The Hague Southwest: A Challenging Change

A study on the usage of participatory governance to improve distressed neighbourhoods

Master thesis

Governance of Migration and Diversity (PA)

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Abstract

Urban participatory governance projects are valued because the participation of citizens in the policy process is expected to make these projects more capable of increasing social cohesion in disadvantaged neighbourhoods. However, there remains a lack of understanding of what this participation looks like and whether it indeed stimulates contact between residents. By reviewing policy documents and interviewing participating residents, this thesis tackles this problem by comparing a top-down project with a bottom-up project in two disadvantaged neighbourhoods in The Hague Southwest. The results indicate a mismatch between the expectations of participatory governance and the actual citizen participation. While traditional participatory governance revolves around the inclusion of citizens in decision-making processes, the participation in The Hague Southwest mostly remains outside the policy arena. Moreover, the local participatory governance projects are unable to facilitate in-depth contact between residents, as residents actually perform and desire more fleeting interactions.

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Introduction

> '*Moerwijk is no longer what it used to be, residents like the 73-year-old Marja Nijhuis find. She came to the neighbourhood with her husband and son over 45 years ago. From her leather chair in her living room, she points outside. "Everyone's front yards used to be só well taken care off. Now balconies are full of garbage, boys throw cans from their cars and some windows are plastered with newspaper." She misses the time when she knew all her neighbours, because the children played together, and garden parties were hosted. "Now people barely greet each other anymore."'* (Trouw, May 26, 2021)

This quote from a Dutch quality newspaper reflects a common problem in Moerwijk: a lack of contact between residents. What's more, in 2019, the municipality of The Hague together with the national government identified several other problems in neighbourhoods Moerwijk, Morgenstond, Bouwlust and Vrederust, mostly related to long-term unemployment, poverty, debt, health, radicalisation, polarisation, deterioration, feelings of unsafety and a lack of social cohesion (National government, 2019). In an effort to tackle these problems a joined action plan, the Regiodeal The Hague Southwest, was formulated, which included several points of focus: physical health, education, employability, and social cohesion.

The municipality hopes to increase the latter by motivating citizens to participate in society and by increasing their self-worth, confidence, and resilience. To do so, several meeting places were created in the neighbourhoods, combined with multiple participation projects. A crucial condition for these projects: they should be created together with the targeted citizens, to ensure that the projects match their needs and wishes, and to increase their feelings of having influence (National government, 2019). Therefore, the projects can be labelled as participatory governance. This is a type of governance that engages individuals and organisations outside government, and in particular citizens, who are viewed as co-producers of public policy (Fischer, 2012; Agger, 2012).

Neighbourhood projects that employ participatory governance are becoming increasingly popular, particularly in heterogeneous, disadvantaged neighbourhoods in the Netherlands (Michels, 2012; Dekker & Van Kempen, 2009; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). However, including citizens in such participatory governance structures has been problematised, primarily because it is not always combined with an increase of the citizens' power over policy processes (Arnstein, 1969; Michels, 2012). Moreover, frequently

representation issues arise, as people with a migration background or low educational or income levels tend to be excluded (Agger, 2012; Dekker & Van Kempen, 2009). Additionally, participatory governance in relation to establishing interethnic contact has been disputed. Neighbourhood projects are expected to socialise residents by promoting profound contact between diverse citizens. However, in practice such projects often seem unable to establish in-depth contact, mostly because citizens do not desire such connections. Instead, they prefer fleeting contact, like greeting and acknowledging each other in public spaces (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). Although it is not necessarily problematic, since superficial contact can also facilitate living together peacefully (Blokland & Nast, 2014), this does have consequences for neighbourhood projects like the ones within the Regiodeal.

This relates to the problem statement of this thesis: how does participatory governance affect citizen participation and social contact in distressed neighbourhoods? Do the problems described in the literature also apply to the projects in The Hague Southwest? And does the type of participatory governance – top-down or bottom-up have an effect?

To answer these questions, this thesis will analyse two neighbourhood projects. Neighbourhood company *Allekanten* is a project that works together with the municipality to develop the talents of Bouwlust's residents and to guide them towards (voluntary) employment. Contrastingly, at neighbourhood shop *Bij Betje* volunteers from Moerwijk offer a meeting place, activities and a sympathetic ear to fellow, vulnerable residents. To compare these cases, the following research question has been formulated, which will be answered through reviewing policy documents and conducting interviews:

How can participatory governance explain differences and similarities between projects Allekanten and Bij Betje regarding the level of participation and social contact between residents of The Hague Southwest?

Answering this research question is academically relevant because it fills several gaps in the literature. First, this thesis combines two strands of the academic debate on participatory governance, namely the one on the extent and interpretation of citizen participation with the one on the facilitation of social contact. Secondly, while scholars have previously linked different types of participatory governance to difficulties with dealing with ethnic diversity and social contact (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018), it has not been linked to whether this also influences different implementations of citizen participation. Lastly, while social contact between attending residents has been extensively researched, the ability of participatory governance

projects to establish more contact between the residents who are part of that governance structure, both within the project and in the neighbourhood, has not been researched yet (Blokland & Nast, 2014; Van der Meer, 2016; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). Therefore, this thesis will fill these gaps by comparing two neighbourhood projects that employ contrasting types of participatory governance.

This is also societally relevant, as there is a disparity between the type of social contact policymakers think participatory governance projects can facilitate, and the type of contact scholars argue such projects can sustain and residents desire. This contradiction will be tackled by examining it empirically in the context of The Hague Southwest. Moreover, this study will assess which type of participatory governance is more effective to reach the project's objectives, and what type of contact residents desire. This will yield policy recommendations relevant to any government agency opting to use participatory governance to advance heterogeneous, disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

Chapter I: Theoretical Framework

In this chapter, the relevant theories and concepts will be explained and linked to each other to form a comprehensive theoretical framework. First, participatory governance will be outlined, followed by a discussion on two dimensions of social cohesion: participation and social interethnic contact. Both can be related to participatory governance and the municipality's goals. This chapter will close with some expectations.

1.1 Participatory governance

Governance, both as an empirical phenomenon and an analytical concept, has become a ubiquitous concept in social science in general, and in the field of migration and diversity specifically. Generally, the concept contains three aspects. First, governance involves actors from the public, private, voluntary, and community sectors, which blurs the boundaries between public and private, and governmental and non-governmental actors (Schiller, 2018). However, the government's role does not shrink but merely shifts from directly steering policy processes to coordinating governance networks (Kjaer, 2004). Second, it involves the (in)formal interaction of these actors, who are autonomous but interdependent. Third, governance is a negotiation tool for formulating and implementing policy, because all actors work towards a common goal: solving societal and political problems (Schiller, 2018).

In Europe, since the 1990s, a 'local turn' towards the urban level can be identified, as urban governments had to deal simultaneously with budget cuts and more responsibilities passed down from national levels. From this arose the need to include other parties in the policy process, as well as privatising certain governmental functions (Schiller, 2018; Dekker & Van Kempen, 2009). This urban governance concerns new, (in)formal institutional arrangements for regulating and coordinating policymaking for urban affairs, such as public-private schemes for development, and neighbourhood development programmes (Lukas, 2019). In such processes, citizens can be invited to join, although this is associated with problems relating to representativeness (when elite are preferred over ordinary citizens) or self-interest motives (Hendriks, 2014; Dekker & Van Kempen, 2004). Therefore, most urban governance processes tend to exclude ordinary citizens, and instead opt for partnering with voluntary and community organisations or representatives, who are supposed to represent the citizens' voices (Obeng-Odoom, 2012; Pierre, 2014; Lukas, 2019).

A type of urban governance that does pursue the active involvement of citizens in the policy process, is participatory governance (Fischer, 2012; Agger, 2012; Michels, 2012).

Similarly to urban governance, the government is no longer central in the policy processes, as partnerships with non-governmental stakeholders are emphasised (Fischer, 2012). Moreover, participatory governance is mostly implemented at the local level in cities and neighbourhoods (Michels, 2012). It can therefore be defined as a type of (urban) governance that emphasises the democratic engagement of individuals and organisations outside government through deliberative processes. Citizens are not only included as voters and watchdogs but can also directly engage with pressing issues (Fischer, 2012, p.2). It attempts to transform citizens from demanding consumers of public services to '*responsible co-producers of public governance by involving them in the design, implementation and enforcement of public policies*' (Agger, 2012, p.30). This should make public policies more effective, as they include the views, ideas, and resources of the affected stakeholders (Agger, 2012).

Traditionally, citizen participation focuses on facilitating greater public access to information about government, consulting citizens on matters that directly affected them, and ensuring a representative democracy by listening to all voices (Aulich, 2009; Fischer, 2012). Participatory governance deepens this by facilitating a more equal distribution of political power, a fairer distribution of resources, the decentralisation of decision-making processes, the development of a wide and transparent exchange of knowledge and information, the establishment of collaborative partnerships and inter-institutional dialogue, and greater accountability, reciprocity, and trust (Aulich, 2009; Fisher, 2012). Moreover, participatory governance involves periods of deliberation aimed at increasing the number of individuals and organisations that participate in discussions on public issues, to make the state more responsive and effective and public policies more participatory, deliberative, accountable, and fairer (Agger, 2012, p.30).

However, while governments are increasingly willing to implement participatory governance, how and why they do so depends on the notion of participation these governments ascribe to. Gustafson and Hertting (2016) distinguish three of such notions. First, the 'interest-based logic' perceives participatory governance as a political arena in which participants can express self- or group interests. Such projects aim to open up the political system and increase its responsiveness by giving a voice to marginalised groups. Second, the 'deliberative' or 'integrative logic' creates an arena for reasoning together. Participants deliberate together to form common understandings and should be prepared to change preferences and beliefs to find a solution acceptable to all. The last notion, 'administrative' or 'functional logic', views participatory governance as a way to improve the capacity to act on collective problems by

mobilising local knowledge and expertise. Here, resources of local actors are collected for efficient problem solving (Gustafson & Hertting, 2016).

These notions reveal that the reasons behind citizen inclusion in policy processes are mostly instrumental and considered from a government perspective. This also applies to the academic field of public administration. Generally, it is asserted that including citizens and other stakeholders creates broader support for policy decisions, which in turn makes government policies more effective and legitimate. Moreover, engaging citizens in the policy process would improve the quality of policies, because it enables governments to employ the information, perspectives and potential solutions that citizens possess. Additionally, it would narrow the gap between citizens and government as participatory governance contributes to building trust in government and raises the quality of democracy (Michels, 2012). However, it is questionable whether the advantages play out in practice. First, participatory governance projects are not always combined with increased citizen influence. Especially initiatives that revolve around abstract issues, future plans, or are in the initial stages, generate low citizen influence, as it is more appropriate for the concrete, later stages of policy processes. Secondly, often issues with representativeness arise (Michels, 2012). Those who participate often have the resources and knowledge to do so, and share similar demographic characteristics, while the less resourceful are excluded (Agger, 2012; Michels, 2012). Lastly, the perceived legitimacy of participatory governance projects only increases for those who participate, and true deliberation rarely seems to be integrated into the design of these initiatives (Michels, 2012).

Despite these limitations, participatory governance is considered a popular tool to enhance social cohesion, particularly in neighbourhoods, and especially in the Netherlands (Michels, 2012; Dekker & Van Kempen, 2009; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). National and municipal governments cast the neighbourhood as a community in which active citizens should feel responsible and deploy initiatives in their local environment, which they view as solutions for social cohesion problems that are considered to be (partly) caused by migration and ethnic diversity. Accordingly, local governments have invested in creating micro-spaces for local organisations and initiatives to facilitate social interaction between residents. Since then, three different kinds of participatory governance projects have arisen. First are the top-down initiatives, which the municipality or other government officials or professionals initiate and run. Contrastingly, bottom-up projects are created and managed by citizens. Somewhere in the middle are bottom-linked initiatives, which are developed by citizens, but supported and realised through top-down policies and/or funds (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018).

In practice, each type of project carries the danger of legitimising top-down interventions or the shift of responsibility for neighbourhood development from the state to local communities. Moreover, projects in diverse neighbourhoods do not necessarily lead to more understanding across different groups. Participation in governance projects is therefore not enough; local ownership of the initiative, shared activities and goals, and mechanisms to overcome power inequalities between individuals and groups are also required (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018).

1.2 Citizen participation

When discussing citizen participation within policy processes, Arnstein's influential 'ladder of citizen participation' should be considered. This author argues that citizen participation, commonly viewed as the cornerstone of modern democracy, does not automatically infer the participation of *all* citizens. She asserts that citizen participation actually refers to '*the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future*' (Arnstein, 1969, p.216).

Arnstein categorised citizen participation into eight – simplified – rungs of a ladder (see Figure 1). At the bottom, two forms of non-participation can be found: (1) Manipulation and (2) Therapy. Here, the actual objective of powerholders is not to enable participation but to educate or cure participants. At (3) Informing and (4) Consultation, participants are heard by the powerful, but this does not result in actual change. Similarly, rung (5), Placation, displays a high level of tokenism, because while the have-nots are allowed to give advice, it is still the powerful that decide. Further up the ladder the influence of citizens increases. When citizens enter into (6) Partnerships, they can negotiate with powerholders and assert some genuine influence over the policy process. At rung (7) Delegated Power, citizens achieve dominant decision-making power, and at (8) Citizen Control citizens actually govern (Arnstein, 1969).

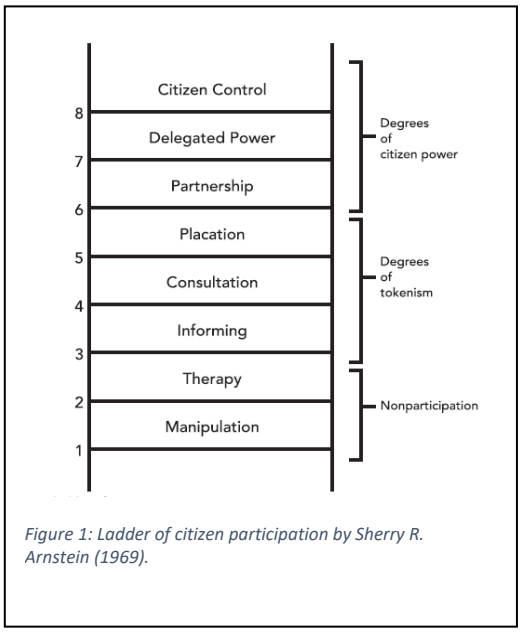

Figure 1: Ladder of citizen participation by Sherry R. Arnstein (1969).

Arnstein's influence notwithstanding, her ladder has been criticised. For instance, Aulich (2009) argues that since traditional citizen participation has evolved into participatory governance, citizen control, viewed by Arnstein to be at the top of the ladder, is no longer the

endgame policymakers and citizens strive for. Instead, partnerships between different stakeholders, including citizens, are used to set and achieve goals. Similarly, Fung (2006) argues that what kind of citizen participation is desirable depends on the context. Hence, an ordered classification is defective, as in some instances citizen consultation may be more appropriate than full citizen control. Taking stock of both Arnstein's definition of citizen participation and its critique, Kalandides (2018) defines it as '*both a democratic right and a process through which citizens engage in the public sphere to shape policy*' (p.153). The author goes on to argue that any analysis of citizen participation should include four dimensions: subject, intentionality, form, and objective.

First, the subject of citizen participation projects should be scrutinised: who is meant to participate, who really participates, and who is excluded (Kalandides, 2018). Agger (2012) distinguishes between active and disengaged citizens. Active citizens are those who participate, as they possess the networks, knowledge and time to do so. There are three types of active citizens. First, 'expert citizens' view themselves to be part of the political system and want to exercise political power. Secondly, 'everyday makers' are project-orientated and aim to develop themselves and enhance their personal capabilities by participating. Lastly, 'social entrepreneurs' tend to represent their community and its interest. Contrastingly, disengaged citizens choose not to participate, despite having the appropriate resources. Both active and disengaged citizens thus possess resources and are often sub-elites who share similar demographic characteristics. This alienates those who are resourceless. Excluded citizens are often immigrants, ethnic minorities, young people and those with lower incomes and educational levels. Therefore, participatory processes can end up being 'gated democracies' in which certain voices, interests or people are excluded (Agger, 2012, p.30).

Secondly, the form of citizen participation matters: how is it designed, organised and implemented (Kalandides, 2018)? Here Arnstein's previously discussed hierarchy of citizen participation can be used to assess what level of power citizens are ascribed. Moreover, Dekker (2007), who analysed participation in relation to policies to lift up distressed neighbourhoods in the Netherlands, defines participation as '*the activities undertaken by residents with the aim of positively influencing the social and physical situation of the neighbourhood*' (p. 357). Participation in this sense can be formal, meaning that residents are part of policy-making processes, or informal, which refers to other activities outside the policy arena. Furthermore, the type of project is relevant. In top-down projects, citizens have less power, as opposed to citizens in bottom-up/linked initiatives (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018).

The third analytical dimension of citizen participation is intentionality: why do people participate in participatory governance (Kalandides, 2018)? Gustafson and Hertting (2016) identify three motives for citizens. The first, 'common good', refers to those who participate because of their desire to contribute to the improvement of their neighbourhood. The 'self-interest'-motive applies to citizens who wish to improve their political resources and skills. These citizens also aspire to give a voice to a particular group, and to a lesser extent themselves and their families. Lastly, 'professional competence' refers to residents who participate as part of their job. These different motives of citizens influence the expectations and evaluations of participatory governance projects. For instance, in Stockholm (Sweden) those who participated based on common good or self-interest motives in an urban renewal programme, were more likely to positively evaluate person-related outcomes, such as interest in politics and influence on local matters. Moreover, those with common good motives were more positive about the impact of the project on their neighbourhood (Gustafson & Hertting, 2016).

Lastly, the objective of the participatory process is pivotal: what is the project about, and what does it aim to achieve (Kalandides, 2018)? Generally, neighbourhood participatory governance projects are implemented in poor neighbourhoods with lower educational and income levels and urban deterioration (Docherty, Goodlad & Paddison, 2001), because both in the academic and the policy field, citizen participation is considered a strategy to achieve social cohesion. Most scholar and policy definitions of social cohesion include citizen participation or civic engagement in public life, as it is thought to contribute to a sense of belonging, solidarity, and readiness for cooperation to pursue common goals. Moreover, participation in associations, political parties, unions or non-governmental organisations is theorised to establish shared values, a sense of belonging and trust (Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2016). This analysis of social cohesion also holds up in the Dutch context, where the national bureau for statistics (CBS) measures it based on three dimensions: participation, trust, and integration. Participation is divided into social participation, referring to the willingness to help others; civic participation, which includes memberships to organisations; and political participation, which includes all activities aimed at influencing politics (Schmeets & Te Riele, 2014).

1.3 Social, interethnic contact

Next to participation, another common integral dimension of social cohesion is the social contact between individuals and groups. This includes social networks, meaning the quality and quantity of social interaction with others, and networks and ties between different groups, which may differ based on culture, ethnicity, or lifestyle (Schiefer & Van der Noll, 2016).

Interestingly, urban policies that encourage social contact as a way to achieve associated benefits such as improved mental health, avoidance of marginalisation, and the provision of emotional, instrumental, practical and social support (Forrest & Kearns, 2000; 2001), tend to target ethnically heterogeneous, disadvantaged neighbourhoods only. Such policies assume that interethnic contact is a prerequisite for a well-functioning neighbourhood and that mixed social networks will facilitate the development of the social capital needed for residents to get out of their disadvantaged positions (Blokland & Nast, 2014). Therefore, one cannot talk about neighbourhood social contact without relating it to ethnic diversity.

Within the academic debate on the intersection between social contact and ethnic diversity, Putnam's work on social capital is influential. This author defines social capital as the face-to-face relations between individuals, and the norms of trust and reciprocity they produce (Putnam, 2000), which is why it is related to the concept of social contact discussed here. He identifies three theories about the effect of diversity on social capital (Putnam, 2007). First, the 'contact theory' contends that interethnic contact under certain conditions promotes out-group tolerance and social solidarity. Secondly, supporters of the 'conflict theory' proclaim that diversity, because of competition over scarce resources, fosters in-group solidarity but out-group distrust. Lastly, Putnam introduced the 'constrict theory', arguing based on data from a nationwide survey in the US that diversity reduces both in-group and out-group solidarity, which causes people to withdraw from social life in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods (Putnam, 2007). However, this latter theory has been debunked or nuanced numerous times (see for instance Van der Meer & Tolsma, 2014; Abascal & Baldassarri, 2015; Laurence, Schmid, & Hewstone, 2019).

To determine which theory applies in a certain context, social capital is usually operationalised into 'bonding' versus 'bridging'. Bonding social capital refers to ties between people with similar backgrounds. Such networks are inward-looking and reinforce exclusive identities and homogeneous groups (Putnam, 2000; 2007). Despite this exclusivity, bonding capital also has positive aspects. This capital connects members to the primary network and its internal resources, which are needed to 'get by', and facilitate inner-community trust and security (Agger & Jensen, 2015; Scholten & Holzhacker, 2009). Contrastingly, bridging social capital is more inclusive, as such networks look outward and encompass people across diverse social cleavages (Putnam, 2000; 2007). These relations with other communities generate the social, economic and cultural capital that is needed to 'get ahead' (Scholten & Holzhacker, 2009; Putnam, 2007).

While the distinction between bridging and bonding is influential, it has also received critique. A main point of criticism is that in this distinction relations with the state are absent (Agger & Jensen, 2015). Therefore, a third type of social capital has been formulated: 'linking'. This can be defined as '*the norms of respect and networks of trusting relationships between people who are interacting between explicit, formal or institutionalised power or authority gradients in society*' (Szreter & Woolcock, 2004, p.655). In other words, linking social capital is a form of bridging capital that focuses on the vertical power relations between individuals or groups and people in positions of political or financial power. For example, citizens and their networks and associations in civil society can be related to state institutions such as municipalities. This is the case in Area-Based Initiatives (ABIs), which contain previously discussed elements of participatory governance, as they are partnerships between local governments and private and non-governmental actors that are funded by the central government, and that often aim to increase social cohesion in distressed neighbourhoods (Agger & Jensen, 2015). The potential added values from generating linking networks are the increased influence of citizens on decision-making processes, the improved information exchange between citizens and municipalities, the ability of citizens to tap into the municipality's resources and vice versa, and the building of trust between citizens and the local government. Therefore, linking networks are valuable social capital that should be generated by local projects and should be considered by scholars evaluating those initiatives next to bonding and bridging capital (Agger & Jensen, 2015).

Another critique on Putnam's distinction between bridging and bonding capital is that according to Van der Meer (2016) it has no empirical foundation. This author looked at voluntary associations, as these are ascribed a strong socialising potential, and are theorised to bridge societal cleavages between diverse citizens. In this debate, ethnically diverse associations are argued to be especially suited to create bridging capital, as they bring together dissimilar people who would otherwise not meet. Consequently, these bridging associations are expected to be more capable of stimulating interethnic cohesion and tolerance, while homogeneous bonding organisations establish intra-ethnic contact and strong group identities. However, Van der Meer could not find any empirical support for these assertions. Based on data from 645 associations in Mannheim (Germany), Enschede (the Netherlands) and Aberdeen (Scotland), he concluded that the diversity of associational life has no socialisation effect on intra- and interethnic social cohesion. More specifically, ethnically diverse bridging organisations do not prompt more tolerance for people with different ethnic backgrounds, and homogeneous bonding associations do not inspire stronger group identities. Therefore, these

findings undermine the assumption that associations, and mixed associations specifically, socialise their members into more pro-social and tolerant citizens (Van der Meer, 2016). Moreover, according to Hoekstra and Dahlvik (2018), contact within associations only takes place between similar people. Problems with establishing interethnic contact arise within top-down projects, as they connect participants to the municipality or other stakeholders, but not to fellow citizens. Similarly, bottom-up and bottom-linked face problems in this area, as the organising citizens tend to only attract similar residents, which excludes certain groups and reinforce rather than break down hostile relationships among residents.

Despite this lacking socialisation effect, many urban policies, and in particular participatory governance projects, still work from the assumption that developing social capital through stimulating network and community formation in heterogeneous, disadvantaged neighbourhoods will improve these urban sites (Blokland & Nast, 2014). However, scholars question what kind of contact participatory governance projects can establish. For instance, Hoekstra and Dahlvik (2018) argue that while policymakers hope to inspire in-depth contact between project participants, residents might not desire such contacts. Instead, they tend to value fleeting or superficial contact, where recognising and greeting each other on the street is often sufficient. This finding even applies to superdiverse contexts, such as the London neighbourhood Hackney (Wessendorf, 2013). There, people find superficial but positive encounters in public spaces like streets or shops sufficient, and diversity is not viewed as problematic, but as 'commonplace' or a fact of life. Moreover, people accept that they live separate private lives and have limited in-depth knowledge about each other, meaning that this 'ethos of mixing' in public life is not accompanied by deeper cultural understanding.

This is not necessarily problematic, as Blokland and Nast (2014) show that everyday encounters in public spaces, despite the absence of networks, can still create a sense of belonging in the neighbourhood. This belonging should not be conceptualised as necessarily connected to a singular community, neighbourhood, or personal local networks, but as the experience of being accepted or tolerated in the public space, an understanding of the social rules, and the ability to move more or less effortless through that space. This kind of belonging mainly develops through daily routines and encounters in the public space, like passing and acknowledging each other on the street. These interactions are not limited to one's own groups in diverse neighbourhoods, as daily encounters invariably include dissimilar people. Then, the inevitability of passing each other produces codes of conduct that finally lead to people being comfortable in their neighbourhood, as they know others and are known by them, and because they understand the local customs, expectations and behaviour. Meeting people one knows and

many whom one is only superficially acquainted with – also called 'public familiarity' – creates a sense of belonging, even if when one lacks social ties or dislikes where they live (Blokland & Nast, 2014). This has great consequences for participatory governance projects, as it shows that they should not aim at creating social networks and in-depth interethnic contact, but rather stimulate fleeting, daily encounters that help transform neighbourhoods into comfortable public spaces.

1.4 Expectations

Based on this theoretical framework, several expectations have been formulated. First, top-down participatory governance projects are characterised by less citizen power because the municipality and other powerholders remain the most authoritative actors (Arnstein, 1969; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018), and citizens are mostly driven by self-interest as such projects are often very goal-oriented (Gustafson & Hertting, 2016).

1. *Participation in a top-down project is characterised by low citizen power and more self-interest motives*.

Contrastingly, a bottom-up project will promote a higher level of citizen power, because they co-run the project (Arnstein, 1969; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018), and that citizens are more driven by the common good motive to improve the neighbourhood, as such projects are created with and for the neighbourhood (Gustafson & Hertting, 2016).

2. *Participation in a bottom-up project is characterised by high citizen power and more common good motives*.

Lastly, it is expected that neither initiative can facilitate profound interethnic contact, because citizens do not value such contacts or need them to feel like they belong (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018; Blokland & Nast, 2014). Moreover, when projects are managed by policymakers or professionals, they have difficulty with including, valuing, and connecting diverse citizens, while citizens leading projects tend to only include and target those who are similar to them (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018; Dekker & Van Kempen, 2009):

3. *Neither a top-down project nor bottom-linked initiative can establish profound interethnic contact*.

Chapter II: Methods

In this chapter, the research design will be laid out. First, the research question and subquestions will be stated. Second, the variables upon which this research rests will be operationalised into measurable indicators. Then, the research design and methods will be outlined, after which the case selection, sampling, data analysis and ethical considerations will be discussed.

2.1 Research question and subquestions

This thesis aims to answer the following research question: *How can participatory governance explain differences and similarities between projects Allekanten and Bij Betje regarding the level of participation and social contact between residents of The Hague Southwest?* To formulate an answer, several subquestions were formulated:

1. What kind of participation and social contact does project *Allekanten* facilitate?
2. What kind of participation and social contact does project *Bij Betje* facilitate?
3. What are the differences and similarities between the projects in terms of participation?
4. What are the differences and similarities between the projects in terms of social contact?

2.2 Operationalisation

The research contains several variables, all of which need to be operationalised to indicators to facilitate empirical research. Participatory governance functions as the independent variable. The case selection is based on this concept, so it requires measurable indicators to correctly describe and distinguish between the two projects (see Table 1). Therefore, this concept structures the context chapter, as there the two cases will be introduced.

Definition	**Dimensions**	**Sub-dimensions**	**Indicators**
Inclusion of individuals and organisations outside government in policy processes through deliberative processes	Type of projects (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018)	Top-down	Municipality/professionals initiated the projects; they run the project; they make the decisions
		Bottom-up	Citizens initiated the projects, they run the project, they make the decisions
		Bottom-linked	Initiatives are created by citizens, but are supported and realised through top-down policies; municipal funding is used
	Notion of participation (Gustafson & Hertting, 2016)	Interest-based logic	Gives voice to marginalised groups; people can express self- and group interests; citizens are allowed to influence policy processes
		Deliberative/ integrative logic	Facilitates discussions; aims to come to a solution acceptable to all
		Administrative/ functional logic	Mobilises local knowledge and expertise; consultation of citizens; effective

			problem solving by improving capacity to act on collective problems
	Type and distribution of people involved in the management of the projects	Resident	Is part of the project because they live in the neighbourhood
		Professional	Gets paid to be part of the project because of their expertise
		Civil servant	Is part of the project because they work for the municipality

Table 1: Operationalisation of 'Participatory governance'

One of the dependent variables is citizen participation. This concept includes various dimensions, all of which have been operationalised into indicators (see Table 2).

Definition	**Dimensions**	**Sub-dimensions**	**Indicators**
A democratic right and a process through which citizens engage in the public sphere to shape policy (Kalandides, 2018)	Citizen involvement/ power (Arnstein, 1969)	Manipulation	Citizens are part of advisory committees where they cannot actually participate; the purpose is to educate citizens, or to engineer their support
		Therapy	Citizens engage in extensive activity where the focus lies with 'curing' them
		Informing	Citizens are informed of their rights, responsibilities, and option, but have no real power to make change
		Consultation	Citizens are asked to give advice e.g. via surveys, neighbourhood meetings and public hearings
		Placation	Citizens are placed on public bodies like boards, but powerholders preserve the final say
		Partnership	Citizens and powerholders work together and share decision-making responsibilities
		Delegated power	Citizens possess the dominant decision-making authority and hold the majority of seats/votes
		Citizen control	Citizens govern a project and are in full charge
	Motivations to participate (Gustafson & Hertting, 2016)	Common good motives	Concerned with improving the neighbourhood in general; participation in discussion on local development; contribution of one's own knowledge and competence; to influence political decisions in the municipality
		Self-interest motives	Desire to improve one's own political efficiency by learning about politics and democracy and acquiring useful contacts; promote interest of oneself or one's own group or family
		Professional competence motives	Participation as part of their job; contributing one's own knowledge and competence
	Form of participation (Dekker, 2007)	Formal participation	Taking part in the decision-making processes, e.g., being part of neighbourhood council, having a say in decision making, dialogue between authorities and residents
		Informal participation	Activities that are important source of neighbourhood regeneration. E.g.,

			organising events, checking undesirable behaviour.

Table 2: Operationalisation of 'Citizen participation'.

Finally, social contact is the second dependent variable. As became obvious in the theoretical framework, this is closely related to interethnic contact, which is mirrored in the operationalisation (see Table 3).

Definition	Dimensions	Sub-dimensions	Indicators
Contact between (ethnically diverse) citizens	Type of contact (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018; Wessendorf, 2013; Blokland & Nast, 2014)	No contact	People have no ties to neighbours; do not recognise and greet each other on the street
		Fleeting/ superficial contact	People meet and greet each other on the streets and in other public and associative spaces; recognise each other; ethos of mixing with diverse citizens; move comfortably through public space; start conversations with people they do not know
		In-depth contact	Long-lasting and regular contact; cultural understanding; also meeting in private space; tolerance; solidarity;

Table 3: Operationalisation of 'Social contact'.

2.3 Research design

This thesis employs an explanatory comparative multi-case study method, an approach that is gaining prominence in governance-related research (Stewart, 2012). Case studies are conducted when an empirical phenomenon must be examined in its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between that phenomenon and its context are blurry (Yin, 1981). Studying multiple cases is relevant when the researcher wishes to analyse data both within each situation and across situations, and the differences and similarities between cases (Yin, 2003). Especially differences between cases are valuable, as it identifies the key factors that influence the outcome of cases. By extension, the multiple-case study method is a valuable tool to investigate the relative effectiveness of particular policy approaches (Stewart, 2012). Therefore, this thesis uses the 'most different case study design', meaning that the two cases that were selected differ significantly based on the independent variable, participatory governance.

Data from multiple case studies is strong, reliable and believable (especially compared to data from single case studies), as it is intensely grounded in the real world (Gustafson, 2017). Therefore, this method is particularly suited to gain a better understanding of the world. Although case studies are ascribed problems with generalisability given their context-dependent nature, this thesis aims to understand and learn from specific phenomena, not find universal explanations. Accordingly, the explanatory nature of this thesis remains context-

related, although it does include the predictability of the results in other contexts (Tuurnas, 2016). Moreover, Stewart (2012) argues that reliability can be assured when researchers give insight into their interview questions and the number of interviewees, which will also be included in this thesis (see below and the Appendix).

2.3.1 Data collection

Data has been collected first by reviewing relevant policy documents. These were gathered via contacts at the municipality of The Hague or via its the web portal, and using the search criteria that they should be about the Regiodeal in general and/or the two projects specifically. Although these documents were not structurally analysed using a codebook, reviewing them did lead to important contextual knowledge, which was used for the contextual chapter and the interview questions. Secondly, some observation on-site took place, although this again was not done structurally. COVID-19 restrictions limited the possibilities to be on-site and downscaled the projects, meaning that there were not many people present to observe. This observation was conducted during two days, one at each project, and resulted in a field dairy, which guided the contextual chapter and the interview questions.

Lastly, interviews were the key part of this case study research, as they can be used to develop understanding, elicit factual material, and check and validate perspectives (Stewart, 2012). Specifically, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were held, because these allow for data collection about lived experiences, knowledge, opinions, and perspectives not easily obtained from paper. Although it is important to note that interviews cannot collect 'hard facts', nor are they neutral or free from normative biases, they do offer the richness of experience and thickness of ethnographic data that cannot be reached through other qualitative methods (Fedyuk & Zentai, 2018, p.174).

Two interviews were held with the managers of each of the neighbourhood projects (N=2). These were 'expert interviews', as the questions related to their expertise about the projects (Fedyuk & Zentai, 2018). The project managers were sampled using purposive sampling, as knowledge of the population was gained through contacts at the municipality (Babbie, 2016). Additionally, two interviews were held with project managers at the municipality (N=2), to clear up the role of the municipality in these projects, and another interview was conducted with two members of *Bij Betje's* board (N=2). All these interviews took place either via Microsoft Teams or by phone and were used to outline the context.

In contrast, the semi-structured interviews with the neighbourhood residents working at the projects (N=10) were conducted face-to-face. For this, a diverse sample was created (see table 4).

Name (pseudonym)	Project	Position	Age	Ethnic background
Aicha	Bij Betje	Volunteer	48	Moroccan
Alan	Allekanten	Werkfitter	29	Afghan
Emir	Allekanten	Intern	25	Dutch-Somali
Evelien	Bij Betje	Volunteer	46	Dutch
Farida	Bij Betje	Volunteer	55	Lebanese
Floor	Bij Betje	Volunteer	42	Dutch
Krista	Allekanten	Werkfitter	35	Bulgarian
Laila	Allekanten	Attendee	36	Moroccan
Maaike	Allekanten	Volunteer	47	Dutch
Neeltje	Bij Betje	Volunteer	69	Dutch

Table 4: List of respondents

These interviews centralised their experiences and perspectives. The residents were selected through snowball sampling by the project managers, who reached out to their team and came up with five respondents respectively. To keep some control over this process, several selection criteria were applied. First, participants needed to live in the neighbourhood of the projects. Second, residents needed to be active in the project regularly to enable an analysis of their participation. Third, they needed to spend sufficient time in the association itself, to establish that they had the opportunity to engage in repeated contacts (Van der Meer, 2016).

The interviews were structured by a topic list derived from the theoretical framework, operationalisation and relevant policy documents (see the Appendix for both the topic lists and interview questions). New topics that arose during previous interviews resulted in new interview questions in an iterative manner, to ensure thorough data collection.

2.3.2 Data analysis

The analysis for this thesis is theory-driven, meaning that an elaborate theoretical framework leads to an extensive list of indicators and concepts to analyse the collected data. However, employing a solely deductive approach would mean that data not part of the initial theoretical framework is excluded from the analysis. Therefore, this was combined with an abductive analysis, as this still enables a movement between theory and data, but also allows for data not in keeping with the initial framework to become significant findings. The iterative process of analysing data abductively extends the research beyond the deductive approach of testing theory

by exploring traditionally unexplored findings, which results in a more comprehensive understanding of the theory and empirical data (Meyer & Flinders, 2013).

The interview transcripts were coded using the software programme Atlas.ti and the two coding stages common to qualitative research. First, open coding was employed to categorise the data and identify themes. Second, through axial coding, these themes were further refined, aligned, and categorised into core codes (Williams & Moser, 2019). The development of these core codes or concepts was partly guided by the theoretical framework, but often also emerged from the empirical data, in accordance with conducting an abductive analysis.

2.4 Case selection

Of the seven neighbourhood participation projects facilitated by the municipality's first phase of the Regiodeal, two have been chosen. This case selection was based on the independent variable: the type of participatory governance of the projects. The following selection criteria were used: the level of involvement of the municipality in the projects and the extent of citizen power in the management of the projects. More concretely, one case would have more municipal involvement, while the other should showcase more citizen power.

After consultation with the municipality and reviewing several policy documents, for the former, neighbourhood company *Allekanten* was chosen. This project was not initiated by citizens of the neighbourhood, but by a social entrepreneur. He hired and pays a project manager for her expertise, who is also not a resident. Therefore, citizens do not have a lot of power over the management of the project. Moreover, and most importantly, the municipality is highly involved, as it set requirements and objectives for *Allekanten*, and contracts the project to carry out one of its policies, namely to guide those who receive social benefits back to work. This makes *Allekanten* a non-citizen-led top-down project. However, the citizens that are part of the team are allowed to make suggestions, and some goals and activities arose from their or fellow residents' needs. As such, this project also has some bottom-linked inclinations.

In contrast, *Bij Betje* was initiated before the Regiodeal by a local entrepreneur and arose from the needs of Moerwijk's residents. The project is run by a team of volunteers, all of which are residents. So is the (paid) manager, who first attended the project seeking help herself. The board also consists of local entrepreneurs. Therefore, residents can exercise power within the project. Moreover, the project does not carry out municipal policies but aims to be a place where residents can meet and ask for help, and was included in the Regiodeal because it was already successful in doing so. Hence, *Bij Betje* is a citizen-led bottom-up project. However, it does

receive a subsidy from the municipality, and although the project does not depend on it, this does make the project partly bottom-linked.

Although the initial goal was to select a top-down and a bottom-up project, practice shows that this distinction is not that straightforward. Why this is the case and a more detailed description of both neighbourhood projects will be discussed in the next chapter.

2.5 Ethical considerations

Social research can be an intrusion into people's lives, as it often requires people to reveal personal information about themselves to strangers (Babbie, 2016). Therefore, the ethical standards common within social science will guide this research: respect for human dignity, justice, and beneficence. More concretely, these four guidelines will be applied: informed consent, non-deception, privacy and confidentiality, and accuracy (Christians, 2005).

All interviewees were asked to sign an informed consent form, which included information on the content of the research, who benefits from it, and who sees the results (Van Liempt & Binger, 2009). These explanations were honest, to avoid perception, but deliberately kept broad, to avoid too much insight into the research that would influence the participants' behaviour and results. The respondents were also made aware of the fact that the interviews were recorded. To protect the privacy of the participants, they were anonymised (Babbie, 2016). Confidentiality was guaranteed by not making the raw results public, and by carefully storing recorded interviews on an encrypted drive. Finally, the results will be dealt with accurately.

Lastly, the position of the researcher and potential normative bias should be considered. In interviews, the interviewer has an important and visible role by asking questions, probing for answers, and even challenging participants. To prevent any biases, in the research questions as well as in the interview questions, the topics were not approached in a normative manner. The aim of this thesis is not to judge the neighbourhood projects, but to explore and explain them in relation to participation and social contact.

Chapter III: The Context of The Hague Southwest

This chapter will outline the context of The Hague Southwest. Moreover, its multifaceted problems will be explained, and the offered solution to these problems: the Regiodeal. Lastly, the background of the two selected projects, *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje*, will be discussed using the operationalisation discussed in the previous chapter.

3.1 The Hague Southwest

The Hague is with about 545,000 inhabitants the third largest city of The Netherlands, after Amsterdam and Rotterdam (Allecijfers.nl, 2021a). Although it is not the capital, this city does house the government, many embassies and consulates, and the International Court of Justice, which shows that The Hague is an important player on the world stage. Moreover, The Hague is the country's most segregated city, with an average (low) income of 26.000 euros and a high level of ethnic diversity, as 56.6 per cent of its residents has a migration background (Boelhouwer, 2002; Dekker & Van Kempen, 2004; Van Gent & Hochstenbach, 2020; Allecijfers.nl, 2021a). This leads to problems, also in The Hague Southwest.

This post-war district is comprised of the neighbourhoods Bouwlust, Vrederust, Morgenstond and Moerwijk, and houses about 67.300 inhabitants. The neighbourhoods are characterised by a multitude of social and economic problems. These range from long-term unemployment, poverty, debt, radicalisation, and polarisation, to increasing (feelings of) unsafety, criminalisation, deterioration, health problems (Dutch government, 2019). Most homes are owned by housing corporations (63%), and their average quality is low (Municipality of The Hague, 2019a; 2020a). Moreover, social cohesion is low (Dutch government, 2019). A survey among residents led the municipality to conclude that in The Hague Southwest, social cohesion scores a 5.1/10, whilst the city's average is 5.7 (Municipality of The Hague, 2020b). This is considered to be an urgent problem that correlates with several other issues, namely a lack of participation, safety and belonging in The Hague Southwest, which is why increasing social cohesion is high on the municipality's agenda.

3.2 Regiodeal The Hague Southwest

Acknowledging these multiple challenges, in 2019 the national government collaborated with the municipality of The Hague, neighbourhood partners, entrepreneurs and citizens, to formulate a policy known as the 'Regiodeal The Hague Southwest' (Municipality of The

Hague, 2020b). This four-year policy, for which the national government invested 7.5 million and municipality 10 million, qualifies as urban governance, as it involves interdependent public and private actors who work together towards a common goal (Schiller, 2018), something the policy recognises itself (National government, 2019). The policy acknowledges that the problems are largescale, multifaceted, long-term, and very urgent, and therefore aims to offer an all-encompassing solution to improve the wealth, liveability, and economy in these neighbourhoods (National government, 2019; Municipality of The Hague, 2020b).

To do so, the policy has been divided into three pillars: 1) Society and participation; 2) Vital citizens; and 3) Activating, learning, and working. The second pillar revolves around the goal to stimulate Southwest's citizens to become healthy, self-reliant, and developed residents, while the third pillar aims to tackle unemployment. The former pillar, which is the most relevant for this thesis, hopes to create a 'strong social foundation' in The Hague Southwest by focusing on increasing the well-being and resilience of neighbourhood residents (National government, 2019). The goal is to activate citizens to participate in society and to create feelings of belonging to their shared porch ('*portiek*'), street and neighbourhood. Another specific goal is to increase the aforementioned lacking social cohesion from 5.1 to 5.6, which is closer to the city's average (National government, 2019). Lastly, this pillar is related to safety in the neighbourhoods (Municipality of The Hague, 2020b).

To increase social cohesion and citizen participation, the municipality created several meeting places and participatory projects (National government, 2019). These were to be created in accordance with local residents, to ensure they reflect their needs, which means these projects are executing participatory governance. In September 2019, the first phase of the Regiodeal, seven projects with different levels of participatory governance were set up, and by February 2020, the five projects whose main goal was to facilitate encounters between residents had reached about 380 residents. However, facilitating encounters is not their only objective, as these meeting places are supposed to organise activities based on the needs of residents (Municipality of The Hague, 2020b). Two of these projects will be discussed below.

3.4 Neighbourhood company Allekanten

Allekanten opened its doors on 5 September 2019 in a former day-care in Bouwlust. A social entrepreneur initiated this project by answering the municipality's call for projects fit for the Regiodeal. He does not live in The Hague but previously set up a similar neighbourhood company in Rotterdam. In principle, at this project all Bouwlust residents are welcome, but in

practice mostly the elderly, mothers, social benefit receivers and status holders show up. Additionally, those with disadvantages on the labour market are targeted specifically:

> '*We've created a place where people can come to learn, to develop themselves, to gain new contacts, to get out of their house. To enlarge their social networks, to get out of their isolation and to start doing something valuable for the neighbourhood while developing themselves.*' (Sanne, project manager)

Photo 1: The front of Allekanten in Bouwlust, housed in a former day-care. (Photo taken by author)

These people are encouraged to develop their talents and to use those in the neighbourhood company, for instance by organising or attending activities. In turn, *Allekanten* facilitates development by providing personal guidance and organising different activities and long-term projects (Municipality of The Hague, 2020c). This is especially true for the residents who attend the *werkfit* ('fit to work') trajectory, which aims to make residents who receive social benefits fit to go back to (voluntary) work. It was the municipality that initiated this policy and contracted *Allekanten* to carry it out. Moreover, the municipality decides who qualifies, and then obliges these residents to go to *Allekanten*, for which the municipality pays. Project manager Sanne describes being 'dependent' on the municipality because of this.

Moreover, for several activities, like language lessons and sports activities, *Allekanten* the municipality has set objectives about how many residents are reached (Allekanten, 2020). This influence and the fact that the project carries out a municipal policy in case of the werkfit trajectory make *Allekanten* a top-down project (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). However, other activities, such as biking lessons, bingo, and waste separation, were initiated by the project itself. Furthermore, some activities have been realized through collaborations with residents and neighbourhood partners. An example is the weekly craft hour that three elderly women suggested. This makes *Allekanten* more bottom-linked, as initiatives of residents are supported through top-down policies of the project and funding from the municipality (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). Therefore, the type of project *Allekanten* qualifies as is mostly top-down, with some bottom-linked inclinations.

The notion of participation is more difficult to discern. The main goals of the project are to improve social cohesion, language skills, health, network and community building, self-reliance and job skills, and therefore fits all three pillars of the Regiodeal (Municipality of The Hague, 2019b). The aim is to stimulate the participation of the disadvantaged in the neighbourhood and in society, not necessarily in the participatory governance structure of the project. Therefore, non of the notions of participatory governance as described by Gustafson and Hertting (2016) apply, as citizens are not part of the participatory governance structure to give them a voice (interest-based logic), to facilitate discussion (deliberative logic), or to consult them (administrative logic), but to promote the personal development.

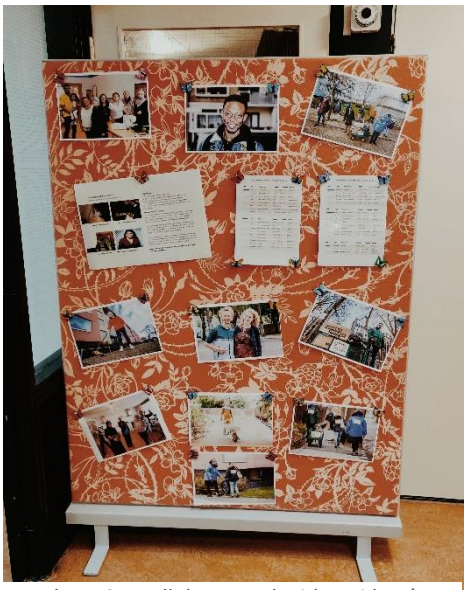

Photo 2: Wall decorated with resident's achievements. (Photo taken by author)

Lastly, the type of the people involved in the project varies. The organisational structure of *Allekanten* exists of paid employees, volunteers, neighbourhood partners, and interns. Additionally, the 'werkfitters' are put to work, as they are required to work within the building. Those who run the project, the project initiator and the manager, are paid professionals and not residents. Similarly, for the rest of the team living in Bouwlust is also not required. However, some team members are residents, and they fill various positions. For instance, Maaike is a volunteer who works as a receptionist at the project twice a week. Her administrative tasks correspond with her past paid jobs, from which she was declared unfit to work several years ago. Contrastingly, Emir is required to be at *Allekanten*, as he is an intern whose participation is rewarded with the necessary study credit to graduate. His tasks range from offering long-term guidance to clients to answering questions during daily consultation hours. Lastly, werkfitters Krista and Alan attend *Allekanten* because the municipality sent them to develop the necessary skills to find work. In other words, these two residents are 'forced' to be at the project, and have to attend several courses and activities like Dutch language lessons. Coincidentally, both these werkfitters are immigrants: Krista is from Bulgaria and arrived in the Netherlands in 2010, while Alan fled from Afghanistan six years ago. They can also be considered part of the participatory governance structure, as both also help out at *Allekanten*: Krista cleans the building, while Alan fixes up rooms, although this participation is not entirely voluntary:

> ‘*Yes, I can fix the rooms. But for me it’s important to find a job. I don’t like these things, I want to think about my future. For me…this is not interesting*.’ (Alan)

In short, *Allekanten* is a neighbourhood company that mainly aims to facilitate the development of vulnerable citizens through participation in the project. It is a non-citizen led participatory governance project that is mostly top-down but with some bottom-linked tendencies where those who are residents fill in various positions. How those positions relate to their power, motivations and social contact will be discussed in the next chapter.

3.5 Neighbourhood shop Bij Betje

Bij Betje started welcoming residents of Moerwijk in January 2018 and has since then become an integral part of the Betje Wolffstraat, a busy shopping street (although the project has temporarily moved due to renovations). A local business owner in the same street felt that the shopping area lacked a social space where people could meet and share personal details or problems. With this idea he won a local contest that asked entrepreneurs to submit project plans for aspects they thought were missing in the shopping district.

Since then, *Bij Betje* has developed into a meeting place for neighbourhood residents. People can come in for a cup of coffee and small talk, but to share their personal issues, which are often related to debt, loneliness or language barriers. This is not surprising, since Moerwijk is both one of The Hague’s poorest neighbourhoods (with an average income of only 16.900 euros) and ranks place 13 in the top 100 of Dutch neighbourhoods with the highest percentage of people with a migration background (76 per cent) (Allecijfers.nl, 2021). *Bij Betje* tries to help these vulnerable citizens by:

> ‘*…being there for people. That is has always been our motto. We are point zero for people, because we are an accessible meeting place in the neighbourhood where everyone is welcome to come in for a cup of coffee.*’ (Azra, project manager)

Additionally, *Bij Betje* hosts several activities, such as craft hours for kids, game afternoons, and dance lessons, during which interactions with fellow residents are encouraged. Although everyone in Moerwijk is welcome to attend these activities, it is mostly the economically

challenged, migrants and elderly that show up. For the latter, dinners are hosted every evening, which during the COVID-19 pandemic changed into a large-scale meal delivery operation. Before the pandemic, *Bij Betje* also had a neighbourhood shop, where residents could sell their homemade products like jam, postcards or scarfs to other residents for a small price.

Photo 3: Entry sign of Bij Betje. (Photo taken by author)

Mostly, these activities were initiated by the board, which consists of local entrepreneurs and the project's initiator, or the project manager, who is a Moerwijk resident. This is supplemented by attending residents or volunteers, who can also suggest new things to do. This makes the type of participatory governance that *Bij Betje* practises bottom-up (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). However, the project is also part of the municipality's Regiodeal. Nonetheless, this inclusion in the policy does not come with requirements or objectives, and other than weekly and monthly check-ins and giving out subsidies, the municipality is not very involved. What's more, *Bij Betje* is not entirely dependent on this money, which is mostly used for the project manager's salary, as it also receives money from other humanitarian funds. Therefore, *Bij Betje's* type of participatory governance is mostly bottom-up, but can also be slightly associated with the bottom-linked classification (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018).

This correlates with the notion of participation that *Bij Betje* adheres to. Next to providing vulnerable citizens with a sympathetic ear, a meeting place and activities, another important goal of *Bij Betje* is to activate these residents by encouraging them to become volunteers, either at this project or at another place. By April 2020, about 80 residents were activated (Municipality of The Hague, 2020c), and the project's own team consisted of ten to fifteen volunteers. All of *Bij Betje's* volunteers are neighbourhood residents since that is a requirement. Moreover, they all are or were vulnerable citizens themselves, which makes them experienced experts and particularly suited to advise other challenged residents. This is also true for the project manager, Azra, who initially visited the project with her own request for help and who since then slowly grew into the role of full-time manager. Therefore, the administrative logic of citizen participation applies, as local knowledge and expertise are mobilised and citizens are consulted (Gustafson & Hertting, 2016).

Photo 4: Entrance of Bij Betje at its new (temporary) location. (Photo taken by author)

Lastly, the type and distribution of the people involved in the project are quite uniform, since there is only one way to participate in its management: as a volunteer who lives in Moerwijk. For instance, Evelien has lived in Moerwijk for six years and has participated at *Bij Betje* for over two, after having been out of a job for several years due to personal circumstances. She volunteers by being a hostess, which entails making conversation with attending residents, lending them a sympathetic ear, and providing them with advice. Similarly, Floor, a Dutch resident of Moerwijk for over ten years, quite recently became a volunteer after she was declared medically unfit to work several years ago. Struggling to come by and depending on social benefits, she was a help-seeking participant at *Bij Betje* before she became a volunteer who assists during the dinners organised for the lonely elderly. Also a long-time Moerwijk resident, Neeltje has been with *Bij Betje* since its conception. Akin to the others, she was declared unfit to work, after which she started volunteering at several neighbourhood organisations and became a hostess at *Bij Betje*. Aicha has also become a familiar face at *Bij Betje.* Originally from Morocco but having lived in Moerwijk for over twenty years, she started volunteering after she quit her job to take care of her kids. She works as a hostess, but also cooks dinner for the elderly, organises activities for kids, makes meal packages and goes grocery shopping. Moreover, she introduced another veteran in the volunteering business to *Bij Betje*: Farida. Originally from Lebanon, she has lived in Moerwijk for over thirty years and volunteered in the neighbourhood for twelve. Comparable with the other volunteers, personal circumstances caused her to quit her job, after which she became a volunteer at several neighbourhood organisations. She has been with *Bij Betje* since the start, and organises craft hours for kids, sewing lessons for women, and cooks and eats with the elderly.

In short, *Bij Betje* is a neighbourhood shop that mostly seeks to support and activate vulnerable citizens, and provides a comfortable meeting place in the neighbourhood. It is a citizen-led participatory governance project that is mostly bottom-up but with some bottom-linked inclinations that lets (former) vulnerable citizens be part of its structure. Why these citizens chose to be volunteers despite their challenging personal circumstances, and how this correlates with citizen power and social contact, will be discussed in chapter five.

Chapter IV: Results: Participation and social contact at *Allekanten*

In this chapter, the participation of the residents that are part of the participatory governance structure of *Allekanten* will be discussed. Furthermore, the type of social contact that the project facilitates will be reviewed, both within the project and within neighbourhood Bouwlust. Doing this will answer the first subquestion: *What kind of participation and social contact does project Allekanten facilitate?*

4.1 Participation

In line with the operationalisation, this section will elaborate on the involvement of citizens in the management of the projects, and the motivations and objectives of citizen participation.

4.1.1 Citizen involvement

Within *Allekanten* the residents have been granted different levels of influence. However, the highest level of influence is accorded to non-residents, namely the project creator and the manager, who are paid for their work and do not live in Bouwlust. Another powerful, non-residential actor is the municipality. They hold a lot of decision-making power over the project, especially when it comes to setting targets and sending werkfitters to the project.

Contrastingly, the residents report having a lot less authority. For instance, volunteer Maaike is not sure whether she influences the project, although she is allowed to make suggestions about the daily management, which are often considered and implemented. Similarly, Emir contends that he as an intern can exert some power over the management of *Allekanten*. For example, he suggested making the weekly meetings more efficient by requiring everyone to set three goals for themselves for that week, which has since then been implemented. However, he deems his Bouwlust residency as irrelevant for this, since it is his expertise as an intern that is valued, not the fact that he lives in the same neighbourhood as his clients. Moreover, while both Maaike and Emir feel that *Allekanten's* management is approachable, as they are allowed to make suggestions to both the project's creator and the manager, they do not interact with or have influence over the municipality and the targets and expectations they set.

Similarly, werkfitters Alan and Krista have no sway with the municipality. What's more, they are quite powerless in general, since the municipality sends them to *Allekanten* in return for their social benefits, something they have little say over. Moreover, the werkfitters have little to no power over the daily management of the project or their participation. They deem this problematic since in their eyes, their participation does not meet their expectations or needs:

> '*The municipality said: go to Allekanten. But then I came here and I had to pick up garbage outside. I said I didn't want to. I want to know when I'll have a fulltime job.*' (Alan)

4.1.2 Motives and objectives of participation

If residents cannot exercise a lot of power over the participatory governance process of *Allekanten*, why do they choose to participate? For Maaike and Emir, the desire to help vulnerable citizens comes into play. They describe feeling proud when they can see they were able to help someone. Interestingly, this motive does not include a wish to improve the entire neighbourhood. This is also reflected in Emir's doubts about whether *Allekanten* would be able to achieve that:

> '*I don't think Allekanten makes Bouwlust more social. Why not? People come here because they need help, or because they have to come to compensate for their social benefits. If they were allowed to stay home, they would.* […] *Everyone comes for themselves.*' (Emir)

Another important incentive for the residents is the wish for personal development. For Emir, this is mostly related to professional development, as his internship will provide him with new professional skills. Contrastingly, Maaike's motivation to participate is more personal, as she would like to be counted as part of society again through her participation because otherwise, she would only be sitting at home receiving social benefits. Similarly, the werkfitters are driven by the personal benefits that their participation will reward them with, namely getting a job or education. They are at *Allekanten* with the sole reason to achieve this. If it does not happen, their participation is viewed as a waste of time:

> '*If I get a good job, that is good. But if I have been coming here for ten months and I don't get a job… That would be very annoying.*' (Alan)

This desire for personal development coincides with one of the objectives of *Allekanten*, which is to develop oneself, especially those who are unemployed and receive social benefits. It is

therefore not surprising that personal development is a strong incentive for the attending residents. Another objective of *Allekanten* is to enlarge the social networks of the people attending. More specifically, the project manager hopes that through the project people can make friends to drink a cup of coffee with, or who can watch their children when they have to go to the doctor. This reflects a wish to stimulate profound contact between residents.

4.2 Social contact

To what extend *Allekanten* can facilitate this in-depth contact between residents both within and outside the project, will be discussed in this section.

4.2.1 Social contact within the project

Although every respondent reports having social contact with fellow residents at *Allekanten*, the type of contact varies. For instance, Emir and Maaike explain they have in-depth conversations with attending residents, but that they remain one-sided: the residents share personal issues, while Emir and Maaike offer advice but abstain from sharing personal details. Moreover, besides the instances where Emir and Maaike listen to the problems of residents as part of their job at *Allekanten*, the contact between them and other residents remains fleeting. This means conversations are rather basic:

> '*Contact? It's "good morning" and "how are you?", and that's about it.*' (Alan)

This also applies to interactions that the respondents have with fellow colleagues. Despite sharing more similarities with co-workers, as they are all working to support vulnerable citizens, their contact does not exceed what Emir calls 'regular work contact'. He did, however, form a friendship with a colleague, whom he also meets in private. Other than this in-depth contact, none of the respondents established such contact, nor do they necessarily want to:

> '*Of course it's nice to meet people* […]. *But it's not like I go here to make friends. I don't*.' (Maaike)

Therefore, interactions remain purposefully fleeting, and this is not deemed problematic. Moreover, the contact is often interethnic. *Allekanten* is run by a very diverse team, which is actively pursued by project manager Sanne, and the attending residents are also ethnically diverse:

> ‘*Here at Allekanten, no one is from Afghanistan like I am. Everyone is a foreigner. So I only have contact with foreigners*.’ (Alan)

Nonetheless, ethnic diversity also impedes social contact, especially for those who are not Dutch, namely Alan and Krista. They are the only ones who contend that they sometimes have no contact at *Allekanten*, which they attribute to their insecurity about the Dutch language and etiquette. The next section will discuss if this is also the case in the neighbourhood.

4.2.2 Social contact in the neighbourhood

When meeting a familiar person in a public space, all respondents greet them and often start a fleeting conversation about how that person is doing. This especially applies to Emir and Maaike, who indicate that they recognise more residents in Bouwlust since their participation at *Allekanten*. Contrastingly, werkfitters Krista and Alan do not see more familiar faces in Bouwlust, which is not surprising since they also interact less at the project.

Nonetheless, everyone responds similarly when they come across unfamiliar passers-by: they almost never greet or talk to them, unless they are greeted first. In other words, they have no social contact in Bouwlust with people they do not recognise. In the case of Alan and Krista, their lacking Dutch often prevents them from addressing fellow residents. Moreover, they are barely addressed themselves:

> ‘*When people walk on the street, they don’t ask me questions, or say hello to me* […]*. But in Bulgaria it’s normal to say hello or good morning. It’s a sign of respect*.’ (Krista)

Emir, whose parents are from Somalia, thinks he knows why immigrants, or those who look like immigrants like he does, seldom get greeted on the street. According to him, Bouwlust is becoming more polarised. When his father first arrived in the Netherlands as a refugee, he was welcomed with open arms, but:

> *‘…now, refugees are greeted with “we already have enough of you here” or “they are a nuisance”. You notice it on the street as well, it has become more individualistic. People keep their eyes down, and are more prone to do their own things and nothing more. That’s a shame, because what you really want on the street is to be asked how you are doing.*’ (Emir)

Nonetheless, both Emir and Maaike denote that they do not desire more contact in the neighbourhood, as both are satisfied with their personal networks. This is not true for the werkfitters:

> '*Of course I would like to have more contact. I love it when people say hello, or to have a conversation if we both have time. Such contact makes life more beautiful.*' (Alan)

Therefore, it seems that those who would benefit the most from a larger social network, namely the werkfitters, have not obtained that through their participation at *Allekanten*.

To conclude this chapter, the answer to the first subquestion is as follows. The kind of participation that *Allekanten* facilitates is characterised by low citizen power, as non of the residents can influence the management of the project. This is especially true for the werkfitters, who are obliged to participate, while the volunteer and intern can make some suggestions about how the project is run. Furthermore, their participation is characterised by the motivations to support vulnerable citizens and the desire to develop personal skills. The type of social contact that the project stimulates remains mostly fleeting, both within the project and the neighbourhood. Moreover, participation in the project does not increase social contact in Bouwlust when it concerns unfamiliar residents, as in such instances contact remains absent.

Chapter V: Results: Participation and social contact at *Bij Betje*

This chapter will describe the participation of the neighbourhood residents that are part of the participatory governance structure of *Bij Betje*. Additionally, the type of social contact that this project facilitates will be considered, both within the project and within neighbourhood Moerwijk. Doing this will answer the second subquestion: *What kind of participation and social contact does project Bij Betje facilitate*?

5.1 Participation

Similar to the previous chapter, this section will first describe the power citizens have at *Bij Betje* and then discuss the motivations and objectives of citizen participation.

5.1.1 Citizen involvement

At *Bij Betje*, those who run the project are not too different from the volunteers. Both the project manager and the board members are neighbourhood residents and/or local entrepreneurs. Moreover, project manager Azra was a volunteer herself before she became the manager, which is a paid position. However, the manager and board do have separate weekly meetings where they decide on strategies, new activities, partnerships and future plans, as well as keep in contact with the municipality. The volunteers are only invited to monthly meetings with Azra, where decisions are communicated, but where the volunteers can also share their views:

> '*Even though Azra is the one running things, there is a lot of teamwork. We discuss everything together, and if someone has an idea, and Azra thinks it fits Bij Betje, then we discuss together how we can implement it.*' (Evelien)

Although the majority of the decision-making power lies with the board and project manager, the citizens are able to exercise some influence during the team meetings by offering opinions, making suggestions for new activities, and dividing the tasks among themselves. However, some volunteers question if they are indeed influential:

> '*No, I don't think I have any influence, because we do everything together. Yes, I attend the meetings, and yes, they listen to my suggestions. But would you call that influence?'* (Neeltje)

Similarly, Aicha feels that although her opinions are heard, she does not attend the board meetings and therefore has no real influence over the projects. Moreover, non of the citizens interact with the municipality. Although this actor remains mostly in the background at *Bij Betje*, there are weekly check-ins by a municipal representative in the neighbourhood, and monthly check-ups by the project manager at the municipality. The volunteers do not attend these meetings.

Nevertheless, the input of the volunteers is valued. Since they are or have been vulnerable citizens themselves, they are particularly suited to provide a sympathetic ear to visiting residents who face similar challenges. Moreover, the fact that these volunteers live in Moerwijk means that they know what is happening in the neighbourhood and what residents need. This knowledge is mobilised by the project manager:

> '*If we see the neighbourhood needs certain things, we go to Azra and she carries it out. For example, I have a neighbour who is lonely and sick and who needed help with cooking dinners. So I went to Azra, and now she provides him with some left-over food.'* (Farida)

5.1.2 Motives and objectives of participation

The fact that not all volunteers think they have a high level of influence at *Bij Betje* indicates that power is not their main motivation to participate. Instead, a desire to help vulnerable citizens drives them:

> '*It gives you a good feeling, seeing how happy they are with a conversation and a cup of coffee, or just being cosy with each other. Then, if you see them come back, that gives you a good feeling. You are really doing something to help these people*.' (Farida)

While it might be surprising that these citizens are this active and driven to help others due to their personal challenges, such as medical issues, unemployment and dependence on social benefits, it seems that in the case of *Bij Betje*, it is exactly these experiences that motivate them to participate:

> '*Helping people, I just find that really important. I've been in a similar, difficult situation. In those times you have to rely on the help of others, like I relied on Bij Betje. Without them, I am not sure I would have survived. So I am happy to return the favour* […]. *So yes, I am driven a little by wanting to pay them back for the help I received.*' (Floor)

This coincides with one of the main objectives of *Bij Betje*, namely to activate citizens and if possible, even guide them towards voluntary work. Indeed, next to this altruistic motive, becoming active also drives these citizens. They describe wanting to get out of the door again, after having been at home for some time due to personal circumstances. Moreover, Evelien hopes to use her voluntary work as a stepping stone to paid work. Therefore, all residents describe the chance their voluntary work provides them for personal development as important.

Another objective of the project is to stimulate social contact between residents. According to Azra, this would help people to get out of their isolation and out of the house, as loneliness is a big issue in Moerwijk. Therefore, she considers accomplishing social contact between residents an important task of *Bij Betje*:

> '*I think it would be good if residents get to know each other, so that they can rely on each other.*' (Azra, project manager)

This reflects a desire to achieve contact between residents that is deep enough to facilitate reliance on each other.

5.2 Social contact

To what extend *Bij Betje* can facilitate this in-depth contact between residents both within and outside the project, will be discussed in this section.

5.2.1 Social contact within the project

Unsurprisingly, all volunteers experience social contact at *Bij Betje*, since their tasks as hostesses and dinner servers require them to interact with fellow residents. Those who are hostesses indicate that they sometimes have profound contact, although this remains one-dimensional:

> '*That's what I like about it, that people feel enough trust to share personal things with me.* […] *My own personal issues I prefer to keep to myself, because when I am at Bij Betje, I am here for the residents and not myself*.' (Evelien)

Evidently, the volunteers do not have in-depth contact with fellow neighbourhood residents that goes both ways, even though these volunteers, who are vulnerable citizens themselves, would also benefit from having profound contact according to *Bij Betje's* philosophy. Some do, however, have in-depth contact with colleagues. Especially project manager Azra is considered a friend by all volunteers. Despite the occasional private rendezvous with her and the friendship between Aicha and Farida that existed before *Bij Betje*, non of the volunteers meet each other

outside the project. Therefore, the contact with fellow volunteers does not include personal issues:

> '*With volunteers, I talk about everything. But not my private life.*' (Aicha)

Hence, this contact remains rather fleeting. The same applies to most of the contact they have with attending residents. For instance, Aicha explains that some residents easily talk about everything, but even with them she does not discuss private details. Moreover, when serious problems are mentioned, she refers residents to project manager Azra to solve them. Therefore, even for hostesses most conversations remain fleeting. However, this is not necessarily viewed as problematic, as the volunteers argue that having nice conversations with residents who are battling loneliness, is helpful. Moreover, the contact between residents and volunteers is often interethnic, as the volunteers mention that people from various backgrounds attend *Bij Betje*.

Furthermore, all volunteers view the kind of contact they have at *Bij Betje* positively, and non have no contact at all since reaching out to residents is part of the job description. Additionally, ethnic diversity does not impede their interactions, and possible language barriers are dealt with using hands and feet, translation apps, or each other as interpreters. This also applies to the two volunteers with a migration background, who have lived in the Netherlands for a long time.

5.2.2 Social contact within the neighbourhood

While all volunteers have fleeting and at times in-depth contact with each other and with attending residents at *Bij Betje*, this does not always happen in the neighbourhood. Greeting or talking to familiar residents in public spaces is not a problem. What's more, this happens quite frequently, as they get recognised more often due to their voluntary work:

> '*I greet people by waving, or if they get closer, I ask them "how are you?". Those are not deep conversations, unless you know about their problems because you helped them. Then you ask them, but not with everyone. Sometimes you just greet them. And I get recognised quite a lot now, like: "oh, you're from Bij Betje!"*' (Farida)

Evidently, this contact in public spaces remains fleeting. Such contact does not take place when the volunteers come across someone in Moerwijk that they do not recognise. Except for Neeltje, who says she greets everyone, all volunteers report doing nothing in these instances, or to wait until the other person greets them first. This lack of contact is not necessarily deemed

problematic by the volunteers, either because they already have sufficient contact within their own social networks, or because they simply do not seek such contact:

> '*I don't want more conversations on the street. I am someone…who likes to remain in the background if I'm honest. It's fine if someone greets me, but I don't need to be in the picture or anything.*' (Floor)

Therefore, it seems that participating at *Bij Betje* does not increase social contact with unknown neighbourhood residents, nor the desire for such contact. However, quite contrastingly, while the volunteers do not crave it themselves, they do think Moerwijk would benefit from increased contact. Litter on the street, criminality, drugs, nuisance created by the youth, unsafety and discrimination are described as increasingly problematic, and especially for the latter the volunteers think that more fleeting contact would be beneficial:

> '*I keep hoping that people will start helping each other. And not fight about every wrong word. I hope there will be more love and understanding for each other. We live here together… They shouldn't be complaining about all the foreigners arriving here, but instead think about everything we had to leave behind, that we were forced to come here. They only see what they want to see, but they don't see our backgrounds. That's a shame. So I want more love, more greeting each other, more…being nice to each other.*' (Farida)

To conclude this chapter, the answer to the second subquestion is the following. The kind of participation that *Bij Betje* promotes is characterised by low citizen involvement since the volunteers cannot influence the management of the project, as they do not attend board or municipal meetings. However, their expertise as neighbourhood residents is valued, and their suggestions for activities and strategies are listened to. Additionally, the participation revolves around motives related to supporting vulnerable citizens and developing personally to become active citizens again. The kind of social contact that *Bij Betje* facilitates varies between one-dimensionally profound and fleeting within the project, and fleeting and absent in the neighbourhood. Although their participation increases the number of people they recognise on the street, it does not stimulate the residents to have more contact with unfamiliar people, even though the volunteers believe more fleeting contact would benefit Moerwijk.

Chapter VI: Analysis of participation: Differences and similarities

Following the description of the citizen participation in the participatory governance process of both *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje*, this chapter will compare and analyse both projects using the previously discussed literature. This will answer the third subquestion: *What are the differences and similarities between the projects in terms of participation?*

6.1 Differences

A fascinating difference between *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* concerns the subject of participation. Using Agger's (2012) differentiation between active, disengaged, and excluded citizens, all respondents fit in this first category, since they all actively participate in a neighbourhood project. However, this plays out differently in both projects. At *Bij Betje*, all volunteers are active citizens, since they live in the neighbourhood, and are not paid but participate voluntarily. More specifically, these residents are 'everyday makers' (Agger, 2012), because they volunteer part-time, are local level project-oriented, and participate to develop their own capabilities, as opposed to wanting to exert power ('expert citizens') or to represent their communities ('social entrepreneurs'). Contrastingly, at *Allekanten* only volunteer Maaike is an 'everyday maker'. Intern Emir does not participate entirely voluntarily, since he has to in order to graduate. This adds another dimension to Agger's theory, as this author does not consider the possibility that sometimes citizens are part of the participatory governance structure because they are expected to be. This also applies to werkfitters Alan and Krista, who did not choose to be active citizens but were sent by the municipality.

Furthermore, another striking difference between the projects concerns the involvement of the citizens. While the residents are ascribed similarly low levels of power over the participatory governance processes of the projects, which will be discussed in the next section, this is evaluated differently by the two groups of respondents. At *Allekanten*, the lack of power over their participation is deemed problematic. This is especially voiced by werkfitters Alan and Krista, who criticise the fact that they were sent by the municipality to *Allekanten* to carry out tasks they do not necessarily like or understand the purpose of. This results in a divergence between their expectations, namely quickly finding a paid job, and their actual participation, which takes about nine months and revolves around small tasks in the building. Contrastingly, at *Bij Betje* the volunteers view their participation and their relatively low level of power positively. This can be explained by the fact that they feel like equals within the project, both

to each other and to the project manager. Moreover, their expertise as (former) vulnerable neighbourhood residents is explicitly appreciated. For instance, the volunteers are able to signal what is happening around them in the neighbourhood, which is taken up by the board. As such, the project mobilises this local knowledge, uses it for collective problem solving, and ensures that the project meets the needs of the neighbourhood. This makes the volunteers feel useful and heard, and causes them to evaluate their participation in a positive light.

6.2 Similarities

Equally fascinating, however, are the similarities between the projects. First, Agger's (2012) categorisation of active, disengaged, and excluded citizens does not seem to fully apply to these case studies. For instance, Agger argues that people with a migration background or a low income or educational level, tend to be excluded from citizen participation. However, at *Bij Betje*, all volunteers are or were vulnerable citizens dealing with medical issues, unemployment or dependence on social benefits, which would generally mean that they lack the resources to participate. The opposite seems true here, as it is exactly this vulnerability that drives them. Similarly, at *Allekanten* both the werkfitters are relatively recent immigrants and new residents of Bouwlust, which according to Agger would mean that they tend to be excluded. However, it is too easy to say that their active participation contradicts this theory, as both Alan and Krista are not participating voluntarily. Moreover, since they have little say about their participation, it can be argued that they are still mostly excluded from the participatory governance structure of *Allekanten*. This shows that Agger's distinction between active, disengaged and excluded citizens is highly context-dependent.

Another similarity concerns the motives of the residents. First, at both projects, the residents are driven to help other residents, although this is more apparent at *Bij Betje*. This inclination does not coincide with what Gustafson and Hertting (2016) call the 'common good motive', since that refers to the desire to help the neighbourhood in its entirety, while at *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje*, the respondents are more concerned with helping individual residents. Thus, the common good motive does not apply here. Instead, a motivation not considered by Gustafson and Hertting (2016) seems appropriate, namely the wish to others, meaning vulnerable individuals. This reason to participate can therefore be called the 'altruistic motive'.

Additionally, at both projects the residents wish to develop themselves. At *Allekanten*, Maaike wants to become a full citizen in society again by participating, while werkfitters Alan and Krista want to develop the skills needed to find a job or education. This also applies to Evelien at *Bij Betje*, who hopes to find a job through her voluntary work. Moreover, at this

project, all volunteers describe wanting to become active citizens again after having been home for a while due to personal circumstances. This wish to develop oneself again does not fully align with what Gustafson and Hertting (2016) call the 'self-interest motive'. These authors relate this motive to improving one's own political efficiency by learning about politics and democracy and by acquiring useful contacts. Contrastingly, the team members at *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* are not interested in political skills, and instead wish to develop themselves personally. This divergence can be explained by looking at the objectives of the studied neighbourhood projects. While these scholars analysed projects that were created with the sole purpose of giving citizens influence over policy processes, both *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* aim to stimulate the development of their participants, respectively to get them to be part of the workforce or to get them out of their isolation. This, then, begs the question to what extent these projects carry out participatory governance since it is not their goal to include residents in the policy processes.

This relates to the most striking similarity between both projects, which concerns the level of power the residents can exercise. Arnstein's (1969) conceptualises citizen participation as the power that is granted over the policy process by the powerful to the have-nots. At *Allekanten*, the project creator, manager and the municipality are clearly the powerful since they hold all the decision-making power. In contrast, the residents are the have-nots. As such, volunteer Maaike and intern Emir are allowed to make suggestions to make the daily running of the project more efficient, but exercise no real power over the policy process nor over their participation. Therefore, they occupy rung (4) Consultation on Arnstein's ladder, since their allowance to express opinions is not combined with control over the policy process. Moreover, werkfitters Krista and Alan score even lower, namely rung (3) Informing, since their participation revolves around informing them about their rights, educating them, and guiding them towards a job, while this is not coupled with them having influence over their participation or the policy process. According to Arnstein, such low citizen power is problematic, which is also voiced by Alan and Krista.

Similarly, at *Bij Betje* the powerholders are the project manager and the board. They hold all the decision-making power and are in contact with the municipality, and therefore exercise power over the policy process. Contrastingly, the have-nots are the volunteers. Because they are invited to monthly meetings, where they can offer their opinions and have some influence over the hosted activities and their tasks, they occupy a slightly higher rung on Arnstein's ladder, namely (5) Placation. Although they can offer advice and exercise some influence, it is still the powerful who make the final decisions.

Therefore, although it was the intention of the municipality to set up participatory governance projects in The Hague Southwest to ensure they were in accordance with the needs and wishes of residents, it seems that in these cases, the residents do not participate in the actual policy processes of the projects. Instead, their participation remains rather informal, meaning that their activities to improve the neighbourhood fall outside the decision-making arena (Dekker, 2007). The real power over the governance process, or the formal participation, continues to be in the hands of the powerful. Therefore, in the case of *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje*, it seems appropriate to speak of (informal) citizen participation in the participatory governance process.

To conclude, the answer to the third subquestion is as follows. There are two differences between *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* in terms of participation. First, at the latter project, the residents are active citizens by choice, while at the former the residents are at times obliged to participate. Secondly, at *Bij Betje* low levels of citizen power are less problematic because the expertise of the residents is appreciated and used. There are also three similarities. First of all, both projects engage citizens who are commonly excluded. Secondly, at both projects, the common good motive was replaced by more altruistic inclinations, and the self-interest motive by a more personal orientation. Lastly, at both projects the residents can only exercise low levels of citizen power.

Having outlined these differences and similarities, the expectations formulated in the theoretical chapter can be reviewed. It was theorised that a top-down project like *Allekanten* would be characterised by low citizen power and high self-interest motives. This indeed seems to be true: the citizens occupy low rungs on Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation, and in the eyes of this author, do not exercise any real power. Moreover, the participants are certainly also motivated by self-interest, although more personally and combined with altruistic intentions. Therefore, this first expectation is be partly confirmed.

As for bottom-up/linked project *Bij Betje*, it was expected that citizens would exercise a higher level of power, which is only true to a small extent: the volunteers occupy only a slightly higher rung on the ladder of power. However, their expertise is explicitly valued, and the residents view their power as sufficient. Furthermore, it was assumed that the common good motive would be more prevalent here, but this is not the case. Instead, other motives drive these citizens, namely an altruistic motivation mixed with a personal self-interest to become more active. Therefore, this expectation is also partly confirmed.

Chapter VII: Analysis of social contact: Differences and similarities

After describing the social contact facilitated by *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* in chapters four and five, it is now time to compare and analyse both projects by linking them to the previously discussed literature. This will answer the fourth and last subquestion: *What are the differences and similarities between the projects in terms of social contact?*

7.1 Differences

At both projects, the contact is often interethnic, mostly because the people attending the projects tend to be diverse, as both neighbourhoods are very ethnically diverse. This seems to reflect the 'commonplace' ethnic diversity that Wessendorf (2013) describes, where interethnic contact in public spaces follows naturally when diversity is just a common fact of life in a neighbourhood. However, ethnic diversity affects both projects differently. For instance, ethnic diversity impedes contact at *Allekanten*. Both werkfitters Krista and Alan, who respectively came from Bulgaria and Afghanistan, occasionally have no contact at the project, even though they would benefit the most from a broader social network. Contrastingly, the two volunteers with a migration background at *Bij Betje* do not experience this difficulty, mostly because they have been in the Netherlands and Moerwijk considerably longer.

Another important difference relates to the contact with fellow team members. At *Allekanten*, this contact remains fleeting and does not exceed regular work contact, except for the one friend that intern Emir made. Other than that, both Emir and Maaike report not necessarily wanting more contact with their team. Oppositely, at *Bij Betje* all volunteers report being friends with the project manager, to whom they feel free to divulge private information, and that they have regular contact with each other. However, this contact again remains mostly fleeting, as volunteers often renounce sharing personal details or meeting in private spheres.

It is mostly the volunteers at *Bij Betje* that are satisfied with only having fleeting contact, which is why this concerns the last striking difference between the projects. At both projects, contact between residents in the neighbourhood ranges from fleeting to absent. This fleeting contact takes place when residents recognise each other, while it remains absent when it concerns unfamiliar citizens. However, the volunteers at *Bij Betje* and Emir and Maaike from *Allekanten* report not desiring more contact in the neighbourhood, because they are satisfied with their personal social networks, which are considerably large because they are long-time

neighbourhood residents. Contrastingly, werkfitters Alan and Krista do wish for more interactions, because they are relatively new to Bouwlust and still lack a local social network. They would like to practise their Dutch and make acquaintances or friends in a neighbourhood they barely know, to enlarge their social networks and create a sense of belonging. As such, they would like to be greeted more and make more small talk on the street.

This desire of the werkfitters for more fleeting contact in the neighbourhood corresponds with Hoekstra's and Dahlvik's (2018) assertion that fleeting contact like greeting and acknowledging each other in public spaces is often sufficient for residents. Moreover, the fact that long-time neighbourhood residents do not need more contact, while the more recent immigrants crave it, supports Blokland's and Nast's (2014) claim that residents need to feel comfortable or familiar in their neighbourhood in order to feel a sense of belonging. It also upholds these authors' assertion that such a sense is developed through fleeting contact such as greeting and acknowledging one another on the street. Only when this happens, an 'ethos of mixing' (Wessendorf, 2013) is sufficient and no deeper contact between residents is required. Unfortunately, it seems that participation in the project does not necessarily result in this mixing or fleeting contact.

7.2 Similarities

Hoekstra & Dahlvik (2018) argue that neighbourhood projects only sustain fleeting contact between residents. This also applies to *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje*, where contact between the respondents and fellow residents is mostly fleeting or only about everyday life. Nonetheless, the hostesses at *Bij Betje* and Emir and Maaike at *Allekanten* report having in-depth conversations with attending residents. However, at both projects this remains one-dimensional, meaning that the respondents listen to the residents' problems, but do not share personal details themselves. Moreover, this type of contact solely emerges as a result of work obligations, as it is their task to reach out to fellow residents, especially at *Bij Betje.* As such, the contact mostly revolves around greeting each other and having conversations about how everyone is doing. Therefore, this type of contact cannot be called profound.

The same goes for the contact that takes place outside the projects, in the neighbourhood. There, if it concerns a familiar face all respondents interact in a fleeting manner by greeting or making small talk. This happens more often for most respondents, as their participation has increased the number of people they recognise on the street. Therefore, their participation at *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* increases the fleeting contact that these active residents have in the neighbourhood. However, when it concerns strangers in public spaces, all respondents obtain

from reaching out, unless the other person does so first. Hence, participation at a neighbourhood project does not seem to have a strong socialisation effect, since they do not greet or talk to strangers more often since their participation. This correlates with Van der Meer's (2016) findings, who also questioned the socialisation effect of neighbourhood associations.

Therefore, both projects only succeed in establishing fleeting contact. While this does not meet the objectives of the projects to increase in-depth contact between residents, most respondents do not find this problematic. Being greeted and acknowledged on the street is often enough, just as Hoekstra and Dahlvik (2018) expected. However, this only applies when residents live peacefully together and when diversity is an accepted part of everyday life (Wessendorf, 2013). This is not yet the case for the residents of both projects, as they all have described instances of discrimination and polarisation. This is also reflected in the resident's wish for more contact between residents in both neighbourhoods. This again coheres with the notion of 'public familiarity' (Blokland & Nast, 2014), as the residents hope that more greeting and acknowledging each other on the street will increase feelings of comfort and belonging in the neighbourhoods and decrease discrimination.

To conclude, the answer to the fourth subquestion is as follows. In terms of social contact, there are three main differences between the projects. First, ethnic diversity influences contact within the projects differently, as those with a migration background at *Allekanten* sometimes experience no contact, while this is not the case at *Bij Betje*. Second, contact with fellow team members is more personal at *Bij Betje*, while it remains more distant at *Allekanten*. Finally, the residents with a migration background at *Allekanten* crave more fleeting contact in their neighbourhood, while the residents at *Bij Betje* are contented with the amount of contact they have. There are also three similarities. First, at both projects, contact ranges between one-dimensionally profound and fleeting. Secondly, participation in both projects leads to more contact in the neighbourhoods because the residents recognise more people, but does not increase interactions with unfamiliar faces. Lastly, contact in the neighbourhood remains fleeting at most, because residents do not desire more profound interactions.

Having answered the fourth subquestion, the third and final expectation laid out in the theoretical chapter can be considered. It was expected that both *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* would not be able to facilitate profound interethnic contact in the projects and neighbourhoods, because citizens do not value such contacts and do not need to experience a sense of belonging in the neighbourhood (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018); Blokland & Nast, 2014). It is true that both

projects barely stimulate in-depth contact. Indeed, the citizens seem to value fleeting contacts more, especially those who are new to the neighbourhood.

However, both projects do facilitate interethnic contact. It was assumed that a top-down project would have difficulty with including and valuing diverse citizens and that a bottom-up project would mostly attract similar citizens (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018; Dekker & Van Kempen, 2009). Yet, both projects have highly diverse teams and experience interethnic contact as a natural result of the neighbourhoods being so diverse. Therefore, as the contact is interethnic and not profound, the third expectation is partly confirmed. How the type of participatory governance explains these differences and similarities, will be considered in the conclusion.

Chapter VIII: Conclusion

After comparing *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* in terms of participation and social contact and analysing the main differences and similarities, it is now time to answer the main research question: *How can participatory governance explain differences and similarities between projects Allekanten and Bij Betje regarding the level of participation and social contact between residents of The Hague Southwest?*

As previously established, *Allekanten* can be categorised as a top-down project with bottom-linked inclinations, while *Bij Betje* ranges between bottom-up and bottom-linked. This differentiation can explain some of the differences between the projects in terms of participation. First, it clarifies why participation at *Allekanten* is less voluntary than at *Bij Betje*. The top-down structure of the former means that the municipality has set several goals the project has to meet and even recruits people to reach certain goals, such as becoming employable again. This especially applies to the werkfitters, who do not participate voluntarily but are sent by the municipality. Contrastingly, the bottom-up setup of *Bij Betje* means that residents can participate at their own discretion. What's more, the volunteers at this project can fill in their position more or less on their own, as they are free to decide which tasks they want to do, while at *Allekanten* there are set positions to which people can apply. Secondly, this explains why the volunteers at *Bij Betje* better fit in Agger's (2012) category of active citizens, since they choose voluntarily to become active at a local project, while at *Allekanten* residents are at times obliged to participate. Thirdly, the distinction between top-down and bottom-up explains why the volunteers at *Bij Betje* are more akin to the residents they are helping. Its bottom-up structure means that the project was created by and for local residents, as its main goal is to help fellow residents and encouraging them to become a volunteer at the project. Contrastingly, at *Allekanten* being a resident of the neighbourhood is not a requirement.

However, interestingly and unexpectedly, this differentiation between top-down and bottom-up does not influence the level of power citizens can exercise at the projects. While it was expected that a top-down project would allow less citizen power, while at a bottom-up initiative the citizens could be more influential, both *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* are characterised by similarly low levels of citizen power. The municipality of The Hague set out to include citizens in the creation and management of neighbourhood projects, as this inclusion in the policy process is a crucial aspect of participatory governance. Nonetheless, neither *Allekanten*

nor *Bij Betje* has included their residents in their decision-making processes. At the former, two residents are merely informed while two others can only consult the powerholders. At the latter, the citizens are placated, as they attend monthly meetings and can make suggestions, but are not included in board or municipal meetings.

It is quite surprising that different levels of participatory governance – top-down or bottom-up – cannot be related to different levels of citizen power, but what is even more remarkable is that participatory governance does explain whether low levels of citizen power are deemed problematic or not. At *Allekanten*, being powerless is problematised. This is especially expressed by the least powerful, the werkfitters, as the project's top-down structure means that they are sent by the municipality against their will. As a result, their participation does not meet their expectations or needs. Contrastingly, at *Bij Betje* the volunteers feel they do not need higher levels of power. This can be explained by its bottom-up structure, which allows for all volunteers to be equally valued as holders of local knowledge. More specifically, their knowledge and experiences as vulnerable neighbourhood residents are explicitly appreciated and mobilised by the project for collective problem-solving, to ensure that the project matches the residents' and neighbourhood's needs. This shows that local ownership and shared activities and goals, which follow naturally from being a bottom-up project, can mitigate the problems of low citizen power in the governance process.

Lastly, the type of participatory governance cannot explain the similarities between *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* in terms of social contact. It seems that participatory governance projects, in general, cannot facilitate profound contact between residents, since there were no differences found between top-down *Allekanten* and bottom-up *Bij Betje*. Both projects only sustained one-dimensionally profound or fleeting contact within the projects and fleeting or no contact in the neighbourhoods. Moreover, residents at both projects did not desire more in-depth contact, which is in line with the theoretical expectations (Wessendorf, 2013; Blokland & Nast, 2014; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). Nonetheless, the contact between residents at the projects was often interethnic, despite previous studies questioning the ability of neighbourhood projects to establish this. However, this can also not be explained by the participatory governance structure of the projects, but by the fact that both neighbourhoods are highly diverse and contact between dissimilar people follows naturally. Therefore, *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* can be viewed as bridging organisations since they stimulate interethnic contact. However, since no profound contact takes place, whether these projects also promote more understanding and tolerance for diversity remains questionable.

In short, and to answer the main research question, participatory governance can only partially explain the differences and similarities between the projects. The different participatory governance structures can explain why the participation at *Allekanten* is less voluntary and coheres more with pre-arranged positions and objectives. It also clarifies why the residents at *Bij Betje* are classic active citizens that are more akin to the residents they assist. Moreover, while the differentiation between top-down and bottom-up does not influence the level of power citizens are ascribed, it does explain why low levels of influence are not always problematic. Lastly, the level of participatory governance cannot expound on why social contact between residents remains fleeting. This is explained, however, by the fact that residents do not desire more profound contact. The next chapter will outline the implications that these findings have for the understanding of the concept of participatory governance and for future research and policymakers.

Chapter IX: Discussion

In this final chapter, the key findings will be briefly restated, after which their implications will be discussed. Moreover, it will be explained how these results fit into the existing body of literature. Lastly, some limitations and recommendations for further research and for policymakers will be laid out.

The purpose of the present study was to determine the effect of participatory governance on citizen participation and the establishment of social contact between residents in diverse neighbourhoods. It was found that the type of participatory governance does not affect the level of power residents are granted but that it does affect how this power is viewed. More specifically, both top-down *Allekanten* and bottom-up *Bij Betje* are characterised by low levels of citizen power. This questions the commonly made connection between the type of neighbourhood project and the level of citizen power in the literature, as top-down projects are associated with low citizen influence, and bottom-up projects with high citizen power (Arnstein, 1969; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). While the findings confirm that a top-down project can indeed be associated with low citizen power, it also contradicts the literature that argues that a bottom-up project automatically results in higher citizen influence, as this is not the case at *Bij Betje*. There, even though the volunteers are all equally valued, they are not invited to board and municipal meetings and are not made part of the decision-making processes. This confirms Arnstein's (1969) and Michels' (2012) claim that participatory governance is not always combined with an increase of the citizens' power over policy processes.

However, this study also nuances this problematisation, as it demonstrates that the volunteers at *Bij Betje* have no problems with their low levels of influence, as long as they feel their knowledge and experiences are appreciated and used for collective problem-solving. Therefore, it can be argued that an explicit implementation of a notion of citizen participation that Gustafson and Hertting (2016) describe, such as *Bij Betje's* administrative logic that taps into local knowledge, might be more important than achieving the higher levels of citizen power that Arnstein (1969) advocates for. This is also consistent with what Fung (2006) and Aulich (2009) argue. They state that a hierarchical categorisation of citizen power is defective because it is entirely context-dependent what type of power is most appropriate to reach the formulated goals. It also confirms Hoekstra's and Dahlvik's (2018) assertion that local ownership and shared activities and goals are important for neighbourhood projects to be successful.

Another finding concerns the fact that the type of participatory governance does influence the residents' motives to participate in the projects. This questions Gustafson's and Hertting's (2016) categorisation of motives, as they only consider it in relation to participation in policy processes. As such, they explain the self-interest motive as the wish to develop political skills and the common good motive as the desire to contribute to the improvement of the neighbourhood, but this does not apply to the present cases. More specifically, the self-interest motive turned out to be more personal, as the respondents hoped to develop personal skills. The common good motive had to be replaced by an altruistic motive, as the respondents were more focused on helping vulnerable citizens than the entire neighbourhood. This divergence between the authors' conceptualisations and the current findings can be explained by the fact that in the present cases, the residents are not actually part of the formal participation within the projects, which concerns the decision-making processes (Dekker, 2007). Instead, the residents participate informally, by organising activities and helping visitors.

Both these findings and how they add to the existing body of literature have consequences for how the concept of participatory governance should be understood. The present study shows that understanding this type of governance solely as participation in the decision-making processes is too limited. Here Dekker's (2007) distinction between formal and informal participation comes in handy. She explains the former as participation in policy processes, and the latter as participation in other activities that contribute to the improvement of neighbourhoods. This study has demonstrated that a lack of this formal participation, which coheres with a more traditional understanding of participatory governance, is not necessarily problematic when residents are given ownership of their informal participation. Therefore, the concept of participatory governance should be considered more broadly to include activities outside the decision-making process.

However, even this does not mitigate the fact that participatory governance cannot explain similarities in terms of social contact. This last finding supports the existing body of literature, as it was expected that both neighbourhood projects would not be able to establish profound contact between residents because they do not desire such contact (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018; Dekker & Van Kempen, 2009). However, the present study also adds to this literature. Authors Dekker and Van Kempen (2009) and Hoekstra and Dahlvik (2018) argued that participatory governance projects are unable to promote interethnic contact, but these results show otherwise. Both projects had ethnically diverse teams, which was actively pursued, and attracted diverse visitors. This, however, was not necessarily actively pursued by the project managers but naturally resulted from the superdiverse neighbourhoods the projects were in.

Hence, participatory governance projects can establish fleeting, interethnic contact, contrary to what has been argued in the literature. That notwithstanding, participation at the projects does not lead to more interethnic contact or understanding outside the projects, in the neighbourhoods, as all respondents reported instances of discrimination and polarisation. The results indicate that increasing fleeting encounters in public spaces between dissimilar residents could mitigate these problems. This supports Blokland's and Nast's (2014) and Hoekstra's and Dahlvik's (2018) statements that superficial contact in neighbourhoods is often sufficient to promote feelings of comfort, belonging and understanding in neighbourhoods.

This has implications for the (study of) governance of diversity. This study has shown when diversity is perceived as 'commonplace' (Wessendorf, 2013), it is not deemed problematic. As such, in superdiverse contexts, the challenge is not to attract diverse citizens to local projects and initiatives, as this will happen naturally when the team and activities are also diverse. Instead, the challenge is to stimulate interethnic daily encounters in public space. This study has shown that this cannot be achieved through local neighbourhood projects, as participation at *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje* did not increase contact with unfamiliar residents. Alternatively, the governance of diversity should focus on facilitating fleeting encounters in public spaces, as these are often enough to make residents feel comfortable and like they belong in their neighbourhoods. This has implications for current policies that do focus on participatory governance projects to mitigate problems with social cohesion in diverse neighbourhoods, which will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

9.1 Limitations and strengths

Although the findings of the present study yield interesting implications, some limitations should be considered. First, there are some disadvantages that cling to the usage of the snowball sampling method. Since the population could not be accessed through another way, because both project managers were very protective, no other method than this non-probability sampling could be used. Nonetheless, from this, problems with representation arise, as no random sample can be taken, and samples tend to be biased or too homogenous because respondents are more likely to select those who are similar to them (Sharma, 2017; Etikan, Alkassim & Abubakar, 2015). This in turn threatens the generalisability of the research (Cohen & Arieli, 2011; Sharma, 2017). However, these limitations were more or less mitigated in this thesis. First, the samples of both projects were very diverse, which mirrors the diverse populations. Second, both populations were very small (about ten people per project), meaning that the samples represent about fifty per cent of the population. That being said, one of the project managers said that

those who responded to her call for interviews were the 'usual suspects', meaning that some of the respondents that participated in the research are very used to being interviewed, while those who usually remain on the background were not reached.

A second limitation concerns the fact that not all methods could be executed as planned. For example, the initial plan was to interview visiting residents about their experiences at the projects, but this had to be changed due to the protectiveness of the gatekeepers. Although this meant a sudden shift in research focus, studying residents working at the projects did conjure up a clearer link with the concept of participatory governance. Additionally, it was planned to carry out observations on site. This could have been a valuable method to supplement the interviews because it would allow an observation of the contact between residents that is otherwise only described by them. However, COVID-19 restrictions limited movement within the projects and allowed only a small number of people to visit the sites. This meant that there was not a lot to be observed.

Opposing these limitations, the study also has some credible strengths. The first strength relates to the advantages that using a qualitative research method has. Conducting in-depth, semi-structured interviews on-site with the respondents conjured up honest and sometimes crude responses that could not have been obtained through other research methods. Secondly, this study was the first to combine and interpret two strands of the academic debate on participatory governance, namely citizen participation and the facilitation of social contact, using different types of participatory governance. This resulted in a coherent overview of the effects of participatory governance and produced the interesting finding that while the differentiation between top-down and bottom-up projects can explain some differences in terms of citizen participation, it does not clarify the lack of social contact the projects establish. Thirdly, this was the first study to scrutinise the social contact that the projects establish for residents that are part of the participatory governance structure. From this, the interesting result emerged that even though these are extremely active and social citizens, since they give up their free time to participate in the projects, even they do not have more social contact in their neighbourhoods as a result of their participation.

9.2 Recommendations

From these findings, several avenues for future research arise. First, it would be interesting to repeat this research on a larger scale, to see whether the contrasts and conformities between top-down and bottom-up projects hold in larger contexts. Second, at *Allekanten* and *Bij Betje*, interethnic contact arose from the fact that both neighbourhoods were highly diverse. However,

since the ability of neighbourhood associations to establish interethnic contact has been problematised, as discussed in the theoretical chapter, it would be interesting to repeat this research in less diverse contexts. Lastly, while these projects clearly sustained interethnic contact, future research could take this one step further to see if this also leads to more tolerance and acceptance, since this bridging-ability has been questioned by scholars like Van der Meer (2016).

As for policymakers, from this research emerges the recommendation to give residents more ownership over their participation. The results indicate that when residents have no power over how and why they participate, they view their participation more negatively. Contrastingly, when the residents feel that their expertise and experiences are appreciated and used, this leads to more effective and collective problem-solving. Therefore, policymakers can still support local projects that exercise low citizen power, as long as participating residents have a say about their participation and the project's objectives. From this, a second recommendation arises, namely to only employ neighbourhood residents for local initiatives, since they relate the most to those they are helping. Moreover, social contact in the neighbourhood increases when the residents recognise more fellow citizens due to their participation. Therefore, if increasing social contact is the goal, such projects should only include residents. Lastly, policymakers should not invest or strive for the establishment of profound contact between neighbourhood residents, as such contact is not desired. Instead, residents prefer fleeting contact, such as greeting and acknowledging each other in public spaces. Therefore, policymakers should accommodate projects and public spaces that facilitate this fleeting contact, instead of profound encounters, especially if they hope to battle problems related to discrimination and polarisation. This study, and its focus on the inclusion of citizens in local participatory governance projects, can be the first stepping stone to more effective policymaking for distressed neighbourhoods.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Topic list and interview questions for project managers (Dutch)

1. Introductie en rol binnen project

a) Wat is uw naam, leeftijd, professionele en culturele achtergrond?

b) Bent u ook een bewoner van de buurt? (Bouwlust voor Allekanten, Moerwijk voor Bij Betje)?

c) Wat is uw rol binnen het project? Wat houdt dat precies in? (En: parttime of fulltime?)

d) Hoe lang werkt u al voor dit project, en specifiek in deze positie?

e) Hoe bent u op deze positie terecht gekomen? Wie heeft u aangesteld?

f) Waarom bent u onderdeel geworden van dit project?

2. Opzet van project

a) Wat is het doel van het project? Waarom is het opgezet?

b) Hoe werkt het project? (Zijn er activiteiten voor bewoners, of workshops/meetings/andere vormen van ondersteuning?)

c) Hoe lang bestaat dit project al?

3. Type project (top-down, bottom-up, bottom-linked)

a) Hoe is het project ontstaan? Door wie is het opgezet?

b) Hoe zijn de doelen van het project tot stand gekomen? Wie heeft de doelen van het project opgesteld?

c) Wie is er verantwoordelijk voor het dagelijks bestuur van het project? (Vrijwilligers/ professionals/gemeente?)

i) Zitten daar ook bewoners bij? Met verschillende achtergronden (nationaliteiten)?

d) Wie worden er betrokken bij belangrijke beslissingen over het project? (Vrijwilligers/ professionals/gemeente?)

i) Zitten daar ook bewoners bij? Met verschillende achtergronden (nationaliteiten)?

e) Wat is de rol van de gemeente in dit project? Is er een samenwerking, en zo ja: op welke fronten, hoe verloopt die samenwerking? (Bijvoorbeeld: bestuur/financiële ondersteuning/ vergaderingen)

i) Waar gaat het budget van de gemeente heen? Salarissen? Gebouw? Nog meer?

ii) Wilt u meer/minder invloed van de gemeente?

4. Bewonersparticipatie

a) Wat voor soort bewonersparticipatie wil het project stimuleren? Op welke manieren worden bewoners geacht te participeren in het project (als vrijwilliger/in activiteiten/ workshops)?

b) Hoe vindt bewonersparticipatie werkelijk plaats? Zijn er verschillen tussen de verwachtingen en de werkelijkheid?

c) Op welke bewoners is het project gericht? Wie worden er geacht mee te doen? (iedereen/ benadeelde bewoners/specifieke groepen?)

d) Welke bewoners participeren werkelijk? Zijn er verschillen tussen de verwachtingen en de werkelijkheid?

e) Waarom is volgens u het stimuleren van bewonersparticipatie belangrijk?

5. Sociaal contact

a) Trekt het project verschillende mensen aan? Of zijn het meestal dezelfde mensen die op komen dagen?

b) Wordt diversiteit actief nagestreefd? Hoe, en waarom (niet)?

c) Vindt er onderling contact plaats tussen de aanwezigen? Zo ja: op welke manier? (Elkaar groeten/diepgaande gesprekken/etc)

d) Wordt onderling contact gestimuleerd door het project?

i) Zo ja: hoe wordt dat gestimuleerd? Waarom is dat belangrijk volgens u?

ii) Zo nee: waarom niet?

Appendix 2: Topic list and interview questions project managers (English)

1. Introduction and role within project

a) What is your name, age, and professional and cultural background?

b) Are you also a resident of the neighbourhood (Bouwlust if Allekanten, Moerwijk if Bij Betje)?

c) What is your role within the project? What does this role entail? (also: parttime or fulltime?)

d) How long have you worked for this project, and specifically in this role?

e) How did you get to this position? Who appointed you?

f) Why did you become part of this project?

2. Design of project

a) What is the goal of the project? Why was it initiated?

b) How does the project work? (Are there activities for residents, or workshops/meetings/other support?)

c) For how long has this project existed?

3. Type of project (top-down/bottom-up/bottom-linked)

a) How did the project come about? Who initiated it?

b) How did the goals for this project come about? Who set those goals?

c) Who is responsible for the daily management of the project? (Volunteers/professionals/ municipality)

i) Does this include residents? With different backgrounds (nationalities)?

d) Who are included in important decisions about the project? (Volunteers/professionals/ municipality)

ii) Does this include residents? With different backgrounds (nationalities)?

e) What role does the municipality play? Is there a collaboration, and if so: how, and how does it work? (Management/financial support/meetings)

i) On what is the municipality's subsidies spent? Salaries? Building? Something else?

ii) Would you like more/less influence from the municipality?

4. Citizen participation

a) What kind of citizen participation does the project want to stimulate? How are citizens expected to participate (as volunteers/during activities, etc)?
b) What does the citizen participation in reality look like? Are there differences between expectation and reality?
c) Which citizens are targeted? Who are supposed to participate? (all residents/disadvantaged groups/specific residents)
d) Which citizens do in reality participate? Are there differences between expectation and reality?
e) Why do you think citizen participation is important?

5. Social contact

a) Does the project attract different people? Or do mostly the same residents show up every time?
b) Is diversity actively pursued? How, and why (not)?
c) Do the citizens have contact with each other? In what way?
d) Is contact between citizens stimulated by the project?
    i) If yes: how? And why is that important?
    ii) If not: why not?

Appendix 3: Topic list and interview questions municipal project managers (Dutch)

1. Introductie

a) Wat is precies uw functie bij de Gemeente, en wat houdt dat in?

b) Hoe bent u betrokken bij Allekanten/Bij Betje?

2. Type project/rol gemeente

a) Hoe is Allekanten/Bij Betje onderdeel geworden van de Regiodeal?

b) Waarom past Allekanten/Bij Betje goed bij de Regiodeal? Waarom is het onderdeel geworden?

c) Wat is de rol van de gemeente binnen het project?

i) Was de gemeente betrokken bij het opzetten van het project? Hoe?

ii) Was de gemeente betrokken bij het opstellen van de doelen van het project? Hoe? En waarom deze doelen?

iii) Hoe is de gemeente betrokken bij het dagelijkse reilen en zeilen van het project? Dagelijks/wekelijks/maandelijks? Bestuur? Vergaderingen? Bezoekjes? Eisen? Sturing? Uitvoering gemeentebeleid?

iv) Hoe is de gemeente verder betrokken? Subsidie? Jaarlijkse evaluaties?

d) Zou u de relatie tussen het bestuur van Allekanten/Bij Betje en de gemeente bestempelen als een samenwerking? En hoe evalueert u die?

e) Waarom is het belangrijk dat de gemeente betrokken blijft bij dit soort buurtprojecten?

f) Waarom vindt de gemeente bewonersparticipatie belangrijk?

g) Hoe denkt u dat Allekanten/Bij Betje de wijk (Bouwlust/Moerwijk) verbetert?

Appendix 4: Topic list and interview questions municipal project managers (English)

1. Introduction

a) What is your function at the municipality, and what does that entail?

b) Who are you involved with Allekanten/Bij Betje?

2. Type of project/role municipality

a) How did Allekanten/Bij Betje become part of the Regiodeal?

b) Why is Allekanten/Bij Betje a good fit for the Regiodeal? Why did it become part of it?

c) What is the role of the municipality within the project?

i) Was the municipality involved in the initiating of the project? How?

ii) Was the municipality involved in the formulation of the project's goals? How? And why these goals?

iii) Was the municipality involved in the daily running of the project? Daily/weekly/ monthly? Management? Meetings? Visits? Demands? Steering? Implementation of municipal policies?

iv) In what other manner is the municipality involved? Subsidies? Yearly evaluations?

d) Would you call the relationship between Allekanten/Bij Betje and the municipality a collaboration? And how do you evaluate it?

e) Why is it important that the municipality remains involved in these neighbourhood projects?

f) Why does the municipality think citizen participation is important?

g) How do you think Allekanten/Bij Betje improves the neighbourhood (Bouwlust/Moerwijk)?

Appendix 5: Topic list and interview questions residents (Dutch)

1. Introductie

a) Wat is uw naam, leeftijd, professionele en culturele achtergrond?

b) Hoe lang woont u daar al in Bouwlust/Moerwijk?

2. Bestuur

a) Als u suggesties of opmerkingen heeft, wordt er dan naar u geluisterd? (Maak hypothetisch als men dit niet doet)

b) Heeft u het gevoel dat u als bewoner invloed heeft op het project?

c) Heeft u het gevoel dat u als bewoner een belangrijk onderdeel bent van het project?

3. Participatie

a) Hoe neemt u deel aan het project (als vrijwilliger) (administratie/activiteiten organiseren/ bijwonen, etc)?

b) Hoe bent u vrijwilliger geworden? Wat deed u eerst bij het project (deelnemen? Hulpvraag?)

c) Hoe lang neemt u al deel?

d) Hoe regelmatig neemt u deel?

e) Waarom doet u mee aan dit project/Waarom bent u vrijwilliger geworden?

4. Sociaal contact in project

a) Heeft u contact met andere mensen tijdens het deelnemen aan het project?

b) Om wat voor contact gaat het? (Groeten/beleefde gesprekken/diepgaande gesprekken)?

c) Gaat het dan vooral om contact met andere vrijwilligers, of ook met deelnemende bewoners?

i) Verschilt uw contact met beide groepen? (Bijv meer diepgaand met vrijwilligers)

d) Praat u dan ook met mensen die anders zijn dan u?

e) In welke mate zijn die mensen anders dan u? Taal/nationaliteit/leeftijd/gender

f) Wordt contact tussen bewoners en vrijwilligers gestimuleerd tijdens deelname aan het project, en hoe dan?

g) Ervaart u ook barrières die contact verhinderen, en zo ja welke?

5. Sociaal contact in de buurt

a) Wat doet u wanneer u mensen op straat of andere openbare plekken ziet die u herkent? (Groeten/gesprek/niks)

b) Wat doet u wanneer u mensen op straat of andere openbare plekken ziet die u niet herkent? (Groeten/gesprek/niks)

c) Herkent u meer mensen op straat of andere openbare plekken sinds uw deelname aan het project?

d) Spreekt of groet u nu meer mensen op straat of andere openbare plekken sinds uw deelname aan het project?

e) Heeft u buiten het project meer contact met medebewoners sinds u vrijwilliger bent?

f) Hoe ziet dat contact eruit? (Intensief (vriendschap)/oppervlakkig/alleen op publieke plekken?)

i) Heeft u vriendschappen opgebouwd door het project? (Ook al vrienden voor deelname?/zijn jullie elkaar ook buiten het project?)

g) Met wie heeft u dan contact? Zijn dat voornamelijk mensen die hetzelfde zijn als u, of anders (en in welk opzicht?)?

h) Heeft u het gevoel dat de buurt socialer is geworden door het project? (Meer contact tussen bewoners)

i) Zou u meer contact willen in uw buurt? Wat voor soort contact? (Groeten/gesprekken/ook in privésferen)

Appendix 6: Topic list and interview questions residents (English)

1. Introduction

a) What is your name, age, and professional and cultural background?

b) For how long have you lived in Bouwlust/Moerwijk?

2. Management

a) Are you listened to when you offer suggestions or remarks?

b) Do you feel like you as a resident you can influence the project?

c) Do you feel like you as a resident are an important part of the project?

3. Participation

a) How do you participate (as a volunteer)? (administration/organising/attending activities, etc)

b) How did you become a volunteer? What did you do first at the project? (Attending? Request for help?)

c) How long have you participated for?

d) How regularly do you participate?

e) Why do you participate?/Why did you become a volunteer?

4. Social contact in the project

a) Do you have contact with others during participation in the project?

b) What kind of contact (greeting/polite or in-depth conversations, etc)

c) Does this mostly include contact with other volunteers, or also with participating residents?

i) Does your contact with both groups differ? (E.g. more in-depth with volunteers)

c) Do you also have contact with people who are different from you?

d) How are these people different from you? Language/nationality/age/gender

e) Is contact between citizens and volunteers during participation stimulated? How?

f) Are there also obstacles hindering contact? Which ones?

5. Social contact in the neighbourhood

a) What do you do when you see people in public spaces that you recognise? (Greet them/talk to them/nothing)?

b) What do you do when you see people in public spaces that you don't recognise? (Greet them/talk to them/nothing)?

c) Do you recognise more people now that you've participated in this project?

d) Do you greet and talk to more people now that you've participated in this project?

e) Do you have more contact with fellow residents outside the project because of the project?

f) What kind of contact? (In-depth/superficial/only in public space)

    i) Did you form friendships due to the project? (Already friends before joining?/Do you meet each other outside the project?)

g) With whom do you have contact? Mostly similar people, or different people? (Different how?)

h) Do you feel like the neighbourhood has become more social due to the project?

i) Would you like more contact in the neighbourhood? What kind of contact? (Greeting/talks/ also in private spheres)