations for elderly care.

The study identified four groups of citizen co-producers involved in client councils, which were labelled the semi-professional, the socializer, the network professional and the aware co-producer. *Semi-professionals* deliberately choose to engage. Their engagement appears to be strictly instrumental, and they are very concerned with the impact they can make on the organization's policies. *Socializers* are concerned with building trust relations between the client council and (the management of) the organization for elderly care. They have a rather passive attitude. Socializers perceive their involvement does not require certain competencies; is neither time-consuming nor can impact on the organization. *Network professionals* deliberately take part in client councils with the aim to have an impact for the patient. Interest representation is a major concern and more egoistic-based motivations (such as standing-up for yourself and a concern for their

own future as potential clients) are opposed. *Aware co-producers*, finally, report even stronger feelings of aversion to egoistic-based motivations. They consider their involvement in client councils very consciously. Aware co-producers are convinced of the client councils' importance: clients should have a voice, and client councils are important for the well-functioning and well-being of elderly care organizations and residents.

An important initial answer to the first sub research question is, therefore, that co-producers in client councils for elderly care engage for different purposes, and thus that co-producers cannot be perceived as a 'single group' or 'entity'. Nevertheless, among the four groups of co-producers some similarities can also be identified. To start with, generally the respondents themselves attached little importance to competencies. This is interesting from a theoretical point of view, as literature on government-citizen relations, citizen participation and active citizenship focuses on individuals' capacities to act, and Alford (2002b) suggests that for co-production, enhancing one's sense of competence and self-efficacy is an important motivation for co-producers to get involved as well. Furthermore, each type of co-producer adheres more to community-centered than self-centered motivations. This is also striking, because in co-production research it is assumed that co-producers are (mainly) driven by material incentives and intrinsic rewards, since they also directly benefit from the services produced (Alford 2002b; 2009). This differentiates co-producers from volunteers: contrarily to volunteers, co-producers are expected to be (solely) motivated by the benefits they (or their relatives) acquire (Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012). The research findings of chapter 2 show, however, this assumption can be questioned, as for the respondents involved in the study, material incentives and intrinsic rewards seem not to be a deciding factor. A cautious conclusion, therefore, is that deducing co-productions' motivations from the differences between co-producing and volunteering is not sufficient to explain co-producers' motivations.

The identified complexity in co-producers' motivations to engage in client councils in organizations for elderly care stresses the need to further investigate why co-producers engage in co-production, and also in other policy fields. In order to make a step in that direction and to further increase our insights, the dissertation

continued by building and demonstrating the usefulness of a theoretical model explaining citizens' engagement. The theoretical model developed (presented in *chapter 3*) shows that the citizens' decision on whether to engage in co-production can be seen as different steps on a 'decision-ladder'. It explains citizens' engagement referring to 1) citizens' perceptions of the co-production task, and their competency to contribute to the public service delivery process, 2) citizens' individual characteristics, and 3) their self-interested and community-focused motivations. These factors underlying citizens' engagement are derived from the motivations and incentives identified in chapter 2 and by integrating insights from different, yet related streams of literature such as political participation, volunteerism and self-organized collective action. Although these related streams of literature provide useful insights, one should be aware that the typical profile of co-producers might differ from that of the active citizen engaged in political participation or volunteering.

For that reason, a first explorative application and test of the model was provided using empirical evidence collected through focus group interviews in four cases, as reported in chapter 3. In the Netherlands, co-producers' drivers to engage were investigated in the context of client councils for elderly care, representative advisory councils at primary schools and neighborhood watch schemes; in Belgium co-producers were questioned on their involvement in user councils in health care organizations for disabled people. Based on the empirical data, it was concluded that the theoretical model provided a satisfactory explanation for co-producers' engagement, but also that some variables are differently interpreted by respondents, some new insights could be added to the model, and that some differences existed among cases. Ease – referring to the effort required to become active – is, for example, not explicitly mentioned by respondents in the four cases. Although the necessity of having enough time to participate is mentioned and can be perceived as a 'transaction cost', this would make the definition of the concept 'ease' rather limited. A possible explanation for the limited attention given to ease lies in the nature of the cases studied: the mandatory nature of all cases studied except for the case on neighborhood watch schemes might imply the collaborative process in these cases is institutionalized and facilitated in such a way that ease becomes less of a question. Additionally, the empirical data could not entirely validate the

theoretical expectations regarding trust. Instead of considering the level of trust in the organization or professionals *before* deciding to engage, respondents indicate they started to consider trust *after* they had become involved as a co-producer. New elements that popped up from the analysis of the empirical case studies included the presence of actual problems (citizens facing troubles or things 'going wrong' and thus becoming aware they can contribute to the solution), the wish to know what is going on in the public organization, and feelings of anxiety ('you should not complain but do something yourself').

The research method applied to test the theoretical model (i.e., focus groups) explicitly aimed to keep an open mind for additional explanatory variables and to keep the discussion as closely as possible tied to citizens' perceptions. However, due to the limited scale, the research findings cannot necessarily be generalized to the larger population of co-producers in the selected cases. Neither can it automatically be assumed that the identified variables also explain co-producers' engagement in other policy domains, other types of co-production or other countries. This stresses the need to further investigate citizens' motivations to engage in the co-production of public services.

Therefore, the empirical study to unravel co-producers' engagement was continued. Specifically, the dissertation addressed a cross-national comparison of citizens' engagement in co-production, holding constant the type of co-production (see *chapter 4*). In the policy domain of safety, citizens' engagement in Dutch and Belgian (Flemish) neighborhood watch schemes was compared. Neighborhood watch schemes are a classical example of co-production (Brudney and England 1983; Pestoff 2012). Even though recently the idea of neighborhood watch schemes experienced a growing popularity in several European countries, to date most studies on co-production of community safety are conducted in the Anglo-Saxon context. In the study presented in chapter 4, the focus was therefore put on the European context instead of the American, thereby selecting countries (i.e., Belgium (Flanders) and the Netherlands) from a politico-administrative regime (i.e., the Germanic tradition) distinct from the Anglo-Saxon countries.

With the specific aim to increase the insights into citizens' engagement in co-production of community safety, a more grounded approach was taken by

conducting a Q-methodology study. The study presented in the previous chapter (chapter 3) identified some differences among citizens' motivations to engage in the co-production processes in the cases selected, resulting in the cautious conclusion that citizens' drivers might be dependent on the context of the specific co-production process. Since the current co-production literature is mainly focused on explaining co-producers' motivations in other policy domains, one might be careful with simply applying these insights to the field of community safety. Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado (2015) also make a case for more in-depth and contextualized research. Moreover, the study presented in chapter 4 sought to compare citizens' motivations across two countries, and based on current co-production literature it is hard to identify what factors are of importance in specific cultural or politico-administrative systems.

Thus, as a next step to answer the first sub research question of why citizens engage in the co-production of public services, again Q-methodology was applied; this time in the domain of safety. Actually, two Q-methodology studies were conducted (for Belgium and the Netherlands, respectively) to stay as close as possible to respondents' perceptions, take the specific context into account and ensure no country specific factors were lost. Both in Belgium and the Netherlands, the study identified three groups of co-producers.

Starting with Belgium, the study identified task-bounded altruists, protective rationalists and normative rationalists. *Task-bounded altruists* stress the importance of their task: producing safety in collaboration with the police is a valuable contribution to society. They are driven by societal-altruistic reasons and do not have personal feelings of unsafety. *Protective rationalists*, on the other hand, believe their co-productive efforts can increase their own safety as well as the safety of the neighborhood they are living in. Recent experiences of unsafety often form an important drive. The rational element in the label of this group of co-producers stems from the calculation of costs (time/effort) and rewards (safety) made by respondents belonging to this group. *Normative rationalists*, finally, also consider costs and rewards, yet the rewards are not defined in terms of past or current feelings of unsafety but in terms of preventing future crime. They hold the normative belief that future crime can only be prevented when as many residents

as possible take responsibility.

In the Netherlands, the three groups of co-producers were labelled normative partners, pragmatic collaborators and rationalizers. *Normative partners* are convinced their engagement helps protect the common interest. Yet, at the same time they stress that they do not intend to take over police tasks: in collaboration with the police they want to pick up their responsibility for community safety. *Pragmatic collaborators* similarly feel morally obliged to engage. Yet, their view on co-production is less idealized. They are more concerned with collaboration *in* the neighborhood watch scheme and emphasize their distance from the police. *Rationalizers*, finally, are driven by the positive results of their engagement. Nevertheless, they are not committed to improving safety per se: if they would not have engaged in the neighborhood watch scheme they would have done some other kind of volunteering, and personal development is highly valued.

Comparing the empirical results across countries with extant theoretical explanations from the co-production literature yielded three interesting observations. The first observation is that the identified profiles are not unidimensional, implying that citizens' engagement in co-production of community safety is triggered by a combination of factors. Self-interest and community-focus can coincide actually. This finding would contradict Meijer's (2014) claim that people collaborate with the police for *either* individual *or* collective interests. The second observation is that in almost all of the profiles perceptions of the co-production task are considered (very) important and that in a number of profiles the own personal rewards are considered. Hence, one needs to be careful with arguing that co-producers engage for purely self-centered or rational reasons: this reasoning is often more complex and nuanced as the benefits of personal rewards often expand to the community as well (for instance when personal rewards include learning processes). The third and final observation concerns some differences identified between Dutch and Belgian members of neighborhood watch schemes. In the Netherlands, for example, self-centered motivations are somewhat less prominent while personal attributes (like salience and efficacy) are more frequent and explicitly mentioned. However, as the main conclusion of the study presented in chapter 4 is that both in Belgium and the Netherlands groups of co-producers are differently motivated, it is hard to identify

the typical profile of Belgian or Dutch members of neighborhood watch schemes.

To conclude, the partial answers given to the first sub research question suggest that citizens engage in co-production of public services for a number of reasons, and that no single, unidimensional explanation covers the empirical observations. In this dissertation different profiles of citizen co-producers in the domains of health, safety and education were identified, each combining and emphasizing different factors. Thus, citizens are driven to co-produce by different factors: not only across countries and policy domains, but even in the same co-production process. Nevertheless, the dissertation provided a theoretical model that offers a satisfactory starting point to explain citizens' engagement in co-production. This model shows that although some important differences exist between the typical co-producer and the citizen involved in for example political participation and volunteering, the co-production literature can benefit from insights of these related streams of literature. Yet, co-production scholars need to complement the ideas derived from related streams of literature with insights gathered in the specified co-production context to build their own theories.

7.2.2 Why do individual public professionals engage in the co-production of public services?

With the introduction of co-production in public service delivery processes, public professionals and citizens collaborate in order to ensure the continuity and quality of public services. As such, professionals are required to share their power, tasks and responsibilities with co-producers. Only recently, scholars like Brandsen and Honingh (2013) and Moynihan and Thomas (2013), argued that co-production impacts professionals' work environment. However, empirical insights into professionals' attitudes towards co-production remain scarce. Hence, even when professionals' discretion in the co-production process is limited, it is assumed that their engagement is a crucial condition for co-production to be successful: professionals who are willing to listen to co-producers' ideas and actively want to share information can, for example, motivate citizens and stimulate feelings of reciprocity among participants (cf. Fledderus 2015a).

This dissertation, therefore, aimed to further our understanding of

public professionals' engagement in co-production, as specified in the second sub research question. This engagement is empirically found to consist of three dimensions: perceived importance of co-production, perceived impact of co-production, and personal (self-reported) involvement in co-production (as reported in *chapter* 5). Based on broader insights from public administration literature, three characteristics of professionals' work environment were identified as antecedents of their engagement, namely work-autonomy (in general and related to co-production), perceived organizational support and red tape (in general and associated with co-production). This resulted in five hypotheses on the relationship between these three work environment characteristics and professionals' self-reported engagement in co-production.

The study presented in chapter 5 tested the theoretical model using survey data collected in the context of Dutch organizations for elderly care, where location managers (i.e., the professionals) are legally obliged to collaborate with client councils. So, more specifically, public professionals' engagement in co-production is studied in the context of co-planning activities in the domain of health care. Testing the relation between work environment characteristics and each of the three dimensions of engagement (i.e., perceived importance, perceived impact and personal involvement), it was concluded that work-autonomy and red tape do not relate with professionals' self-reported engagement in collaboration with client councils. However, the perceived levels of both autonomy and red tape associated with co-production are related: autonomy in co-production positively and red tape associated with co-production negatively affects professionals' engagement in co-production. Regarding organizational support results were mixed: the higher the levels of organizational support perceived by location managers, the higher their scores were on perceived importance of and personal involvement in co-production. Yet, no significant relation was found between organizational support and perceived impact of the client council. Finally, an interaction effect was identified between organizational support and work-autonomy in co-production: organizational support was found to significantly reinforce the positive effect of work-autonomy on the perceived importance of collaboration with client councils.

To sum up, based on the study conducted in chapter 5, one can conclude

that public professionals' engagement cannot be taken for granted: even in a mandatory type of co-production individual professionals' levels of engagement were found to vary. Furthermore, professionals' engagement builds upon different aspects, namely their perceptions on the importance and impact of co-production, and their (self-reported) personal involvement in co-production. In the context of client councils in organizations for elderly care, it became visible that work environmental characteristics emerging in the specific co-production context impact on professionals' self-reported levels of engagement. General work-autonomy is of positive influence only when the professionals perceive high levels of organizational support.

7.2.3 How do mutual perceptions of the co-production partners' engagement influence the collaboration?

The answers to sub research questions 1 and 2 provided deeper insight in the engagement of individual citizens and public professionals in co-production of public services. However, these sub research questions did not address the question how citizens and professionals perceive each other's engagement, and how these perceptions are reflected in the collaboration. The studies answering the first and second sub research question shows that both citizens' and professionals' engagement cannot be taken for granted. Based on existing literature it is known that differences in purposes for and/or levels of engagement matter: the willingness and ability to co-produce are assumed to impact on citizens' and professionals' contribution to the co-production process, and these contributions will sequentially influence co-production's outcomes (cf. Alford 2009; Ostrom 1996; Loeffler and Hine-Hughes 2013). Nevertheless, as existing co-production literature is mainly concerned with either the citizens or public professionals involved in co-production, the question how co-producers' and professionals' perceptions of their co-production partners' level of and purposes for engaging influence the collaboration remains unanswered.

The last sub research question probed into these issues; addressed by an explorative, in-depth case study on neighborhood watch schemes in a Dutch municipality (as presented in *chapter 6*). Data was collected through various

sources, including individual/group interviews with members of neighborhood watch schemes and public professionals from the municipality and the police, participant observations, policy documents, newspaper articles and Twitter messages. While existing co-production studies on citizens' engagement mainly focus on the purposes behind this engagement (cf. Thijssen and Van Dooren 2016; Bovaird, Van Ryzin, Loeffler and Parrado 2015), the results of the study presented in this dissertation suggest that citizens are not only engaged for different reasons but also to different extents. The citizens being interviewed differ in how they perceive their co-producing role and how much effort they are willing to make to investigate. This is interesting, since these citizens all voluntarily decided to get involved in neighborhood watch schemes. In the literature, one can already find references to professionals having different levels of engagement (see for example Tuurnas 2015); hence, as these professionals often have no option but to be involved in co-production, this is less surprising.

Another important finding is that even when neighborhood watch schemes can act more independently from the police/municipality after some time, professional support from police officers and local civil servants is needed and appreciated. Citizens and professionals, in other words, commit themselves to the collaboration and need the resources (e.g., time and means) to live up to the expectations their co-production partner holds. Furthermore, feelings of appreciation are important to keep both citizens *and* professionals motivated. For both actors it was found that they felt less inspired to contribute efforts to the collaboration when these efforts are not (explicitly) valued and/or when no useful output is produced.

Thus, based on the answers to the third sub research question (presented in chapter 6), the conclusion is that in order to establish and continue a co-productive relationship over time, it is crucial that both citizens and professionals are truly engaged. Only when actors themselves are motivated, feel committed with co-production and are convinced of the added value of the collaboration, can they inspire their co-production partner. So, citizens and professionals not only need to be engaged in co-production but also should make this engagement visible to their co-production partners.

7.2.4 Wrapping up: an adjusted theoretical model of individual citizens' and public professionals' engagement in the co-production of public services

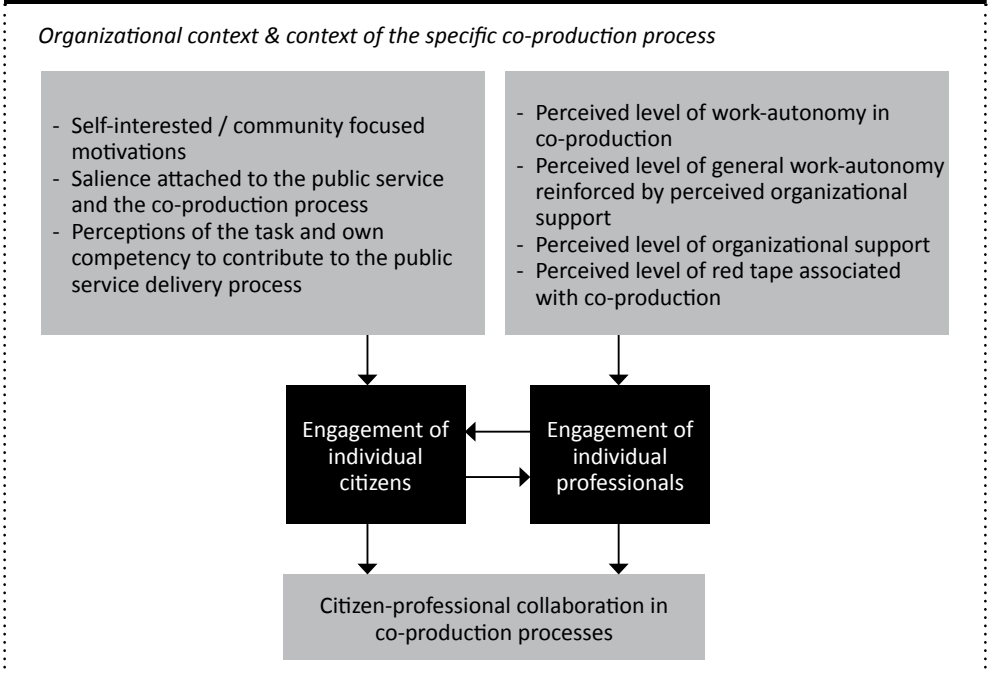
After answering the three sub research questions, now a brief answer to the main research question can be formulated. The main research question of the dissertation asked what are the motivations for individual citizens and public professionals to engage in the co-production of public services, and how mutual perceptions of the co-production partners' engagement influence the collaboration between citizens and professionals.

The answer to the main research question is threefold. First, *individual citizens engage* for different purposes, combining different rationales for engaging in co-production of public services. Consequently, no typical profile of the citizen co-producer can be identified. Generally, however, individual citizens consider the following factors when deciding whether or not to engage: 1) perceptions of the co-production task and their competency to contribute to the public service delivery process, 2) individual characteristics, and 3) self-interested and community-focused motivations. Second, *individual professionals engage* themselves to various extents in co-production based on their perceptions on a number of work environment characteristics, namely work-autonomy related to co-production activities, perceived organizational support and red tape associated with co-production. Perceptions on general work-autonomy only impact on the level of engagement when high levels of organizational support are perceived. Furthermore, professionals' engagement is found to consist of three dimensions: perceptions on the importance and impact of co-production, and (self-reported) personal involvement in co-production. Third, *mutual perceptions of the co-production partners' engagement* do influence the collaboration, as these perceptions impact on the efforts actors are willing to invest. True engagement that is also made visible to the co-production partners is crucial to establish and continue a co-productive relation over time. When citizens or professionals feel that they are unvalued and not taken seriously, they will reconsider their efforts.

Figure 7.1 schematizes the main research findings in a new model of individual citizens' and public professionals' engagement in the co-production of

public services. This model is an adjusted version of the theoretical model presented in the introductory chapter of this dissertation. That preliminary model (presented in Figure 1.1) showed the link between 'individual characteristics' of citizens and professionals with their levels of engagement, and between this engagement and the collaborative co-production process. Taking the research findings of the separate empirical chapters in mind, the initial model can now be specified further. That is, the individual characteristics can be specified to the factors that have been identified in the answers provided to the first and second sub research questions; the factors identified in chapters 2, 3 and 4 for the co-producers and chapter 5 for the professionals respectively. For matters of simplification, the interactions between the different factors underlying citizens' and professionals' engagement are not included in the model; here I would like to refer to chapters 3 and 5 in particular.

Figure 7.1 Theoretical model derived from the dissertation's research findings



Because the answer on the third sub research question (presented in chapter 6) showed that citizens' and professionals' levels of engagement can reinforce or weaken each other, in Figure 7.1 two arrows are added between the boxes of citizens' and professionals' engagement. A more thorough understanding of these interactions can be found in chapter 6. Furthermore, especially in the chapters on citizens' engagement (chapters 2, 3 and 4) some differences were identified among co-production cases and countries. For that reason, the final model presented in Figure 7.1 not only shows that the individuals involved in co-production behave in the *organizational* context but also in the context of the *specific co-production process* (among others the cultural setting of the country and the particular policy domain). The (potential) influence of context (e.g., national, political, organizational) on various public management processes is under growing attention (cf. Meier, Rutherford and Avellaneda 2017; Bozeman and Su 2015).

7.3 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Having answered the main research question and schematized the theoretical model, this section continues with a discussion of the research findings. What are the contributions of the overall dissertation? What limitations of the study should be taken into account? What new questions and suggestions for further research arise? And what are the practical implications of the research? This section will answer these questions sequentially.

7.3.1 Major contributions of the overall dissertation

This dissertation contributes to the co-production specifically and the public administration literature more in general in several ways. In each of the empirical chapters, the contributions made are discussed. In this section, I will not replicate these contributions but instead compile all research findings and discuss the main contributions to the literature in the light of the overall research question. These major contributions can best be formulated as propositions, as this makes clear what direction for co-production literature I propose. Four propositions are distinguished, namely that co-production research benefits from 1) holding an analytical focus on

the individual level, 2) integrating insights from different disciplines, 3) integrating the specific context in the research design and conducting more comparative studies, and 4) putting more emphasis on the professionals involved in co-production and on the challenges they have to deal with.

Proposition 1: Co-production research benefits from holding an analytical focus on the individual level

At the rise of the co-production concept in the 1980s, co-production was predicted to have a glorious future. Levine (1984: 186), for example, wrote: "[t]he strategy of coproduction promises to be a powerful tool for resolving fiscal stress and an auspicious start on the road to restoring the trust and support of citizens for their public institutions." After more than twenty years, many co-production processes have been initiated, but it seems co-production does not fulfil all promises. Citizens sometimes feel disappointed in co-production, professionals feel constrained in interacting with citizens or even strongly resist to the idea of co-production, and often only a small number of citizens are involved (WRR 2012; Voorberg et al. 2015; Löffler 2010).

In the introductory chapter of this dissertation, I explained that existing co-production literature is not able to solve these issues. More specifically, I argued that existing co-production literature is not able to provide such answers due to its main focus on the collaborative networks, processes and organizations in which co-production occurs. In the time period the dissertation's study started, much attention was paid to issues like how third sector organizations adapt to the network context of co-production and how they cope with the tensions this context brings (Brandsen and Van Hout 2006), the influence of the institutional context on the co-production design (Joshi and Moore 2004), and how to organize co-management between (local) government and third sector organizations or civil society (Freise 2012). Other authors explained how the co-production process can be optimized, for example by making more appropriate use of ICT (Meijer 2011) and by providing lessons on how to implement a co-production design in such a way that the government systems become supportive towards co-production (Isett and Miranda 2015).

Due to this focus on the aggregate level, co-production literature mostly disregarded the micro level of the individuals involved in co-production (see reviews by Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff 2012; Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers 2015). Yet, in the end co-production is about collaboration between individuals. This was clearly illustrated at the beginning of this dissertation in chapter 1. The introductory chapter started with the exemplary case of a Dutch citizen (named Suzan) who, triggered by some concrete troubles in her local environment, wanted to establish a neighborhood watch scheme. This case shows that such co-production initiatives bring many challenges: for the citizens involved, the public organizations originally producing the public services, and for the public professionals in these organizations who now (are forced to) collaborate with these citizens.

Therefore, this study takes an innovative approach by bringing the individual citizens and professionals to the core of the analytical framework. The new insights that are derived show that studying co-production from the individual level is worthwhile. The usefulness of focusing on the individual level has been recognized before in other, related streams of literature, such as on cross-boundary organizational relations or on the introduction of market elements in public service delivery. Nowadays, public services are often delivered in collaboration with other (non-)profit organizations, and to better understand the contemporary institutional context of cross-boundary collaboration it is relevant to gather more insights on the *individuals* working in this cross-boundary environment (Breathnach 2007; as referred to by Schappla 2012). Schappla (2012), for example, concluded in a study on local development partnerships in urban regeneration policies, that a focus on the individual workers in local government and third sector organizations has many advantages: it helps to better understand the challenges resulting from concrete (practical) actions taken by service providers. Stoker and Mosely (2010: 8) express this aptly:

> "Understanding what motivates people and what drives their behaviour is self-evidently central to policy making. If you are trying to change human society for the better then you are likely to have some theory of what it is that makes humans 'tick'."

Proposition 2: Co-production research benefits from integrating insights from different disciplines

The underestimation of the level of individuals involved in co-production resulted in three specific knowledge gaps that were identified in the introduction of this dissertation: 1) co-producers' motivations are scarcely taken into account, 2) the perspective of the individual professionals is scarcely taken into account, and 3) in existing literature there is a dominant focus on either co-producers or professionals instead of on the collaboration between them. In this dissertation I contributed to solving these gaps, not only by studying co-production from the individual level, but also by integrating insights from different disciplines.

Because the current co-production literature has no solid answer for why citizens and professionals engage, and how differences in perceptions on engagement impact the collaboration, I broadened my views. That is, in order to provide a more comprehensive answer, insights were integrated from streams of literature on for instance political participation, volunteering, self-organized collective action, community policing, public service motivation, public management and organizational psychology. In the last decades, the concept of co-production has been studied from a variety of disciplines, most notably economics, political science and public administration (Brandsen and Honingh 2016: 427). This dissertation shows that taking a multidisciplinary approach in one, single study is useful and can help us to solve some knowledge gaps.

When integrating insights of different streams of literature, of course one has to be aware of the differences between pure co-production processes on the one hand and citizen initiatives in for instance political participation and volunteering on the other hand. Co-production, for example, is not solely about contributing to the benefits of others – like in volunteering – as co-producers often are also users of the services produced. Moreover, co-production is about the interaction between citizens and professionals, while volunteering does not take place in similar professionalized service delivery processes. However, the empirical data show that insights derived from these related streams of literature are helpful to better understand citizens' and professionals' engagement in co-production, and the role of engagement in co-production collaboration. Combined with insights

gathered in the specific co-production context, a multidisciplinary approach can be helpful to develop new theories.

Proposition 3: Co-production research benefits from integrating the specific context in the research design and from conducting more comparative studies

In chapters 2, 3 and 4 some differences can be observed in citizens' engagement, dependent on the specific co-production process under scrutiny. To illustrate, in the profiles identified among citizen co-producers involved in client councils in organizations for elderly care, issues like being involved in order to have a hobby, making social contacts or finding a pleasant environment are in general neutrally valued or even (strongly) opposed. In the case of neighborhood watch schemes, to the contrary, groups of citizens were triggered by the social aspect of getting involved in such neighborhood watch schemes: they emphasize the social contacts with fellow members, the contact with youth or the possibility to get in touch with fellow residents of their neighborhood. So, the social component of being involved in the co-production of public services seems to apply more to co-production in the context of community safety than in the domain of elderly care. Furthermore, the findings derived from Q-methodology and focus groups show that competencies and perceptions on whether one is capable of participating ('internal efficacy') are almost solely mentioned by co-producers involved in client councils in organizations for elderly care and representative advisory councils at primary schools, but not by members of neighborhood watch schemes.

These findings indicate that the specific context matters if one wants to better understand citizens' engagement. The three cases – client councils, advisory councils and neighborhood watch schemes – represent different types of co-production. The co-production processes differ, for example, in the extent to which the process is institutionalized and regulated by law, and in the extent to which co-producers are dependent on the regular producer to produce the services delivered. This last element in particular can explain why a concept like trust is differently interpreted by respondents in different cases: members of client councils interpret trust in relation to external efficacy ('is the management willing to listen to our concerns?') while members of neighborhood watch schemes relate feelings of

especially *dis*trust with the salience of becoming active (having no or little trust that the police can solve safety and livability issues alone). In the latter case there is a strong link between dissatisfaction with the service currently delivered and feelings of trust in the local government and the police (cf. Kampen, Van de Walle and Bouckaert 2006).

Thus, regarding citizens' and public professionals' engagement in co-production, differences occur between various co-production processes in different types of co-production processes, different policy domains and different countries. This conclusion is in line with Pestoff's (2008) findings: in a comparative study on childcare services in eight countries, he identified some differences between levels of parent participation and the form of service provision (i.e., public, private or a hybrid form) in these countries (Pestoff 2008). The context dependency of co-production – or the impact of the specific public administration regime – has been hinted upon before by Verschuere, Brandsen and Pestoff (2012), and might be considered as one of the explanations why current co-production literature is dominated by qualitative, single case studies (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers 2015).

However, although contextualized research is valuable – also in light of the findings of this dissertation – co-production literature will benefit even more from comparative research: despite the explosive growth of co-production research, progress in the field remains limited. This is partly due to conceptual confusion (Brandsen and Honingh 2016) and to a limited understanding of the generalizability of contextual factors to other policy processes (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers 2015). This dissertation intends to be a useful leg up to more comparative research, by identifying some differences between co-production in different policy domains (health care, education, community safety) and countries (the Netherlands, Belgium).

This dissertation's findings are promising regarding the usefulness and possibilities of comparative research while keeping the contextual aspect of the specific co-production processes in mind. At first sight, a paradox seems to exist between putting more attention on contextualized research and conducting more comparative research. However, both aims can be combined and simultaneously

reached. An example is given in chapter 4 of this dissertation, were a comparative Q-methodology study is conducted. However, more quantitative approaches are also useful, for instance to identify to what extent contextual factors are influential (Voorberg, Bekkers and Tummers 2015). Designating the context of any given study, scholars can for example integrate a context matrix or set of variables conditioning the context in their comparative large-*N* studies (O'Toole and Meier 2015), or specify their survey question in such a way that "(…)it can measure the theoretical construct of a model variable in the new research setting in order to be able to compare it with the same theoretical construct from the original context" (Torenvlied and Akkerman 2017: 103).

Proposition 4: Co-production research benefits from putting more emphasis on the professionals involved in co-production and on the challenges they have to deal with
In this dissertation the perspectives of the individuals involved in co-production are central. The study shows that the collaborative process is dependent on the attitudes and motivations of both individual citizens and public professionals. However, because the individual level has scarcely been integrated in the analytical framework of most co-production studies, also the actors involved in co-production have scarcely been taken into account. Recently, one can observe a gradually growing interest for understanding the role and position of citizens in co-production, for instance by studying what makes the role as co-producer distinct from the role of citizen or consumer/customer (Fotaki 2011; Moynihan and Thomas 2013). However, knowledge on the public professionals involved remains limited. In line with studies by for instance Tuurnas (2015), in this dissertation some important first steps are taken to increase our insights on the public professionals involved in co-production. Yet, I would encourage further research on this topic.

Co-production is about government *by* instead of *for* the people (Bovaird and Löffler 2012b); nevertheless, the citizens' growing role in the public service delivery process does not mean professionals become less important or no longer have a role to play. Indeed, co-producers will always be "second-class experts" (Ewert and Evers 2014: 440) and will be in need of professional input. Through co-production, citizens become a part of the professional *process*, but they are

not professionals themselves. Recently, some scholars have acknowledged co-production has implications for professionals' work environment and position in the service delivery process (e.g., Ewert and Evers 2012; Brandsen and Honingh 2013; Moynihan and Thomas 2013). Because professionals' tasks change, other knowledge will be required and new skills are needed. Technical or substantive knowledge on the subject at hand must be complemented with an ability to segment between client groups, have diplomatic and enabling skills to bring co-producers and regular producers together for a common cause, and interpersonal skills like being a good communicator and excellent listener (Alford and O'Flynn 2012; Salamon 2002; O'Leary, Gerard and Choi 2013).

How public professionals cope with the challenges co-production brings to their work environment or how they perceive citizens' increasing role in public service delivery processes remain unclear, however. This is a serious flaw, since this dissertation's study shows that even though professionals often have no choice other than to participate in co-production, their levels of engagement differ and this impacts on the collaboration with co-producers. By expressing the relevance of giving professionals a more prominent place in co-production research, this dissertation contributes to Tuurnas' (2015) statement that scholars need to better understand how professionals realize co-production in practice. So, co-production research will benefit from more emphasis on the public professionals involved in co-production of public services.

7.3.2 Limitations of the current study and suggestions for the future research agenda

The last section already proposed some themes that could (or perhaps should) be added to the future research agenda. In this section I will provide some more specific suggestions for further research. Some of these stem from the study's limitations; others arise as a result of the research findings.

Suggestions for further research stemming from the study's limitations

Considering the overall dissertation, the empirical chapters reflect a mixed method design in which different research methods are applied and the research findings of

one chapter are elaborated on in another (cf. Creswell and Clark 2011). Needless to note, all single research methods (Q-methodology, survey research, focus groups / individual interviews) have their own strengths and weaknesses. These weaknesses might create certain biases or limitations that are not only important to take into account when interpreting the research findings, but also result in some suggestions for further research.

One of the dissertation's limitations concerns its generalizability. Given the context dependency of co-production and the research designs applied, we must be careful when generalizing the conclusions to other (groups of) co-producers, types of co-production, policy domains or countries. To identify citizens' viewpoints on their engagement in co-production and to gather factors explaining this engagement, the dissertation's study conducted Q-methodology and gathered data through focus groups. The biggest advantage of both techniques is that the researcher stays close to respondents' viewpoints and that the respondents are allowed to freely bring in new, relevant insights that would have otherwise been ignored when survey research was conducted. Q-methodology and focus groups are very suitable for studying personal viewpoints, attitudes and perceptions. Yet, the insights should be further replicated in other contexts.

Moreover, although Q-methodology can assure that the discourses found actually exist, it cannot eliminate the possibility that other, additional discourses that have not been identified in the underlying study exist outside the sample. In the cases studied in chapters 2 and 4, a diverse set of respondents was included in order to ensure that as many viewpoints as possible were considered. Yet, the possibility that other co-producers in similar co-production processes in health care / community safety or other policy domains hold other viewpoints on their engagement cannot be eliminated. Furthermore, both Q-methodology and focus groups are less useful in gathering information on socioeconomic variables (e.g., age, gender, ethnicity, levels of income and education) and in achieving a full insight into the way in which these and other variables are related. That is, the mechanisms or causal links cannot easily be established. Further research will therefore be needed to test the theoretical model developed in chapter 2 in a more extensive way and to see whether the mentioned explanations and conclusions drawn in the

other empirical chapters are also valid in other contexts. Survey research will be an appropriate method in this respect, and I would especially encourage scholars to conduct comparative large-*N* studies as this allows the opportunity to control for the type of co-production process or policy domain.

Two other important limitations of the dissertation's study concern the issues of causality – or rather the potential of reversed causality – and the risk of common method bias. Both issues are especially relevant for chapter 5, in which a theoretical model was tested to explain individual public professionals' engagement in co-production on the basis of certain work environmental characteristics. Since this study made use of cross-sectional, self-reported data, the design bears the risk of common method bias. Even though correlations between dimensions and between independent variables are generally low, the results of the study must be carefully interpreted. To deal with this potential risk, further research can focus on the development of instrumental variables or even more 'objective' measurements of engagement.

The issue of reversed causality implies, to put it bluntly, that one cannot definitely conclude that a variable is a response to or a cause of another variable (Van de Walle and Bouckaert 2003). Based on the cross-sectional data it was possible to observe associations among variables, but testing causality in the direction of this relation was not possible. The possibility of reversed causality cannot be ruled out for that reason. For example, it might be possible that low levels of engagement induce perceptions of red tape, instead of the other way around. However, the theoretical arguments provided in chapter 5 make it plausible that the relations are directed in the way they are tested and therefore are not reversed. Nevertheless, further research could pay attention to the issue of causality, for example by conducting a longitudinal study and Granger causality tests. Granger causality testing determines whether variable A at time 1 is correlated with variable B at time 2, when controlling for variable B at time 1. When there are no other plausible causes, then this test provides good evidence for causality between the two variables (Brandt and Williams 2007).

More general suggestions for the further research agenda

Additional suggestions for further research are inspired by the dissertation's research findings and conclusions. For instance, this dissertation is based on citizens' and public professionals' perceptions on engagement in co-production of public services. Another interesting question then relates to what are the consequences of these different perspectives: how do the different perspectives affect the actual behavior of co-producers and professionals, or ultimately the effectiveness of co-production? Do levels of citizens' and public professionals' engagement matter for the quality of the services delivered? This dissertation's study can serve as a stepping stone for these kinds of questions. The study presented in chapter 6 showed, for example, how perceptions on co-production partners' engagement are reflected in the collaboration. However, in that particular study no connection was made with different types of co-producers in terms of the discourses identified in chapter 4, nor was it possible to determine for example professionals' level of engagement in more objective terms or to say something about the effectiveness of the co-production. Developing more objective measurements of engagement and investigating the link between engagement and effectiveness will be two of the challenges for further research.

Another interesting question relates to the environmental setting in which co-production occurs. Here, one could for example think of neighborhood variables. In chapter 6 on neighborhood watch schemes in a Dutch municipality code-named Stadszicht, an interesting factor came up that has not yet been discussed in the dissertation. Some of the professionals from the police and municipality mentioned that certain characteristics of the neighborhood impact on the neighborhood watch scheme and the way it functions. They refer especially to the level of social coherence present in the neighborhood. They argue that without a certain level of social coherence it is not possible to start a neighborhood watch scheme or to make it successful in the longer term: when citizens do not feel connected with each other and their neighborhood, they do not want to invest any efforts in improving safety and livability. So, while in the literature it is assumed that co-production is a tool to increase social coherence or results in the growth of social networks (Boyle and Harris 2009; Needham 2008; Cepiku and Giordano 2014), it might be that for

co-production to be successful over a longer period of time a minimum level of coherence also needs to be present beforehand. Further research will be needed to investigate whether this claim holds true.

Some other suggestions for further research are about the consequences of co-production for the public professionals, particularly for their daily-work environment and personal attitudes. How does, for instance, the interactive nature of the relationship between public professional and co-producer affect personal attitudes such as job satisfaction and the meaning individual professionals give to their work? How can individual professionals be supported to accomplish the new tasks required for co-production, and what is the role of (managerial) leadership herein? The survey research among managers in organizations for elderly care (chapter 5) pointed at the importance of organizational culture for managers' levels of engagement in collaboration with client councils. But what does this culture entails exactly? And how can such a supportive culture be established? Moreover, it will be interesting to investigate what is the role of (managerial) leadership herein. In the explorative case study on the collaboration between the police/ municipality and neighborhood watch schemes in a Dutch municipality (chapter 6), it was mentioned that co-producers highly appreciated the mayor's interest in neighborhood watch schemes. During the interviews, some of the professionals of the municipality and the police suggested that because the mayor is in favor of the idea behind neighborhood watch schemes, a certain atmosphere was created in the municipal and police organization. The mayor has, for example, an important role in establishing the priorities for the coming period. Spiegel (1987) also illustrates the importance of the mayor's sympathy with co-production for the process to succeed. Literature on leadership states that network leadership is different from leadership in a single-agency structure (Silvia and McGuire 2010). Further research can investigate whether leadership also changes in a co-production context.

Furthermore, due to co-production, public professionals might increasingly be confronted with goal ambiguity or perceived conflicts of interest. Co-production is, somewhat paradoxically, simultaneously an instrument to ensure public services are in line with citizen demands (i.e., the collective entity) and a process in which the interests of (a select group of) individual co-producers become more prominent.

Situations might occur in which the interests of the broader group of service users conflict with the (private) interests addressed by co-producers. Focusing on the public professional who has to deal with these potential conflicts or tensions, it is interesting to investigate how s/he deals with this. It is important to note that such conflicts are not necessarily the result of pure self-interest of co-producers in the negative sense of the word. Conflicts or tensions can also stem from co-producers' motives or convictions that are potentially restricting their viewpoints and as such cause a bias towards what might be in the interest of the other service users. To illustrate, at an initial stage of this dissertation's research, some pilot interviews were held.[15] A location manager in an organization for elderly care said that some members of the client council are strongly driven by 'personal preferences', for example representing their own relative who is a resident of the organization whereby these members are focused on the experiences and interests of this relative. In other words, the experiences and preferences of relatives are laid down as a standard. That is not to say that the co-producers' intentions are 'bad', but for the manager this could be difficult to deal with as the co-producers' viewpoints are restricted to partial and specific interests and the manager wants to serve the interests of all users and of the organization.

Finally, some possible directions for further research are not directly linked with the dissertation's findings but instead are concerned with the general idea of co-production. In this dissertation I have shown the relevance of holding an analytical focus on the individual level. However, this does not imply other analytical levels are less relevant to study. One of the important streams in current co-production research is focused on the question if co-production does reach some of the assumed effects, and I would encourage scholars to continue this search. The current dissertation does not provide insights on this topic, but given the growing popularity of co-production it is an important avenue for further research. It is interesting to get a better grip on what is the role of co-production in public service delivery and society more broadly, and to increase our understanding of what are the consequences of delivering public services through co-production for the general public. For instance, what are the consequences of co-production

15 See chapter 5, footnote 11.

for the continuity and quality of public services? Not all citizens might be willing or capable to co-produce or to continue their efforts over a longer period of time. And, as already elaborated on above, citizens are not professional experts. How can public organizations ensure public services are also delivered in the (near) future and are of good quality? And what are the dark sides of co-production, for example regarding the broader issues of accountability, legitimacy and representativeness?

From these latter questions, it is a small step to ask a more normative question: how desirable is it to introduce co-production in public service delivery, especially when more compulsory elements for the individual co-producers are integrated? This links to the more fundamental issue of what is the responsibility of individual citizens for public services and what role is expected of governments. Co-production is often introduced in delivery processes of vital public services, such as health, education and safety. Citizens are often dependent of these services; can governments ensure all citizens have equal access when these services are co-produced? Does co-production really meet the standards of 'good governance'? That is, good governance cannot be defined in strictly economic terms but also includes elements concerned with democracy (cf. Rouban 1999b). At first sight, the idea of citizens *participating* in service delivery seems to perfectly fit into this idea. Yet, modern democracies also hold the requirement of solidarity; apart from the requirement of responsibility. When equal access cannot be guaranteed or when a small – and perhaps not representative – group of co-producers contributes, one can wonder whether this indeed is in line with issues like solidarity and (representative) democracy.

This latter set of more normative questions show how closely tied the academic debate on co-production and the political debates in society are. In the introductory chapter, I already indicated this briefly. Given the growing popularity of co-production in society and among politicians, in the coming years one might expect public organizations will continue to strive to co-produce public services. In the end, the decision whether or not to co-produce is a political decision. However, future academic research could contribute further to the co-production endeavor by investigating how and in which way co-production can best be implemented.

7.3.3 Implications for practice

Finally, the dissertation has some implications for practice: for the citizens, public professionals and public organizations involved in co-production. Co-production is often presented as the go-to solution for the challenges (local) governments are confronted with, such as the ageing population, a legitimacy crisis of both the government and the market, and austerity in public finances. As such, co-production has become the subject of many ideological and political debates (see for instance Ishkanian and Szreter 2012; Boyle and Harris 2009). Despite the pitfalls that are addressed in the literature – for example with regard to the issue of equity or the difficulty of involving citizens in public service delivery processes – many governments seem to remain in favor of co-production (OECD 2011). This dissertation does not claim to be a handbook for (local) governments of how to organize co-production in the best way or to provide 'the' guideline for how to co-produce. However, in addition to the practical implications already listed in the separate empirical chapters, some guidelines and remarks that are worthwhile considering are provided below.

First, *understanding and being aware that co-producers are no unitary group* is perhaps the most important lesson here for public organizations. Although at first sight this seems not to be a very special finding, it definitely has some important implications for practice. The chapters that provided an answer to the first sub research question in particular (i.e., chapters 2, 3 and 4), demonstrate that different groups of co-producers hold different perspectives on their involvement. To illustrate, some co-producers see their involvement mainly as a way to make social contacts ('it is cozy'), while others are really concerned with improving the public services delivered, and some others take part due to having a normative belief they 'have to do something for society'. Public organizations need to be aware of this when designing co-production processes and communicating with potential co-producers.

When designing co-production processes they must, for example, be careful with introducing compulsory elements for individual co-producers. That is, although it can be mandatory for public organizations to deliver public services through co-production (as for instance in the case of client councils in organizations for elderly

care), enforcing individual citizens to get involved as a co-producer is more risky. Public organizations might better give potential co-producers an voluntary option whether or not to involve. To give just one example, a couple of years ago a Dutch nursing home introduced compulsory involvements for relatives of residents. The organization initiated the idea of 'mandatory informal care', because – according to the organization's management view – all relatives have a moral obligation to be involved and to spend a minimum number of hours per week with the residents. An association representing informal care givers was not in favor of this initiative: they were afraid informal care givers would feel cornered and would no longer want to be involved (NOS 2013). This reaction can be explained with the conclusions drawn in this dissertation. Co-producers with a sincere interest in the care process could feel offended if they are expected to, to put it bluntly, have some coffee with the residents for a couple of hours per week. People with such motivational profiles believe that their co-production entails much more than such mundane tasks. Co-producers that are motivated from a normative framework do not need to be obliged to take up societal responsibilities they consider as 'normal', and may be offended by such compulsory policies. A framework that makes their involvement in co-production 'compulsory' may be perceived as a framework that wants to 'sanction'. Only the co-producers motivated more or less by the conviction that the financial basis of public service delivery (like subsidized care) is under pressure, in times in which the public sector is faced with financial austerity, may be charmed by frameworks that make co-production 'compulsory' to individual co-producers.

Furthermore, public organizations need to design co-production in such a way that it allows for a made-to-measure approach. As not all co-producers perceive their tasks, role and relation *vis-à-vis* the professional in a similar way, a standardized and uniform 'protocol' will not be satisfying to them. This can be illustrated with the neighborhood watch schemes studied in chapters 4 and 6. Some co-producers want to improve safety and livability in close collaboration with the police. If they are not regularly updated on what has been done with the information they sent to the police, they feel not valued and will reconsider their involvement. Other co-producers get motivated if they have the opportunity to learn new skills. Offering training programs will be a helpful 'tool' to keep these

citizens in the neighborhood watch schemes. However, co-producers who combine their involvement with paid jobs or have busy lives in another way might perceive excessively high levels of required efforts when all these training programs are mandatory. Public organizations, then, have to keep the balance steady between organizing a couple of mandatory training programs to teach the citizens the skills needed to safely perform their tasks, and offering some additional courses to motivate the citizens who want to develop themselves. Although this might bring additional costs for public organizations, this is no waste of money as in the end the public organizations and society also get something in return of highly engaged co-producers.

Such a 'made-to-measure' approach is closely linked with two out of Ostrom's eight 'Principles for Managing a Commons'. Elinor Ostrom developed these eight principles based on her studies on how the commons can be governed sustainably and equitably in a community. Principle two specifies to "match rules governing use of common goods to local needs and conditions", while according to principle three it is important to "ensure that those affected by the rules can participate in modifying the rules" (On the Commons 2017).

When communicating with potential co-producers to encourage them to also get involved in co-production, public organizations also need to be aware of the differences between potential co-producers. That is, most likely the same kinds of differences that are observed in this study among co-producers will also exist among the potential co-producers. To mobilize citizens to pick up social responsibilities and to join co-production, strong, motivating and attracting words are crucial (Van Zuydam, Van de Velde and Kuiper 2013). Communication strategies might be specified to different groups of potential co-producers, emphasizing different elements of co-production, like the social element, opportunities to learn and the ability to do good for the community.

Second, for both citizens and public professionals it applies that *their participation arouse certain expectations on their co-production partner's side*. Introducing co-production in the public service delivery process does not only change the citizens' role but also the professionals' role. It brings some duties for public professionals, such as being in touch with citizens regularly, providing citizens the

means needed and sharing information. Entering or starting a co-production process implies the professional commits her/himself to these duties. Public organizations need to be aware of this: is it doable to live up to the expectations, and can they enable and support the professionals involved to meet their commitments? This organizational support can take different forms, such as formal procedures or an organizational culture that is in favor of citizen collaboration. Furthermore, public organizations have to provide their professionals sufficient levels of autonomy to perform the co-production activities. Professionals, for example, need some discretion to balance between on the one hand staying in close contact with citizens to collaborate with and stimulate them, and on the other hand keeping enough distance to allow citizens to pick up their responsibilities in the service delivery process. Depending on the individual characteristics of both co-producers and public professionals, different professionals will interpret this balance differently.

Third, and related, *individual professionals' engagement has a crucial role in the collaborative process of co-production, yet it cannot be taken for granted*. The case presented in chapter 6 on the involvement of special investigating officers in neighborhood watch schemes showed that professionals are not spontaneously convinced of the added value of (their involvement in) co-production. Public organizations cannot simply force their professional employees to engage. That is, they can do so, but high levels of engagement will not automatically ensue. Public organizations can best involve their professionals in the decision to initiate co-production, as this can stimulate awareness of its usefulness for the organization and their own daily work activities. An open organizational culture and (managerial) leadership might contribute to this as well.

Fourth, and finally, even when public organizations and public professionals put as many efforts as possible into motivating and stimulating citizens to co-produce, *co-production is likely to depend on a small group of citizens*. It is not realistic to expect all citizens are willing or capable to engage. Often, citizens' involvement is based on voluntary efforts, implying public organizations can only determine and influence this involvement to a certain degree. Public organizations can encourage citizens, emphasize the salience of the co-production process and/or the public service delivered, and provide support. But sanctions or compulsion

are often counterproductive, as illustrated above. Thus, the notion that public organizations are dependent on a small group of engaged co-producers seems unavoidable to a certain extent.

However, it also brings a potential risk for the continuation of the service delivery process and public organizations need to be aware of this. In all three cases studied – involving health care, education and community safety – it was observed that citizens' commitment to co-production is often dependent on concrete incidents or family members / children being part of the organization for elderly care / primary school. Even though especially in the health care and education cases more self-interested or egocentric motivations are (strongly) opposed, it seems that co-producers need something that is close to themselves to trigger their engagement. In other words, co-producers consider participation in service delivery as important because it is close to themselves, but once they have decided to engage they want to broaden their viewpoint and are mainly motivated by community-centered motivations. The consequence is that once this connection with the organization loosens or the 'triggering incident' is 'solved', commitment is likely to decline: citizens' perceptions on the salience of the collaboration and/ or public service delivered change, and – in the case of health care especially – given the larger distance between co-producer and public organization it is more difficult to involve these citizens in and inform them about all relevant issues. Thus, it might be difficult for public organizations to continue co-production over a longer period of time, especially when new, potential co-producers are hard to engage. Public organizations have to anticipate this and ensure the public services can also be delivered when citizens' input in co-production declines.

To conclude…

This dissertation started with the challenges of some ordinary, yet exemplary citizens and public professionals: Suzan who wanted to start-up a neighborhood watch scheme in a Dutch municipality; Peter who worked as a civil servant in the municipal organization and provided Suzan the necessary support; and Tina who, as a police officer, wanted to be of help to Suzan and her team, yet who at the same time felt constrained by the local police chief (her supervisor) (see Text box

1.1). The separate studies in the dissertation have shown that this fictitious case is not unrealistic or unlikely to occur, and that both individual citizens and public professionals have to deal with the challenges of co-production almost on a daily basis. In this dissertation I have attempted to better understand the engagement of the individual citizens and public professionals involved in co-production, and what is the role of this engagement in the collaborative process. With the answer formulated to the research question and the practical implications outlined above, I hope that I have contributed to the co-production debate in both academia and society. Hopefully, people like Suzan, Peter, Tina and the local police chief can make an advantage of it to ensure they can collaborate in a worthwhile way to produce a safe and livable neighborhood or any other relevant public service. Let the dissertation be an inspiration also for others to happily and fruitfully co-produce!

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NEDERLANDSE SAMENVATTING

NEDERLANDSE SAMENVATTING (SUMMARY IN DUTCH)

Dit proefschrift gaat over coproductie: de samenwerking tussen burgers en overheidsprofessionals gericht op het leveren van publieke diensten. Vandaag de dag vinden we dergelijke samenwerkingsverbanden overal om ons heen. In de buurt is misschien een buurtpreventieteam actief om de buurt veilig en leefbaar te houden. Bij de basisschool om de hoek helpen ouders via de medezeggenschapsraad om de school draaiende te houden door allerlei relevante zaken (zoals lesmethoden) met het schoolbestuur te bespreken. En in het verzorgings- of bejaardentehuis spelen de bewoners en hun familie via de cliëntenraad een rol bij het leveren van kwalitatief goede zorg.

De achtergrond van 'coproductie'

Het idee dat burgers een bijdrage kunnen leveren aan publieke dienstverlening is niet nieuw. In verschillende wetenschappelijke publicaties uit eind jaren 70 / begin jaren 80 van de vorige eeuw vinden we het begrip 'coproductie' terug. Maar toen in de jaren 80 het marktdenken populair werd (het zogenoemde *New Public Management*), verschoof de aandacht. Vooral sinds het laatste decennium beleeft het concept echter een ware comeback. De groeiende populariteit is mede het gevolg van de economische crisis waardoor de druk op de overheidsfinanciën toenam, een groeiende roep van burgers voor meer én betere diensten tegen lagere kosten, sociale uitdagingen zoals de vergrijzing, en een legitimiteitscrisis van zowel de overheid als de marktsector.

De opkomst van coproductie past binnen een breder, veranderend denkbeeld over hoe de relatie tussen overheid en burgers eruit hoort te zien. Aan de zijde van de burger wordt hierbij steeds meer nadruk gelegd op actief burgerschap: het oppakken van verantwoordelijkheden naast het benadrukken van burgerrechten. Aan de zijde van de overheid overheerst het denkbeeld dat diensten in een netwerk geproduceerd dienen te worden: de overheid dient niet langer de centrale actor te zijn en zou burgers de mogelijkheid moeten geven een bijdrage te leveren aan het dienstverleningsproces.

Coproductie kan dan ook niet los gezien worden van de politieke en ideologische debatten in verschillende landen. Zo voerde toenmalig premier Cameron in het Verenigd Koninkrijk het '*Big Society*' debat aan en is sinds enkele jaren '*the right to challenge*' populair. Dit 'recht' om de traditionele serviceverlener uit te dagen wint momenteel ook in Nederland aan populariteit, waar het kan worden toegevoegd aan debatten over de 'doe-democratie' en 'participatiesamenleving'. Het normatieve karakter van deze debatten is deels terug te zien in de academische literatuur. In de literatuur worden nog relatief weinig kritische noten gezet bij de normatieve assumpties die stellen dat coproductie onder meer leidt tot het leveren van betere publieke diensten, het beter benutten van schaarse middelen, de versterking van sociale netwerken waardoor de zelfredzaamheid van burgers toeneemt en, tot slot, een verbeterd welzijn.

Eén van de uitdagingen voor de huidige coproductieliteratuur is om te onderzoeken in hoeverre deze assumpties waar zijn. Dit proefschrift richt zich echter niet op de effecten van coproductie, maar op een ander belangrijk en tot nu toe onbeantwoord vraagstuk.

Opzet van de studie

Aan de start van het dissertatieonderzoek lag de focus binnen de coproductieliteratuur namelijk vooral op de samenwerkingsnetwerken, processen en organisaties, waardoor de individuen betrokken bij coproductie amper bekeken werden. Mede hierdoor was weinig bekend over hoe de coproducenten (de burgers) en de reguliere producenten (de overheidsprofessionals) het coproductieproces ervaren. In de praktijk zien we dat burgers soms teleurgesteld raken, het niet altijd even gemakkelijk is om een grote groep burgers aan te spreken om actief deel te nemen en dat overheidsprofessionals de omschakeling naar de nieuwe werkwijze niet altijd makkelijk (kunnen) maken. Maar binnen de bestaande coproductieliteratuur werd geen antwoord op deze vraagstukken geboden.

Meer specifiek identificeert dit proefschrift drie gaten in de literatuur: 1) de motivaties van coproducenten worden te weinig bekeken, 2) het perspectief van de individuele professional wordt te weinig bekeken, en 3) bij de studies die zich wel op burgers of professionals richten is de focus slechts op één van de

samenwerkende partijen gericht in plaats van op de samenwerking tussen beide. Om onze inzichten te vergroten, zoekt dit proefschrift naar een antwoord op de volgende onderzoeksvraag:

> **Wat zijn de motivaties van individuele burgers en publieke professionals om zich betrokken te voelen bij de coproductie van publieke diensten, en hoe zijn wederzijdse opvattingen over de betrokkenheid van de coproducerende partner van invloed op de samenwerking?**

Deze hoofdvraag is opgesplitst in drie deelvragen:

1) Waarom voelen individuele burgers zich betrokken bij de coproductie van publieke diensten?
2) Waarom voelen individuele publieke professionals zich betrokken bij de coproductie van publieke diensten?
3) Hoe zijn wederzijdse opvattingen over de betrokkenheid van de coproducerende partner van invloed op de samenwerking?

Tabel A Overzicht van de empirische hoofdstukken in het proefschrift

Hoofdstuk	Specifieke onderzoeksvraag	Onderzoeksontwerp (O) & onderzochte casus (C)
2	Wat motiveert burgers om zich betrokken te voelen in co-planning activiteiten binnen de ouderenzorg?	**O:** Q-methodologie studie **C:** Cliëntenraden in organisaties voor ouderenzorg (NL)
3	Waarom voelen burgers zich betrokken in de coproductie van publieke diensten?	**O:** Literatuurstudie en focusgroepen **C:** Cliëntenraden in organisaties voor ouderenzorg (NL), medezeggenschapsraden op basisscholen (NL), buurtpreventieteams (NL), gebruikersraden in organisaties voor gehandicaptenzorg (BE)
4	Waarom coproduceren burgers in het veiligheidsdomein en wat zijn de verschillen en overeenkomsten tussen Nederland en België?	**O:** Vergelijkende Q-methodologie studie **C:** Buurtpreventieteams (NL en BE)
5	Hoe verklaren percepties over 1) autonomie, 2) de ondersteuning geboden door de organisatie en 3) de regeldruk de betrokkenheid van locatiemanagers bij de coproductie met cliëntenraden binnen Nederlandse organisaties voor ouderenzorg?	**O:** Survey onder locatiemanagers / multivariate (OLS) regressies **C:** Cliëntenraden in organisaties voor ouderenzorg (NL)
6	Hoe zijn de opvattingen die burgers en professionals hebben over het niveau en de reden van betrokkenheid van hun coproducerende partner van invloed op de samenwerking?	**O:** Enkelvoudige, explorerende casestudy / interviews, focusgroepen, participatieve observaties, documentanalyse **C:** Buurtpreventieteams (NL)

Voor de beantwoording van de onderzoeksvraag is het nodig om andere onderzoeksmethoden te gebruiken dan de enkelvoudige casestudies die het onderzoeksveld domineren. Kwantitatieve methoden en vergelijkende studies (zowel tussen beleidssectoren als landen) komen weinig voor, maar om het onderzoeksveld verder te brengen is meer methodologische diversiteit wenselijk. Recentelijk zijn enkele stappen in deze richting genomen, zoals een experimentele studie uitgevoerd door Jakobsen (2013) en een vignettenstudie door Fledderus (2015b). Dit proefschrift is in dezelfde periode uitgevoerd waarin deze innovatieve

onderzoeksmethoden in het onderzoeksveld van de coproductie werden geïntroduceerd. De dissertatie voegt daar enkele andere methoden aan toe (te weten Q-methodologie, een vergelijkend onderzoeksontwerp en survey onderzoek) en maakt het zo mogelijk om een ander type onderzoeksvragen te beantwoorden en nieuwe inzichten te verzamelen.

Samengenomen weerspiegelen de empirische hoofdstukken een gemixt onderzoeksdesign ('*mixed method*'), waarin zowel kwalitatieve methoden gericht op het bouwen van theorie als kwantitatieve methoden gericht op het testen van hypothesen zijn geïntegreerd. Belangrijk om daarbij te vermelden is dat het proefschrift is gebaseerd op een aantal artikelen dat gepubliceerd of ingediend is bij internationale wetenschappelijke tijdschriften. Ieder hoofdstuk kan hierdoor ook op zichzelf gelezen worden. Tabel A geeft een kort overzicht van de empirische hoofdstukken en het onderzoeksontwerp dat in ieder hoofdstuk is toegepast.

Een antwoord op de onderzoeksvraag

Voordat een antwoord op de overkoepelende onderzoeksvraag gegeven kan worden, moeten eerst de drie deelvragen beantwoord worden.

Deelvraag 1: Waarom voelen individuele burgers zich betrokken bij de coproductie van publieke diensten?

Om deze deelvraag te kunnen beantwoorden, is eerst een Q-methodologie studie uitgevoerd (beschreven in *hoofdstuk 2*). Via deze methode is het mogelijk om de denkbeelden van burgers systematisch te bestuderen en zo de verschillende percepties die burgers hebben op hun betrokkenheid in coproductie te onderscheiden. In het bijzonder is gekeken naar de percepties op co-planning activiteiten in de context van cliëntenraden in Nederlandse organisaties voor ouderenzorg. Deze eerste deelstudie laat zien dat de redenen waarom coproducenten zich betrokken voelen bij cliëntenraden divers zijn en dat zij daarmee niet als een eenduidige 'groep' of 'entiteit' gezien kunnen worden. Sommigen zien hun deelname aan de cliëntenraad bijvoorbeeld meer als instrumenteel, met als doel impact te hebben op het gevoerde beleid. Anderen hebben een meer ideologisch beeld: zij worden gedreven door de gedachte dat patiënten een stem moeten hebben en dat cliëntenraden belangrijk

zijn voor het functioneren van de organisatie en het welzijn van de bewoners.

Toch kunnen tussen de verschillende groepen coproducenten ook enkele overeenkomsten geïdentificeerd worden. Eén overeenkomst betreft de motivatie om zich op de gemeenschap te richten in plaats van op zichzelf. Vanuit een theoretische invalshoek is dit opmerkelijk, omdat de coproductieliteratuur vaak veronderstelt dat coproducenten gedreven worden door materiele prikkels en intrinsieke beloningen. Coproducenten hebben immers direct baat bij het produceren van de geleverde diensten, omdat zij deze ook afnemen. En dat is nu ook wat coproducenten onderscheidt van vrijwilligers: van coproducenten wordt verwacht dat zij (uitsluitend) gemotiveerd zijn door het profijt dat zij of hun directe naasten hebben van de diensten. Op basis van de onderzoeksresultaten van hoofdstuk 2 kunnen echter vraagtekens gezet worden bij deze assumptie.

Om de geïdentificeerde complexiteit in de motivaties van coproducenten beter te begrijpen, is een theoretisch model opgebouwd (zie *hoofdstuk 3*). In dit model wordt uiteengezet dat de beslissing van coproducenten om zich betrokken te voelen bij coproductie weergegeven kan worden als een ladder. Drie factoren zijn hierbij van belang: 1) de percepties van burgers op de coproductie taken, 2) individuele kenmerken, en 3) motivaties gericht op de gemeenschap en zelfgerichte motivaties. Bij deze zelfgerichte motivaties dient opgemerkt te worden dat deze niet per definitie gezien moeten worden als egoïstische beweegredenen; het kan bijvoorbeeld ook gaan om de motivatie om nieuwe contacten op te doen of nieuwe vaardigheden te leren.

Om de bruikbaarheid van het model te onderzoeken, zijn binnen vier cases focusgroepen gehouden (zoals gepresenteerd in *hoofdstuk 3*). Hierbij is gekeken naar de betrokkenheid van coproducenten bij Nederlandse cliëntenraden in instellingen voor ouderenzorg, medezeggenschapsraden op basisscholen en buurtpreventieteams, en bij Vlaamse gebruikersraden in zorginstellingen voor gehandicapten. Op basis van de verzamelde empirische data kan geconcludeerd worden dat het model een goede verklaring biedt voor de betrokkenheid van burgers. Wel blijkt dat sommige variabelen anders geïnterpreteerd worden door de respondenten dan vooraf op basis van de theorie werd verwacht; zo wordt het ‘gemak’ waarmee coproductie kan worden uitgevoerd slechts beperkt tot

het hebben van genoeg tijd. Ook kunnen enkele nieuwe inzichten aan het model worden toegevoegd, zoals ongerustheidsgevoelens en de overtuiging dat je niet moet klagen, maar zelf iets moet bijdragen aan de oplossing van problemen. Tot slot bestaat een aantal verschillen tussen de onderzochte cases.

De gehanteerde onderzoeksmethode met focusgroepen heeft onder meer als voordeel dat met een open blik gekeken kan worden naar nieuwe inzichten. Nadeel is echter dat de conclusies niet zomaar gegeneraliseerd kunnen worden naar alle coproducenten in de onderzochte cases en dat we ook niet zondermeer kunnen concluderen dat het model eveneens een verklaring biedt voor de betrokkenheid van coproducenten in andere beleidsdomeinen of landen. De empirische zoektocht om de betrokkenheid van burgers te ontrafelen wordt daarom nog verder voortgezet. Dit keer met een vergelijking tussen twee landen (weergegeven in *hoofdstuk 4*). Als casus is gekozen voor buurtpreventie; een klassiek voorbeeld van coproductie. Om de inzichten in de betrokkenheid van burgers bij de veiligheid in hun eigen buurt beter te begrijpen, is een vergelijkende Q-methodologie studie uitgevoerd tussen Nederland en België (Vlaanderen).

Net als bij de Q-methodologie studie uitgevoerd bij cliëntenraden in de ouderenzorg, blijkt ook binnen het veiligheidsdomein dat groepen burgers uiteenlopende motivaties hebben om zich betrokken te voelen. Wanneer de empirische resultaten van de beide landen naast de bestaande theorie gelegd worden, dan leidt dit tot drie interessante observaties. Allereerst blijken de geïdentificeerde profielen - waarin de percepties van één groep burgers worden weergegeven - niet eendimensionaal te zijn. Met andere woorden, de betrokkenheid bij de coproductie van veiligheid in de eigen buurt wordt gedreven door een combinatie van factoren. Gemeenschapsgerichte en zelfgerichte motivaties kunnen hierbij prima naast elkaar voorkomen. Ten tweede is bij de motivatie van vrijwel alle onderzochte coproducenten een grote rol weggelegd voor percepties over de uit te voeren taken. Tot slot blijkt uit de vergelijking tussen Nederland en België dat in verhouding de zelfgerichte motivaties in Nederland wat minder prominent zijn en dat concepten als het belang van coproductie (‘*salience*’) en percepties over het eigen kunnen en de toegevoegde waarde (‘*efficacy*) juist frequenter en explicieter genoemd worden. Echter, aangezien de belangrijkste conclusie is dat

zowel in Nederlands als in België groepen burgers verschillend gemotiveerd zijn, is het lastig om één eenduidig profiel voor dé Nederlandse of Belgische coproducent te schetsen.

Deelvraag 2: Waarom voelen individuele publieke professionals zich betrokken bij de coproductie van publieke diensten?

Nu een beter beeld bestaat waarom burgers zich betrokken voelen bij coproductie, kan de focus verplaatst worden naar de andere samenwerkende partij: de publieke professionals. Hoewel individuele professionals vaak weinig keuzevrijheid hebben in de beslissing om al dan niet deel te nemen aan coproductie (die beslissing wordt vaak van hogerhand gemaakt), wordt in de literatuur wel verondersteld dat hun betrokkenheid een belangrijke conditie voor succesvolle coproductie is. Professionals die naar de ideeën van coproducenten willen luisteren en bereid zijn actief informatie te delen, kunnen bijvoorbeeld burgers motiveren en gevoelens van wederkerigheid tussen de deelnemers stimuleren. Toch bestaat nog maar weinig empirisch inzicht in de betrokkenheid van professionals.

In het proefschrift is een eerste stap gezet om de betrokkenheid van professionals beter te begrijpen (gerapporteerd in *hoofdstuk 5*). Het blijkt dat de betrokkenheid bestaat uit drie dimensies: de percepties op het belang van coproductie, de percepties op de impact van coproductie en persoonlijke (en zelfgerapporteerde) deelname aan coproductie. Als mogelijke verklaring waarom professionals zich betrokken voelen bij coproductie, zijn op basis van de bredere bestuurskundige literatuur drie kenmerken van de werkomgeving beschreven: de ervaren mate van werkautonomie (zowel in het algemeen als specifiek gerelateerd aan coproductie), percepties over de door de organisatie geboden ondersteuning en de ervaren regeldruk (‘*red tape*’; zowel in het algemeen als specifiek gerelateerd aan coproductie).

Vervolgens is dit theoretische model getest door middel van een survey onderzoek (ook wel ‘enquête’ genoemd). Als casus is hierbij opnieuw gekeken naar cliëntenraden binnen de ouderenzorg, waarbij de professionals de locatiemanagers van de verschillende zorginstellingen zijn. Wat deze casus interessant maakt, is dat het een wettelijk verplichte vorm van coproductie betreft. Uit de analyse

van de survey antwoorden blijkt dat zelfs bij deze verplichte samenwerking de betrokkenheid van professionals niet als een gegeven kan worden beschouwd: locatiemanagers voelen zich in verschillende mate betrokken bij de samenwerking met de cliëntenraad. Hiermee wordt dus ook duidelijk dat deelname aan coproductie ('*involvement*') niet hetzelfde is als het zich ook daadwerkelijk betrokken voelen bij het coproductieproces ('*engagement*').

De analyse toont verder dat het theoretische model ten dele een verklaring biedt voor de betrokkenheid van professionals. De mate waarin zowel werkautonomie als *red tape* in het algemeen wordt ervaren, blijkt geen verklaring te kunnen bieden. Dezelfde concepten maar dan specifiek gedefinieerd binnen de coproductiecontext blijken daarentegen wel een effect te hebben: werkautonomie ervaren in het coproductieproces heeft een positief en *red tape* ervaren in het coproductieproces een negatief effect op de betrokkenheid van professionals. De resultaten met betrekking tot de geboden organisatieondersteuning zijn gemengd. Hoe meer ondersteuning professionals ervaren, hoe hoger de scores voor zowel het gepercipieerde belang als de persoonlijke deelname. Tussen organisatieondersteuning en de gepercipieerde impact van de cliëntenraad bestaat geen significante relatie. Tot slot is een interactie-effect gevonden tussen organisatieondersteuning en werkautonomie in coproductie: de geboden ondersteuning door de organisatie versterkt significant het positieve effect van werkautonomie op de percepties over het belang van de samenwerking met cliëntenraden.

Deelvraag 3: Hoe zijn wederzijdse opvattingen over de betrokkenheid van de coproducerende partner van invloed op de samenwerking?

Door het beantwoorden van de eerste twee deelvragen hebben we een beter inzicht gekregen in de betrokkenheid van individuele burgers en professionals bij coproductieprocessen. Eén vraag is echter nog onbeantwoord, namelijk hoe deze betrokkenheid doorwerkt in de samenwerking. Om ook hierin inzicht te krijgen, is een explorerend onderzoek uitgevoerd: een casestudy onderzoek waarbij de samenwerking via verschillende buurtpreventieteams binnen één Nederlandse gemeente wordt uitgediept (zoals gepresenteerd in *hoofdstuk 6*). De data zijn via verschillende bronnen verzameld: (semi-gestructureerde)

individuele en groepsinterviews met leden van buurtpreventieteams en publieke professionals van zowel de gemeente als politie (beleidsmedewerkers, boa's en wijkagenten), participerende observaties, beleidsdocumenten, krantenartikelen en twitterberichten.

Eén van de onderzoeksbevindingen is dat de coproducenten niet alleen om verschillende redenen betrokken zijn (zoals in het antwoord op de eerste deelvraag naar voren kwam), maar dat ze ook in verschillende mate betrokken zijn. De buurtpreventen verschillen in hoe zij hun eigen rol zien en in hoeveel inspanningen zij bereid zijn te leveren. Deze bevinding is des te interessanter, aangezien alle coproducenten zelf en vrijwillig hebben besloten om deel te nemen aan het buurtpreventieteam. Van publieke professionals weten we dat zij zich in verschillende mate betrokken voelen, zoals onder andere blijkt uit het survey onderzoek in dit proefschrift en uit een studie van Tuurnas (2015). Maar doordat zij vaak min of meer gedwongen worden om deel te nemen aan coproductie, is dat minder verrassend.

Daarnaast blijkt dat professionele ondersteuning van wijkagenten en gemeentelijke beleidsmedewerkers nodig is en door de buurtpreventen gewaardeerd wordt. Vaak kunnen de buurtpreventieteams na verloop van tijd zelfstandiger opereren, maar dit doet de noodzaak voor ondersteuning maar beperkt afnemen. Met andere woorden, burgers en publieke professionals committeren zichzelf aan de samenwerking en hebben de middelen (zoals tijd) nodig om aan de verwachtingen van hun coproducerende partner te voldoen. Uitingen van waardering zijn over en weer nodig om zowel de burgers als de professionals gemotiveerd te houden. Voor beide actoren bleek dat zij zich minder geïnspireerd voelden om inspanningen te leveren wanneer deze inspanningen niet (expliciet) gewaardeerd werden door de ander en/of wanneer de samenwerking geen zinvolle uitkomsten opleverde. Dergelijke waardering kan bijvoorbeeld geuit worden via een (figuurlijk) schouderklopje, een twitterbericht of een jaarlijkse gemeentelijke borrel.

De overkoepelende onderzoeksvraag: Wat zijn de motivaties van individuele burgers en publieke professionals om zich betrokken te voelen bij de coproductie van publieke diensten, en hoe zijn wederzijdse opvattingen over de betrokkenheid van de coproducerende partner van invloed op de samenwerking?
Nu alle deelvragen beantwoord zijn, is het mogelijk om een antwoord te formuleren op de overkoepelende onderzoeksvraag. Dat antwoord is drieledig.

Allereerst laat dit proefschrift zien dat **individuele burgers** zich om verschillende redenen betrokken voelen bij coproductie. Hierdoor is het niet mogelijk om een eenduidig profiel op te stellen van dé coproducent. Wel is het mogelijk om enkele factoren te onderscheiden die een rol spelen bij de beslissing van individuele burgers om zich al dan niet betrokken te voelen bij coproductie. Dit zijn: 1) de percepties van burgers op de coproductie taken, 2) individuele kenmerken, en 3) motivaties gericht op de gemeenschap en zelfgerichte motivaties.

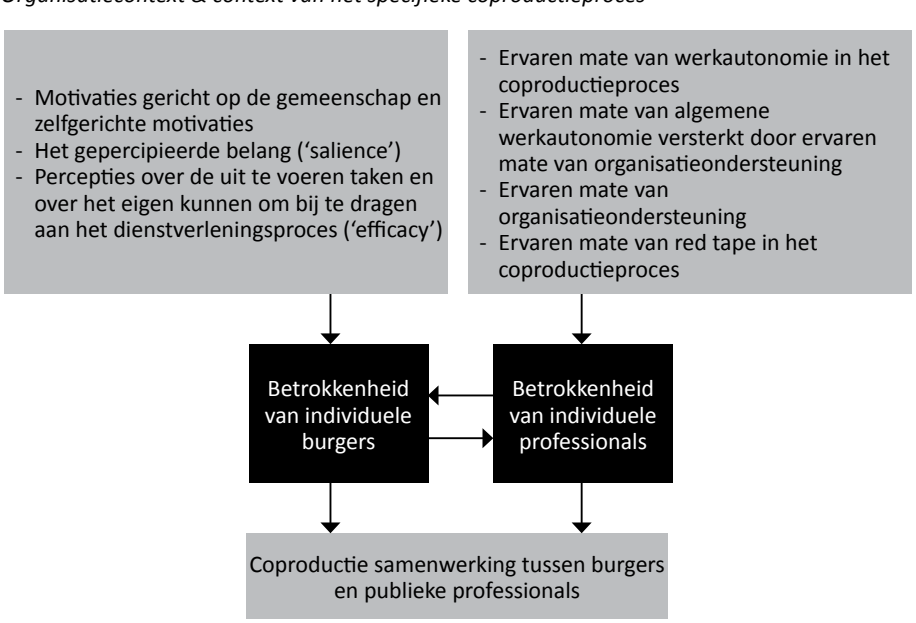
Ten tweede blijkt dat **publieke professionals** zich in verschillende mate betrokken voelen bij coproductieprocessen en dat deze verschillen verklaard worden door enkele kenmerken van de werkomgeving. Het gaat hierbij om werkautonomie ervaren in het coproductieproces, de ervaren mate van ondersteuning geboden door de organisatie en *red tape* ervaren in het coproductieproces. Percepties van de algemene werkautonomie hebben alleen invloed op de mate van betrokkenheid wanneer een hoge mate van organisatieondersteuning ervaren wordt.

Tot slot kan geconcludeerd worden dat **wederzijdse opvattingen over de betrokkenheid van de coproducerende partner** inderdaad van invloed zijn op de samenwerking, doordat deze opvattingen invloed hebben op de inspanningen die actoren bereid zijn te leveren. Oprechte betrokkenheid die ook getoond wordt naar de andere actor is cruciaal om een coproducerende relatie op te bouwen en te continueren. Alleen wanneer actoren zelf gemotiveerd zijn, zich gecommitteerd voelen aan de coproductie en overtuigd zijn van de toegevoegde waarde van de samenwerking, kunnen zij anderen inspireren.

Op basis van dit antwoord op de onderzoeksvraag kan een nieuw theoretisch model gevormd worden (zie figuur A). Het model verklaart de betrokkenheid van individuele burgers en publieke professionals in coproductie. Het laat zien welke factoren invloed hebben op deze betrokkenheid, hoe de betrokkenheid doorwerkt in

de samenwerking en hoe burgers en professionals elkaar beïnvloeden. Dit alles vindt plaats binnen de context van de publieke organisatie waarin het coproductieproces is opgenomen en van het specifieke coproductieproces.

Figuur A Theoretisch model afgeleid van de onderzoeksresultaten van het proefschrift



Praktische implicaties

Tot slot is het goed om stil te staan bij de gevolgen van deze onderzoeksresultaten voor de praktijk: voor de burgers, publieke professionals en publieke organisaties die deelnemen aan coproductie. Dit proefschrift beoogt geen handboek voor (lokale) overheden te zijn voor hoe zij coproductieprocessen het beste kunnen vormgeven. Toch kunnen wel enkele richtlijnen en suggesties worden meegegeven. In het proefschrift worden de volgende vier punten uitgewerkt:

1. *Begrijp en wees ervan bewust dat coproducenten geen eenduidige groep vormen.*

   Hoewel dit op het oog niet zo'n interessante bevinding is, is dit misschien

wel de belangrijkste les voor publieke organisaties. Het heeft gevolgen voor zowel het ontwerp van coproductieprocessen als voor de communicatie met potentiële coproducenten. Zo moet het coproductieproces zodanig ontworpen worden dat ruimte bestaat voor maatwerk. En is het aannemelijk dat dezelfde verschillen die in het proefschrift zijn gevonden tussen burgers die al deelnemen aan het coproductieproces eveneens van toepassing zijn op burgers die potentieel kunnen gaan deelnemen. Door in de communicatie naar deze groep verschillende aspecten van coproductie te benadrukken, kunnen zij beter bereikt worden.

2. *Wees ervan doordrongen dat participatie aan coproductie leidt tot bepaalde verwachtingen aan de zijde van de coproducerende partner.*
   Coproductie leidt ertoe dat de rol van burgers en professionals in het dienstverleningsproces verandert. En dit brengt bepaalde verplichtingen met zich mee voor de professionals die deelnemen. Zo moeten zij regelmatig met de burger in contact treden, moet informatie gedeeld worden en moeten burgers over de benodigde middelen kunnen beschikken voor het goed kunnen uitvoeren van hun taken. Door een coproductieproces op te starten dan wel hierin te stappen, committeren de professionals en de publieke organisatie zich aan deze verplichtingen. Zij dienen zich daarom – vooraf – af te vragen of het realistisch is om aan de verwachtingen te voldoen en of de publieke organisatie haar professionals voldoende kan ondersteunen om hun nieuwe rol waar te maken.
3. *De betrokkenheid van individuele professionals is cruciaal in het coproductieproces, maar kan niet als vanzelfsprekend worden beschouwd.*
   Dit punt raakt aan het voorgaande. Ook al worden professionals verplicht om deel te nemen, oprechte betrokkenheid ontstaat niet vanzelf. Dit vraagt een investering van de professionals zelf en van de publieke organisatie. Zo is het zinvol om professionals te betrekken in de besluitvorming om al dan niet deel te gaan nemen aan coproductie. Dit kan bijdragen aan de bewustwording welke toegevoegde waarde de samenwerking met burgers heeft voor het dienstverleningsproces in het algemeen en voor de dagelijkse taakuitvoering door de professional. Een open organisatiecultuur en leiderschap kunnen hier

een positieve bijdrage aan leveren.

4. *Realiseer dat coproductie naar alle waarschijnlijkheid berust op een kleine groep burgers.*

   Publieke organisaties en professionals kunnen nog zoveel energie steken in het motiveren en stimuleren van burgers om deel te nemen aan coproductie; het is niet realistisch om te verwachten dat alle burgers kunnen en willen deelnemen. Meestal is de deelname van burgers gebaseerd op vrijwillige inzet, waardoor publieke organisaties hier maar beperkte invloed op hebben. Het invoeren van sancties of gebruik maken van dwang heeft vaak een tegenovergesteld effect. Het lijkt daarmee onvermijdelijk dat de groep coproducenten een beperkte omvang zal hebben. Dit kan risico's met zich meebrengen voor de continuïteit van het dienstverleningsproces en publieke organisaties dienen zich hier bewust van te zijn.

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Carola

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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Carola van Eijk was born on July 26th, 1986. She holds a Bachelor and a Research Master in Public Administration from Leiden University, the Netherlands. In addition, she obtained a Propedeuse in Minor Economics at the same university. Throughout her Bachelor program, she was a student member and the secretary of the Program Committee of the Institute of Public Administration, and worked as a trainee and research assistant at the Netherlands Court of Audit. She also combined her master studies with work as a student assistant in several research projects (on topics such as local government, public sector reform, and Public Service Motivation (PSM)), and was involved in different teaching activities.

After obtaining her Master degree, Carola van Eijk worked as a researcher at Leiden University. She was involved in research projects on the topics of PSM and active citizenship. In 2013, she started her PhD research, after being awarded a Research Talent Grant by NWO (the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research). Besides her PhD research, Carola took several skill courses (for example on presenting and academic writing) and didactical courses offered by ICLON (Leiden University Graduate School of Teaching). She attended international and national conferences, such as The European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR), The International Research Society for Public Management (IRSPM), and The Netherlands Institute of Government (NIG). As a member of the IIAS Study Group on Co-production of Public Services, she frequently discussed her work with other international scholars in the field of co-production. Carola also taught several undergraduate and graduate courses (for example on research methods, Europeanization, and the policy process), and supervised Master students in the writing of their theses. In 2015, she developed a Master's course on the topic of co-production and citizen engagement. During that year, she also obtained the University Teaching Qualification (BKO).

Carola's research addresses a wide variety of topics, such as co-production, citizen participation, blame gaming, crises, and policy advice. She uses and combines different qualitative and quantitative research methods. Her work has

been published in different international and national academic journals, including *Public Management Review*, *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, *Local Government Studies*, *Public Administration*, and *Journal of Urban Affairs*. She also connects her research findings with a wider, professional audience through presentations at ministries, conferences for professionals, and (social) media contributions. Currently, Carola works as a researcher and a lecturer at the Institute of Public Administration at Leiden University.

The idea of citizens and public professionals collaborating to provide public services has widely spread in several countries around the globe. Co-production is often presented as the go-to solution for challenges such as an ageing population, financial concerns, citizens' demand for more/better services at a lower cost, and a legitimacy crisis of both the government and the market. Yet, co-production also brings new challenges for the citizens, public professionals and public organizations involved. Why do citizens sometimes become disappointed with co-production? And what drives them to engage in co-production processes? Why do professionals at times feel constrained when interacting with citizens? Although co-production literature is booming, these issues still remain unsolved.

This dissertation contributes to our understanding of why individual citizens and public professionals engage in co-production, and what the role of mutual perceptions of this engagement is. The study is innovative in both its approach (i.e., a focus on the individuals involved instead of on the collaborative networks, processes, and organizations) and the research methods applied (i.e., it proposes a mixed method research design in a research field dominated by single case studies and qualitative research methods). The book presents a variety of studies to empirically unravel citizens' and professionals' engagement in the co-production of public services. The cases include client councils in healthcare organizations, neighborhood watch schemes, and representative advisory councils at primary schools.

The book concludes proposing a new theoretical model of individual citizens' and public professionals' engagement in the co-production of public services, and suggests further research topics that still need to be addressed. The dissertation provides valuable insights for academic scholars in the field of co-production, and has some implications for the citizens, public professionals and public organizations involved in co-production processes.

Carola van Eijk is a researcher and a lecturer at the Institute of Public Administration at Leiden University, the Netherlands.