Facilitating Environmental Complexity

Exposing Different Dimensions in Managerial Networking

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Abstract

Public managers engage in networking relationships with a wide variety of external actors and organizations from which they can draw different types of support to the core agency. They thus face a wide array of possible actions and strategic choices with regard to their potential networking behaviour. Most empirical studies on managerial networking, however, merely expose different levels of networking activity, as if it were a uni-dimensional concept. This inadequacy potentially obscures information on the actual patterns to be found in networking behaviour itself. To make up for this theoretical-empirical incongruence, this paper accordingly uses Mokken-Scaling to expose different dimensions of managerial networking. By demonstrating how public managers differentiate between different external actors and organizations, it thus facilitates the environmental complexity in which public management takes place. The research context for this analysis is found in the recent shift from central to local authority marked by the Social Support Act (SSA/WMO).

Introduction

Although government programs and policies have always involved complex clusters of individuals, groups, and organizations, such patterns of networking have become even more prevalent in recent decades (Rainey, 2003: 148). The nature of public service delivery has changed through developments of (1) increased privatization and contracting out, (2) a greater involvement of the non-profit sector, and (3) complex and 'wicked' problems that exceed the scope and capacity of single organizations (Rittel & Weber 1973; O'Toole 1997). Moreover, the current financial-economic crisis forces governments worldwide to cut down expenses and implement large-scale reforms in almost all domains of the public sector. These environmental changes compel (semi-) public organizations to adapt their strategies, goals, and primary processes. A much reported response is the emergence of some form of inter-organizational collaboration or cooperation (Milward & Provan 2000; Meier & O'Toole 2003; Agranoff & McGuire 2001). As the operation of government and public management has then become more differentiated, pluralistic, and decentralized, the networking concept has gained prominence in public administration research, as to take it 'out of the narrow tunnel of formally designed structures and mandated organizations' (Toonen, 1998: 250).

Public managers that operate in the complexity of the above described settings, engage in networking relationships with a wide variety of external actors and organizations from which they can draw different types of support to the core agency (Bozeman 1987; Heymann 1987; Moore 1995; Rainey & Steinbauer 1999; Moynihan & Pandey 2005). They thus face a wide array of possible actions and strategic choices with regard to their potential networking behaviour. Oddly enough, however, empirical studies on public sector networking rarely support this theoretical contention. For instance, Torenvlied et al. (2013: 252) observe how current empirical evidence of studies on managerial networking merely expose different *levels* of networking activity, as if it were a uni-dimensional concept (e.g. Meier & O'Toole 1999).

Despite the - albeit important - range of *explanation* this general dimension of managerial networking has provided in terms of organizational performance[1], its conceptualization does not do justice to the multiplicity of activities and functions that are involved in the public management of an increasingly complex environment. A great deal of information on the patterns to be found in networking behaviour is then potentially obscured. To make up for this inadequacy, this paper accordingly attempts to expose different dimensions of managerial networking, as to facilitate the environmental complexity in which it takes place.

At the theoretical level, it does so by combining elements of the three dominant perspectives in public administration research on networking in the public sector. Although much of the analysis in this paper relies heavily on the *managerial networking* logic specified by Meier and O'Toole (1999), we should acknowledge that the *inter-organizational* and *collaborative* networking perspectives also carry important insights into the workings of public sector networks in general. Rather than cutting them off, it then seems a more fruitful approach to grant them a complementary role in theoretically framing the individual actions of public managers. This (1) gives us a better understanding of *coordination* and *network structure* as important mediators for effective public service delivery (e.g. Milward & Provan 1995; Provan & Kenis 2007), and (2) focuses our attention on processes of *collaboration* and the individual strategies that network member employ to facilitate and operate in multi-organizational arrangements (e.g. Agranoff 2006). These insights then provide the input for a conceptualization of managerial networking that is more consistent with what public managers *actually* do, i.e. a conceptualization that does *not* limit our understanding of their behaviour to one general dimension of managerial networking activity.

[1] See Sartori (1970: 1053) for the "ladder of abstraction" and the balancing act of finding concepts that provide both an acceptable range of *explanation* and an adequate accuracy of *description*. For the managerial networking concept the balance has seemingly shifted to the detriment of the latter.

At the methodological level, this paper follows up on a research agenda set by Torenvlied et al. (2013), in which a case is made for the potential of cumulative scaling for the analysis of managerial networking. In that sense, it is partly a replication of their analysis performed on the networking behaviour of Texas School Districts superintendents, in which Mokken Scaling was used to disaggregate managerial networking into multiple scales of managerial networking activity (ibid.: 252). However, the same analysis is now carried out in a vastly different context – the local SSA policy in the Netherlands - and thus subjects the initial argument to a challenging test of external validity. Moreover, rather than looking for different *general* dimensions, this paper expects the patterns of managerial networking behaviour to depend heavily on the specificities of the studied policy and its goals. Here, we slightly divert from Torenvlied et al.'s (2013) theoretical ambition, as the analysis of networking behaviour presented below is somewhat more *contextualized*[2] to the institutional setting in which it takes place. By demonstrating how these different dimensions of managerial networking can then be exposed and analyzed, this paper helps to fill an apparent gap in the literature on networking and performance.

This paper will proceed as follows. Firstly, in order to place ourselves in a wider body of literature, an overview is given of studies on networking in the public sector. An adequate understanding of these more general issues and conceptualizations subsequently allows us to situate the present study in a more particular perspective; i.e. that of managerial networking. This helps us straighten out relevant concepts of networking and public management, laying down the theoretical foundation to make our argument with regard to the multiple dimensions of (managerial) networking. Armed with these theoretical contentions,

[2] In "facilitating environmental complexity", the theoretical ambition of providing context-independent, first-order explanations in the analysis of networking behavior seems misguided. Instead, it seems a more fruitful approach to have our analysis accommodate for the open-ended, contingent relation between contexts and actions and interpretations that is involved in any form of human activity (see Flyvbjerg, 2001: chapter 3 & 4).

we will then step down to the more concrete level and present a research context that allows empirical testing. This context is found in the implementation of the SSA-policy in Dutch municipalities. After operationalizing the identified theoretical concepts, the analytical section of the paper uses the Mokken-scaling technique to expose different dimensions in managerial networking. Lastly, a concluding section will serve to frame a discussion, put the findings of the present study into perspective, and set directions for future research.

Literature Review

Networks and Public Management

When using the term *networks*, the literature generally refers to 'multi-organizational arrangements for solving problems that cannot be achieved, or achieved easily, by single organizations' (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001: 296). In a public management context, these networks are led by government representatives. For the public and non-profit sectors in particular, addressing complex issues that demands multilateral coordination requires more than merely achieving the goals of individual organizations (O'Toole 1997). Therefore, collective action and the governance of these activities are needed (Provan & Kenis, 2008: 232). In the increasingly complex and complicated environment of public service delivery (see introduction), networks are often employed as the intentionally chosen and designed agents of public management (Lynn, Jr. 2006: 152). Network analysis is accordingly characterized by "the examination of the multiple interactions that comprise full networks, including discussion of how public policy is implemented through networks of cooperating service providers" (Milward & Provan, 2001: 414).

A distinctive characteristic of these public service delivery networks is that they are primarily non-hierarchical; i.e. participants often have substantial operating autonomy (Provan et al. 2007: 483). In essence, networks are thus structures of interdependence in

which none of the units is the formal subordinate of the others in some larger hierarchical arrangement (O'Toole & Meier, 2011: 55). Still, the organizations within the network influence each other through dyadic interactions, or are connected with each other through a sub-network of multiple relations. To understand networking behaviour, the unit of analysis is then not only the actors themselves, but also the connections between them. These connections - or ties between the nodes – come in many different shapes and sizes. They can both be formal or informal and facilitate a wide variety of exchanges, ranging from information, materials, and financial resources to services, and social support (ibid.).

Different *types* of relations between organizations can thus be identified and *what* is substantively being exchanged between organizations can be differentiated according to (1) strategic content and (2) the degree of personal interaction that is involved (Schalk, 2013: 856-857). For instance, relations for mobilizing *financial resources* and the resulting *monitoring relations* with the organization providing these financial means (Kickert et al. 1997), will require some (personal) managerial interaction for its initiation; once in place however, these types of relations are not expected to strongly convey strategic information (ibid: 857). On the other hand, the intensive coordination process of *client referrals* - needed to acquire information of clients to whom the services are provided (see Milward & Provan 1995) - may require a higher degree of strategic information exchange and personal contact between network members as to facilitate the continuous exchange (Schalk, 2013: 857). Similarly, discussing strategic possibilities for cooperation between organizations requires *managerial interaction* (Meier & O'Toole 2003), marked by a high degree of personal involvement between organizational members and strategic information exchange (Schalk, 2013: 858). In that sense, the actual content of existing relations between organizations can differ widely, seemingly pointing to multidimensionality in public service delivery networks (cf. Hjern & Porter 1981).

From Resource-Dependence to Managing Interdependencies

In line with the definition of *networks* provided above, network interactions allow organizations to achieve goals that they could not have achieved by themselves (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001: 296). From this follows the core assumption of public management networks; namely that the establishment of these networking relations allow public sector organizations to successfully deal with the complexities of their interdependencies (Provan & Milward 1995; Klijn & Koppenjan 1997; Torenvlied et al. 2013). In that sense, the relationship between networking and effective public service delivery is generally perceived as a positive one. For managers who have to deal with the complexity of the environment in which their organizations operate, actively developing a wide variety of network relations could then provide an outcome. A successful application of this strategy would accordingly lead to an enhanced performance of the organization itself (Kickert et al. 1997; Rethemeyer et al. 2008; Akkerman & Torenvlied 2011a).

The main theoretical foundation for this hypothesis can be traced back to the work of Pfeffer and Salancik (1978). They summarize the perks of maintaining network relations in three main assertions (ibid: 145-146): (1) network relations make sure that information that could be crucial to the activities of the own organization is acquired and exchanged in an optimal fashion; (2) network relations help in developing commitment of stakeholders to the activities of the own organizations; and (3) the interaction between organizations can stabilize the environment and hence reduce uncertainty.

This *resource-dependence* perspective is based on the premise that public organizations - in their day-to-day activities and operations - are highly dependent on *other* organizations and actors. In practice, this (inter-)dependency manifests itself in several forms; first and foremost, in order to operate smoothly, public organizations require *information* and

resources of the environment in which they operate. In this fashion, they can – for example - learn about the needs of their clients and anticipate to future trends in their demands. Moreover, these network relations keep public organizations informed about new technologies and innovations and can grant them proper access to the funding institutions that are crucial to their survival.

In addition, public sector organizations require the trusted cooperation of other organizations in order to facilitate smooth interactions and foster learning and innovation (Pfeffer & Salancik 1978; Aldrich 2008; Powell et al. 1996; Zaheer et al. 1998). This inter-organizational trust can be defined as 'the willingness to accept vulnerability based on positive expectations about another's intentions and behaviours' (McEvely et al. 2003: 92). Whenever this trust is present, organizations will expect the counterpart to behave in a predictable, reliable, and fair manner, in particular when the opportunity for opportunism is present (Bachmann & Zaheer, 2008: 535-536). Trust thus plays an important role of limiting opportunistic behaviour in inter-organizational relationships (Bachmann & Zaheer, 2008: 545). In that sense, it is a more efficient and cheaper governance mechanism than, say, a hierarchy.

Three Approaches in Public Administration

Based on the theoretical foundation laid down above, three perspectives have sprung up in public administration research with regard to the linkage between inter-organizational networking and public performance. Firstly, the *inter-organizational network-approach* is concerned with the structure and governance of "whole" networks (Provan & Milward 2001). The core hypothesis here is that public performance - usually measured at the community level - is related to the structure of the network (Provan & Milward 1995; Provan et al. 2007). When reasoning from this perspective, coordination is held to be the main explanatory

mechanism of performance. As Milward and Provan (1995: 24) have shown in their study of community mental health systems, coordination can ensure close cooperation between otherwise atomic organizations with conflicting goals. Moreover, centrally coordinated inter-organizational networks are held to perform better than either dense or sparse ones (Akkerman et al. 2012).

A second approach, the *managerial networking* perspective, focuses on the network activity of individual managers with various external actors and organizations - e.g. suppliers, clients, political institutions, regulatory agencies etc. (Torenvlied et al. 2013). This managerial networking can act as a moderator between the organization's day-to-day activities and its turbulent environment. The vital resources needed for an organization to perform – i.e. information, materials, expertise, money – will be transferred through relations with these external organizations. For instance, Meier and O'Toole (1999) find how different characteristics of networking activity positively affect the performance of high schools in the Texas school district. The two main explanatory mechanisms in this perspective are that active networking enables organizations to (1) exploit their environment, in terms of resources and information, and (2) buffer environmental shocks (i.e. changes in political, economic and technical demands) (ibid.).

Thirdly, the *collaborative* network perspective is not so much focused on outcome variables, but more on the process of collaboration. When one talks about network management in this capacity, one refers to the strategies individual network members employ to facilitate and operate in multi-organizational arrangements (Agranoff, 2006: 56). In this fashion, organizations can set up the rules, routines, norms and values that govern their interactions and mutual dependencies. This affects the substantive content and quality of relations of the network – delineated by some boundary rule specification – and thus also the

performance of the network as a whole (Klijn & Koppenjan 2000; Bruijn & Ten Heuvelhof 2008). This 'performance' is usually measured as perceived by its participants.

Theory, Concepts, and Hypotheses

Of the three approaches prevalent in public administration research (managerial, inter-organizational, collaborative), this paper mainly focuses on the *managerial networking* perspective. When talking about *networking* in this capacity, we refer to the actions of the individual manager in the networked environment of his or her public agency (O'Toole & Meier, 2011: 59). The unit of analysis is thus the so-called 'ego-network' of the public manager and the main focus is on the individual actions he/she undertakes. However, as to provide a more comprehensive theoretical framing of this *managerial networking* behaviour, this section also draws on insights from the *inter-organizational* and *collaborative* networking perspectives. In a complementary role, these perspectives can improve our understanding of the environmental complexity in which the analyzed networking behaviour takes place, allowing for a more accurate conceptualization.

External Management and Stakeholders

In the managerial networking perspective, *networking activity* is usually conceptualized by the contact-frequencies that the high-ranking managers maintain with external actors and organizations. The more active public managers are in this regard, the better their organizations can be expected to perform (Meier & O'Toole 2003; Agranoff & McGuire 2001; Rethemeyer et al. 2008; Akkerman & Torenvlied 2011a). Two causal mechanisms lie at the basis of this positive relationship: (1) active networking allows organizations to exploit their environment, in terms of resources and information; and (2) it enables organizations to buffer environmental shocks, such as changes in political, economic, or technical demands (Meier & O'Toole 1999).

The external actors and organizations with which the core agency engages in networking relationships are of a wide variety. They range from suppliers, stakeholders, and clients, to alliance partners, regulatory agencies, and political institutions (Torenvlied et al. 2013: 252). These environmental factors can have a significant influence on the core agency's performance[3]. Recent studies report on how organizations can *actively* draw different types and sources of support in their environment (Bozeman 1987; Torenvlied et al. 2013). Moreover, some of these sources may in fact be beyond the control of public managers themselves, i.e. they do not ´control all levers´ (Moynihan & Pandey, 2005: 433). In that sense, a focus on the exogenous forces shaping the behaviour and performance of public agencies and their managers seems justified. Still, some important questions prevail, particularly with regard to the question of multiple dimensions in managerial networking.

Different Types of Actors = Different Types of Support

An approach in which a factor analysis provides us with the managerial networking dimension implies that managers who are inactive (i.e. a low score on the factor) tend to network infrequently with few external organizations, while managers who are active (i.e. a high score on the factor) tend to network frequently with many organizations (Torenvlied et al. 2013: 253). However, *different* kinds of external actors and organizations provide *different* types of support to the core agency (Torenvlied et al. 2013). We can then see how public managers face a wide array of possible actions and strategic choices with regard to their networking behaviour. In that sense, (managerial) networking activity seems more complex and subtle than a mere counting of relationships between organizations implies (McGuire 2002). After all, this conceptualization tells us fairly little about what *actually* happens

[3] The idea that this environment can play an important role for the core organization is a relatively old one. Lawrence and Lorsch (1967) already developed hypotheses on how organizations would be best suited to adapt to the demands of their immediate environment and Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) were concerned with tapping into environmental resources essential for organizational survival.

between the networking nodes, i.e. the ties connecting them remain somewhat of a black box. Moreover, each external tie the organization maintains with other network members is held to be of similar strength, importance, and substance. This seems a rather distorted image of reality, given the environmental complexity in which public managers and their organizations operate.

The Theoretical Implications of One General Dimension

Although maintaining frequent contact with all relevant environmental actors is very likely to positively affect the performance of the agency itself (Moynihan & Pandey 2005; Schalk et al. 2010; Akkerman & Torenvlied 2011a), the effect and importance of each of these actor types and the importance of their support should not be treated in a similar fashion. Annulling variation in the behaviour of network managers, by analyzing it through one general dimension of managerial networking activity, obscures a great deal of information on the actual behaviour of network managers (Torenvlied et al. 2013: 252). Upholding this single common factor of managerial networking - particularly prevalent in the work of Meier and O'Toole (1999) – has several severe theoretical implications that make it an unfeasible approach for the analysis of managerial networking behaviour.

Firstly, the "Meier and O'Toole-approach" carries the assumption that network managers do not discriminate between different types of environmental actors (Akkerman & Torenvlied, 2011b). This seems unrealistic when considering the many types of organizations with which public managers are surrounded, inevitably leading to different patterns of networking in which managers establish network relations more frequently with some pairs of external actors and more infrequently with others (Torenvlied et al. 2013: 253). Secondly, those managers observed to be most active in terms of managerial networking - as operationalized by one common dimension - are also expected to have the most diverse

networks. However, this can lead to serious measurement error, as it may in fact be the separate concept of network *diversity* itself that is responsible for the increased performance, rather than the network *frequency* that is held to represent it. Thirdly, considerations of time-management, physical proximity, and functional necessity, has us more interested in the specific types of actors with which network managers are involved. After all, not every one of these external actors should be expected to be equally beneficial or have equal importance to the core agency. A central question is then why network managers are more willing to invest in one type of relation over another? What goals does the public manager have and how does this affect his choice for certain types of environmental actors? Specific environmental actors will serve specific goals and an adequate analysis of networking behaviour should take this consideration into account.

Managerial Networking as Goal-Oriented Behaviour

In light of the above made arguments, we should expect public managers to behave in a goal-oriented fashion. After all, despite both science's and society's optimism about the positive effects that public service delivery through networks can bring about, we should also note that networking can in fact be a costly endeavour. In that sense, managers are best advised to be selective in their investments in relationships with external actors (Heymann 1987; Moore 2000). They have to decide on what external actors and organizations serve the goals and interests of the core agency best. For instance, public managers under strict budgetary supervision, prioritize relationships with organizations that yield financial support. Then again, if the core organization receives negative feedback from clients, the public manager is more likely to invest in network relationships with client interest groups (Torenvlied et al. 2013). The main premise here is that public managers thus face a choice of how much to invest in relationships with specific external actors and organizations. Certain cost-benefit mechanisms seem to underlie their behaviour.

Managerial Networking as a Costly Endeavour

In terms of costs, Agranoff (2007) notes how actively managing the environment by engaging in a wide variety of network relations also means that the manager has less time for the internal management of the own organization. These *opportunity costs* of external management should be taken seriously as they can have serious consequences for the organization's functioning. Moreover, if the network collaboration is to become a success, the organizations participating will have to adjust their behaviour to each other. Inevitable *coordination costs* are bound up in this process - i.e. investments, effort, obtaining information, etc. Being coordinated - with all the monitoring, adjustments, and constraints this entails –means an inevitable loss of autonomy. The goals, strategies, and preferences of each organization will have to be altered and each individual actor will not be eager for too many concessions in this regard.

The above made considerations complicate matters significantly. In a sense, the shared interest of effective public service delivery and the high levels of interdependency between the network organizations for reaching this common goal[4] may not be enough to generate successful implementation (O'Toole, 2012: 298-299). Joint impediments still remain as opposing organizational interests will inevitably exist/prevail in the policy-network. Despite overlaps in interest and priorities, there will also be discrepancies due to different goals and perspectives on policy matters (O'Toole, 2012: 299). Moreover, the complicated policy challenges with which the organizations are faced, requires consideration by different kinds of units reflecting distinct and partially competing goals. Expecting a common interest in these instances is unrealistic.

[4] Being bound up in a "shared fate", as Laumann & Knoke (1987) name it.

Considering the Benefits

The *benefits* of managerial networking should then also be noted. When considering the "publicness" of the agency environment, we can see how it is inevitably shaped by a multitude of actors (Bozeman 1987). Besides political and bureaucratic actors, the public, agency clients, and other stakeholders will also have a substantial influence (Heymann 1987, Moore 1995, Rainey & Steinbauer 1999; Lynn, Jr. 2006). Including these actors in the policy-making process will only enhance the "publicness" of policy outcomes; i.e. generate a more legitimate means of public service delivery. Complementing this main consideration, four distinct benefits surface when including various actors in the process of public service delivery (Edelenbos & Klijn 2006).

Firstly, by involving influential actors early on in the decision-making process, the government can prevent that these actors use their veto power to block or oppose decision-making later on. After all, they are expected to be more supportive of a policy decision to which they contributed themselves. Secondly, involving numerous actors in the decision-making procedures, allows for the inclusion of different aspects of the problem in the formulation of a solution. This leads to a more complete and flexible policy process and avoids a premature fixation on one-dimensional solutions dominated by a single perception or rationality (ibid.). Thirdly, incorporating different perspectives and ideas tells a more complete story and brings in different types of skills, information, experience, and knowledge. This should enhance the overall quality of the final policy. Lastly, interactive decision-making involves citizens in the decision-making process, accordingly increasing identification with governmental policy products and closing the gap between state and society. In that sense, involving more actors gives the decision-making process a more open character. This can enhance democratic legitimacy and is in accordance with the idea of representative democracy (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2006: 420-421).

Differentiating Dimensions

Summarizing, the environmental complexity in which public managers operate, had us reconsider the adequate conceptualization of their managerial networking behaviour. In order to accommodate for the different types of actors and organizations that provide different types of support to the core agency, we should not limit our understanding of managerial networking to one general dimension. Instead, public managers operate in a goal-oriented fashion and face a choice of how much to invest in relationships with specific external actors and organizations. These considerations provide a firm belief in the existence of *different* dimensions in managerial networking. To enable us to subject our theoretical contentions to empirical testing, we set up the following hypothesis:

"Managerial networking can be differentiated along different dimensions, each related to a specific type of support to the agency that can be provided by external actors and organizations."[5]

Research Context, Data, and Study Design

Case Selection: SSA/WMO

Recent decades have seen some major decentralization operations in the Netherlands (Gilsing 2007; Veldheer 2009). One that stands out in particular, is the shift from central to local authority marked by the Social Support Act[6] (SSA/WMO) (Schalk, 2011: 7). With the SSA, the Dutch central government places the responsibility with local governments to stimulate the (social) participation of its citizens (TK 2003-2004). Besides a realignment of legislation, however, the SSA is also an emphatic attempt to realize social and administrative innovation (Timmermans et al, 2010: 23-33). In essence, the SSA is designed to ensure that

[5] See also Torenvlied et al. (2013: 255)

[6] In Dutch: Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning (WMO)

citizens can remain self-sufficient for as long as possible and are enabled to participate in society (Van der Veer, 2011: 266).

Two aspects of the SSA in particular, make it an interesting research context for the present paper's purposes (Van der Veer et al. 2011). Firstly, the SSA is a "framework law", i.e. although central government outlines the broader goals and intended (social) effects of the policies in the SSA-setup, municipalities are given an extensive degree of autonomy and discretion in formulating their own variant of the local policy to be implemented and the choice of instruments by which the central goals are to be attained. Thus, municipalities are free to develop their own policy within the bounds of the set framework (see Koppenjan et al. 2009). Secondly, the vertical lines of accountability are absent in the new institutional setup through which the SSA-policy is implemented. In other words, local society is expected to keep checks on the policy in a *horizontal* fashion. These two elements combined, ensure that the SSA distinguishes itself from other decentralizations projects, as municipalities are left with far more discretion and autonomy with regard to the formulation and execution of local policy. This is of interest to this study as variation in network structures and strategies can then be expected.

But what exactly is the role of stakeholders in the specific context of the SSA? The wide range of services provided to SSA clients requires the coordination and support of many different types of actors. This requirement is reflected by the SSA's strong recommendation to involve multiple actors in all stages of policy making (Schalk, 2011: 8). Consistent with the managerial networking logic specified above, this recommendation carries the underlying assumption that an intensive degree of stakeholder involvement will eventually increase overall policy performance (ibid.). By developing and maintaining relation with different actors and organizations, the local governments are envisioned a role of policy broker or 'lead organization' (cf. Provan & Kenis 2008).

The way this interactive process of stakeholder involvement is then organized in local SSA-policy making, is through official long-term forums of negotiations and roundtables (Schalk, 2011: 8). Stakeholders thus have no actual political decision-making power, but are represented in participatory forums in which they can voice their concerns and interests. A public manager of the municipality has the responsibility and discretion to organize this process of inter-organizational service delivery. It is the behaviour of this individual in particular to which we devote our attention when analyzing the managerial networking done in the SSA context.

Professional and Client Stakeholder Involvement

At the theoretical level, two functional types of actors can be distinguished in SSA-policymaking: *professional stakeholder* organizations and *client interest* organizations (De Klerk et al. 2010; Schalk 2011: 3). *Professional stakeholder* organizations are the main service-providers to the client-population. Operating under different levels of government, most of these partner organizations have either a non-profit or semi-public legal status, although some private organizations are also included in the SSA-setup (e.g. transport companies). To serve the broad variety of goals specified by the SSA, these widely differing organizations each have their particular specializations and can thus provide the local government with different kinds of expertise. Moreover, as *actual* service providers¸ professional organizations often possess the extensive (financial and other) resources that local governments need for successful policy implementation. Performance feedback on their respective clienteles and other critical information on service delivery methods and best practices should also be considered in this regard.

Client interest organizations represent the interests of different client groups, such as the elderly or disabled. Their main focus lies with influencing policy-outcomes, as to embody

the concerns of their clients. For local governments, these organizations possess critical information on the wide variety of clients the SSA-policy is expected to serve. Moreover, the success of service delivery will be contingent on the support of these different client-groups. Including them in the policy-making process is an important means of securing this requirement (cf. Bozeman 1987; Edelenbos & Klijn 2006). Although the involvement of professional and clients interest groups are largely separate processes, both types of organizations are involved in the policy implementation and formulation phases. The degree to which these different actors are involved in the policy-process can be held to represent their perceived importance for a successful policy implementation **(**Schalk, 2011: 11).

A Wide Variety of Policy Goals

With the SSA, Dutch government intends to encourage social participation and active involvement of *all* its citizens, particularly those dubbed as the more 'vulnerable' groups in society (De Klerk et al. 2010). This latter category of individuals includes - amongst others - the elderly, people with a physical or mental impediment, problem youth, the homeless, and addicts. To serve all these different categories of clients, the SSA is thus concerned with widely differing policy goals, evinced by the nine centrally formulated 'performance targets' set up to guide and evaluate local implementation (see appendix A). These targets range from "supporting informal care and voluntary work" (target 4) to "providing community shelter" (target 8), and from "facilitating the independent functioning of those with physical or mental impediments" (target 5 & 6) to "activating social cohesion and livability" in neighborhoods (target 1) (TK 2004-2005). To accommodate all interests related to these different aspects of the comprehensive SSA-policy, local governments are thus expected to involve a wide variety of different stakeholders.

Data: SCP Process-Scan

The dataset used for testing the specified hypothesis was obtained from the Netherlands Institute of Social Research (SCP), a government agency that conducts research into the social aspects of all areas of government policy (source: SCP website). The *Process Scan* (PS) is a dataset containing information on the full population of Dutch local governments (N = 443). It provides the results of a questionnaire answered by the public manager assigned as the key coordinator of the local SSA policy-making process. It was sent in the first quarter of 2008 and retrospectively addresses the policy-making process of 2007. The response rate was 83 %, leaving us with a sample of 383 municipalities.

Operationalizing and Measuring Stakeholder Involvement

The Process Scan carries information on the SSA-coordinator's networking behavior. In the data, a distinction is made between the involvement of professional stakeholder organizations and that of client interest organizations. As these are largely separate process, in the sense that local government typically establish separate platforms in which *either* client interest organizations *or* professional organizations participate, this distinction seems justified.

To assess the degree of stakeholder involvement, the public managers were asked to indicate which of the 20 different functional types of *professional* organizations, and 11 different functional types of *client interest* organizations were involved in the local SSA policy making process. The list of organizations was constructed carefully through roundtable sessions with representatives from stakeholder organizations in the field across the Netherlands (De Klerk et al. 2010; Schalk, 2011: 10). Of these lists, public managers could accordingly indicate whether they had a relation with each type. The data derived from these surveys will thus not refer to networking activity in terms of contact frequency, but rather to

networking diversity in terms of number of different *types* of organizations that are involved. However, this need not be problematic for constructing networking scales, as the Mokken Scaling procedure seems equally comfortable with dichotomous data (Mokken, 1971; Van Schuur 2003; see methodology below).

Methodology: Mokken Scaling

To find different dimensions of managerial networking, we turn to cumulative scaling analysis to provide the answers. To be more specific, we use Mokken Scaling; a nonparametric "item response" model for scaling analysis. For the sake of clarity, we should elucidate some of the concepts and nuances central to this methodology. Then we can state the main advantages of its usage for the present purpose.

When referring to a scale, we mean 'a set of items which are all positively correlated and with the property that every item coefficient or scalability (Hi) is larger than or equal to a given positive constant (c)' (Mokken, 1971: 184). The items of which the scale is built up, are designed to be indicators of a single latent variable – i.e. some form of managerial networking in our case (van Schuur, 2003: 139). Each item is accordingly held to be a separate test of the value of the respondent on that latent trait (Torenvlied et al. 2013: 257). In this fashion, the Mokken model can analyze each participant's pattern of responses. In our case, these participants are the SSA-coordinators from the Process-scan dataset.

Item-Response Theory

"Item response theory" models - such as Mokken analysis – differ from "classic test theory" models - such as factor analysis – in several crucial aspects. Firstly, where IRT assumes that items can be included in a scale only once, CTT assumes that an item can contribute to several latent factors or dimensions. The participant's scale score that Mokken analysis accordingly produces is then the sum of her scores on each item of the scale. Ideally,

we would want to see that the probability of a positive response to any given item increases with increasing scale values of the subjects (van Schuur, 2003: 146).

Moreover, where CTT makes the strong assumption that different items in the scale have the same mean and standard deviation, Mokken scale analysis can provide an outcome whenever the items are not "parallel" (Carroll 1945). The latter seems more applicable to a model that deals with the interactions of external organizations and actors (Torenvlied et al. 2013: 257). After all, the main determinant for close interaction between organizations seems to be a physical one; actors that are closely located to the core agency are more accessible than distant ones. For the SSA policy, however, the functional determinant should also be noted. As external actors fulfill different functions in relation to the formulated policy goals, their resources and support will be of varying importance to the core agency. This implies a widely differing interaction frequency with different external actors and organization and makes the assumption of similar means and standard deviation undesirable.

Cumulative Scaling

Mokken analysis is of a cumulative nature: participants that are able to pass an item of some degree of difficulty, are also assumed to pass *all* items that are less difficult. For instance, whenever a student can faultlessly multiply 73 by 66, we also expect him to know the answer to the multiplication of 7 times 6. Note that the term 'difficult' should be interpreted in strict methodological terms. However, with regard to this assumption, errors should be expected at the theoretical level. Thus, it is possible that participants that pass one item may in practice fail to pass an item that is less difficult. To form a scale, the errors that arise out of this main assumption, should be randomly distributed. They are accordingly modeled by using a probability function that estimates how likely participants are to pass an

item of a given difficulty. The observed errors are then transformed into a "scale homogeneity" coefficient *H*; the inverse of the ratio between observed and expected errors.

When compared to other earlier developed IRT scaling techniques, Mokken scale analysis tries to find a way out of the shortcomings of Guttman (1950) analysis – such as a suboptimal criterion of model fit – by systematically representing deviations from a perfect Guttman scale. It does so by invoking one or more separate additional dimensions (Mokken 1971; van Schuur, 2003: 141). Thus, similar to the Rasch Model (1960), it calculates the probability of a positive response to a dichotomous item by analyzing both one or more subject parameters and one or more item parameters. A disadvantage of using the Rasch Model, however, is that its assumptions are rather strict. In that sense, it is best applied to data with a high number of items (> 20). Again, "Mokken scaling" can provide an outcome as its two nested scaling models of Monotome Homogeneity and Double Monotonicity[7] ensure that when a large number of different topics are treated with a relatively small number of indicators for each concept, potential scales can still be extracted rather well (Van Schuur, 2003: 143). In that sense, it is ideal for our present purposes in which the SSA-coordinators respond to a maximum of 30 items to capture his networking behavior.

Summarizing, the main advantages of the Mokken data reduction technique are that it 'includes an item parameter that shows how items differ in their distribution, it is probabilistic rather than deterministic, and it can be applied in situations in which latent variables must be operationalized with only a small number of indicators' (van Schuur, 2003: 141). The use of

[7] Monotome Homogeneity is based on the assumptions of unidimensionality, local stochastic independence, and monotonicity in the latent attribute, i.e. whose Item Response Functions are non-decreasingly monotone (See Meijer et al. 1990: 283). The model of Double Monotonicity carries the same set of assumptions, plus the additional assumption of monotonicity in the item *difficulties* (ibid: 284).

Mokken Scale Analysis in this paper is primarily exploratory; i.e. an experimental set of items is analyzed to see whether one or more scales emerge.

Analysis: Empirical Results

To obtain the cumulative scales of the networking activity of the SSA-coordinator, we firstly scrutinized the nine performance fields of the SSA-policy (appendix A). From this we derived a number of potential scales by fitting the identified stakeholders (appendix B) to the goals (e.g. youth, direct care, psychological, etc.). The substantive argument that arose from this qualitative approach was accordingly cross-validated with a data-driven, exploratory approach facilitated by the MSP Stata module to perform the Mokken Scale Procedure (Hardouin 2004). The according scales that surfaced are held to represent different patterns in managerial networking behaviour for the SSA-context.

` However, in order to speak of *cumulative* scales, several criteria have to be satisfied. Most importantly, each formed cumulative scale has to conform to the minimal weak scale criterion of $H > 0.30$, while each individual item loaded on the scale has to conform to $H_i > 0.30$ (Molenaar et al. 2000). Considering the relatively strong relationships between the items in an initial analysis, we adopted a threshold value of c.(.7), starting with the two items that form the strongest scale (v15_2 and v15_6, i.e. Transport Companies and Home Care Organizations). A process of trial-and-error accordingly had us identify six separate scales (table 1). As mentioned, Appendix B describes the involved external actors and organizations more elaborately. A descriptive summary of the data is given in table 2.[8]

[8] Appendix C gives the raw results of the Mokken scales identified above.

Table 1. Mokken Scales .

Networking Scales (Loevinger H)

	Items					Loevinger H
Carescale	Transport	Zorgkantoor	CIZ	Thuiszorg	GGD	0.72
Youthscale	BJZ	Schools	Police			0.70
Psyscale	GGZ	Welfare Org.	Com. Shelters			0.90
Supportscale	Inf. Care	Voluntary W.	MEE			0.87
Housingscale	Reg. Gov.	Hous. Comp.				0.85
Interestscale	Inf. Care	Vol. Work	Disabled	Elderly	Loc. Neighborhood	0.62

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics .

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Carescale	335	0	5	3.35	1.44
Youthscale	339	0	3	1.85	1.16
Psyscale	346	0	3	2.44	.88
Supportscale	346	0	3	2.72	.76
Housingscale	343	0	2	1.15	.62
Interestscale	355	0	5	3.27	1.40

Interpretation: A Qualitative Argument

With the items 15_2 (transport companies) and 15_6 (home care organizations) forming the strongest scale, we are immediately confronted with two central actors in the care component of the SSA-policy. Performance field 5 focuses on having clients 'participate in societal traffic' and promotes them 'functioning independently'. Transport companies and home care organizations provide the services that do exactly that. While the former is used to ensure the mobility of clients with physical or mental impediments, the latter provides professional care at the homes of clients. However, besides these more direct forms of care provision, facilitation and coordination is also needed in order to ensure an effective and tailored service delivery. The Health Care Service Coordination Office (15_4), CIZ (15_5),

and the GGD (15_7) are types of actors fit for this role. Their tasks range from ensuring quality and quantity of the provided care, to checking whether clients' claims to care provision are legitimate. A Loevinger H Coefficient of 0.72 for the 5 selected items seems to confirm the plausibility of this scale as representing a general care providers dimension in the SSA-Coordinator's networking behaviour.

Another pillar in the SSA-policy is the support of young people and the various upbringing/education problems with which they are concerned (Performance field 2). Organizations concerned with Youth Care Provision and Youth Protection (item 15_14) are the first actors that come to mind in pursuit of obtaining this goal. Besides taking over the role of the CIZ for client under 18, they have the authority to intervene or provide assistance whenever a child's upbringing is problematic for whatever reasons. To fulfil this function properly, however, they will have to cooperate closely with actors that can carry out important supportive roles. With regard to signalling functions, schools (15_15) and the police (15_16) can fulfil important tasks. A Loevinger H of 0.70 seems to confirm this dimension as a strong scale in service of youth policy.

Thirdly, the SSA is concerned with psychological and mental welfare (performance fields 6, 8, and 9). The GGD (15_9) is a particularly relevant actor in this regard as they are mainly focused on providing mental and psychological care, including the treatment of addicts. The strong scale this organizations forms with welfare organizations (v15_12) seems logical, considering the various activities they can provide in terms re-socialization and rehabilitation. Also, community shelters (v15_13) fit in well with these items. This can be explained by the high number of potential clients and addicts with which they deal, making a close collaboration - with the GGZ-organization in particular - inevitable. A signalling function also seems important in this regard. A Loevinger H of 0.87 supports this line of argument quite strongly.

As for the fourth scale, performance field 4 carries the promise of supporting informal care and voluntary work. It is thus not strange that voluntary work organizations (v15_18) and informal care organizations (v15_19) form a rather strong scale. Moreover, the MEE organization (v15_20) has an important supportive role for caretakers (voluntary work and informal care) that is centred on providing information and giving advice. This makes these three items logical partners, which is confirmed by a relatively high Loevinger H of 0.87.

The SSA-Policy also focuses on the 'housing' dimension, particularly with regard to those with mental and physical impediments. Obviously, housing corporations (v15_3) play an important role in this dimension. Municipalities usually agree with housing corporations that whenever new houses are built or old ones are renovated, the needs of the physically and mentally impeded are kept in mind. The Mokken scale analysis appoints regional government (v15_1) as their logical partner. Regional governments can facilitate local government policy by providing financial resources, legislative obligations and other types of support. Especially, when municipalities want to get things done in terms of housing – a policy area that requires rather powerful policy instruments – these regional governments can become useful partners. A Loevinger H of .85 supports this line of reasoning.

Lastly, for the client-interest organizations, 5 items form a Mokken scale - H = 0.62, c(.6). These are 'informal care clients', 'voluntary work clients', 'disabled clients', 'elderly clients' and 'local neighborhood platforms'. A possible explanation for the surfacing of this scale is that they may consist of the organizations that are generally well-organized. Although one might be thus tempted to suggest that this is proof that the more entrenched interests are best heard - i.e. "the haves" get more (cf. O'Toole & Meier 2004) – one should note that the groups identified in this scale are also the central target groups of the SSA policy. Their involvement in decision-making will thus be prioritized by the SSA-coordinator, as their information and support is crucial to the functioning of the SSA policy in general.

Assessing Divergent Validity

The divergent validity of the identified scales helps us establish that the sought dimensions of managerial networking actually differ from each other. To assure this we cross-correlated the identified scales in Table 3. Several conclusions can accordingly be drawn. Firstly, we note that networking behaviour between the professional organizations (scales 1 till 5) and client-interest organizations (scale 6) are rightly considered to be separate dimensions, demonstrated by the consistently low levels of correlation amongst them (R = 0.07 – 0.14). As the two are stakeholder-involvement processes are largely kept separate, this is not a surprising observation. Secondly, although the scales derived from the professional organizations have a somewhat higher correlation between them, they are not of that high a value that it provides enough grounds for rejecting our central hypothesis of the existence of different dimensions in managerial networking. The empirical evidence seems consistent with the specified theoretical contentions: namely that the latent variable of managerial networking has several *distinct* traits. In that sense, the constructed scales seem valid and *do* point to evidence of differentiation in managerial networking of the SSA coordinator.

Table 3. Inter-Scale Correlations .

Correlations

		Carescale	Youthscale	Psyscale	Supportscale	Hscale	Intscale
Correlation	Carescale	1,0000					
	Youthscale	0.4779	1,0000				
	Psyscale	0.5345	0.5515	1,0000			
	Supportscale	0.4903	0.4494	0.6095	1,0000		
	Housingscale	0.4445	0.3760	0.3586	0.3740	1,0000	
	Interestscale	0.0715	0.0939	0.1365	0.1386	0.0099	1,0000

Conclusion and Discussion

This paper started from the theoretical contention that a uni-dimensional conceptualization of networking behaviour is not compatible with the environmental complexity in which public managers operate. Public managers face a wide array of possible actions and strategic choices with regard to their potential networking behaviour and can draw different types of support from a wide variety of external actors and organizations. Rather than analyzing different *levels* of networking activity, this paper has then sought to expose different *dimensions* of managerial networking. This has been done through an exploratory use of the Mokken Scaling technique, in accordance with qualitative analyses and interpretation of relevant policy documents, as to add some flesh to the bones of the mere statistical structure. Accordingly, six different scales of managerial networking emerged in the SSA-context, pointing to patterns in the networking behaviour of public managers.

But what do these conclusions tell us with regard to the study of networking behaviour in general? Firstly, we have demonstrated how Mokken Scaling Analysis - rather than reliability analyses or factor analysis - can be used to analyze networking behaviour. This has allowed us to empirically deconstruct the concept of managerial networking. In that sense, it has become more coherent with a theoretical underpinning that emphasizes environmental complexity. This notion becomes particularly relevant when assessing the way in which each of these managerial dimensions is related to various indicators of agency performance as it places us in a position to specify the model of managerial networking even further. After all, it seems likely that each of these different dimensions will also have different effects on different aspects of performance. A next step would then be to link multiple dimensions of managerial networking to multiple dimensions of performance. Although the analytical delicacy of such an analysis exceeds the scope of this paper, it seems a viable research agenda to pursue in the future.

Secondly, we should underline that the analyzed behaviour of SSA-coordinators takes place in a *public* context. It is then important to view the empirical findings presented above through this prism of "publicness" and to assess what insights they carry for inter-organizational networking in the public domain in general. As the analytical section of this paper has demonstrated, public managers differentiate between different *types* of actors as to accommodate for the multiple goals and interests with which the implementation of the SSA-policy is involved. This wide variety of interests and goals with which public policy is involved has been widely documented and seems inherent to any act of public policy making (Bozeman 1987; O'Toole 1997; Moore 2000; Rainey 2003). In fact, the incorporation of the concerns of these *different* stakeholders as to serve the *public* interest is what *public* management is all about; it provides the underpinning for democratic legitimacy. In that sense, the use of one general dimension of managerial networking accordingly undermines the inherent nature of *public* policy by obscuring information on the patterns to be found in networking behaviour. This paper has corrected for this inadequacy and has tried to emphasize the "publicness" of managerial networking by accounting for the environmental complexity in which it takes place.

Still, some cautions should be made. The different dimensions of managerial networking identified for the SSA-context seem to rely heavily on the institutional setting in which the analyzed behaviour takes place. In that sense, the specific goals and interests with which the public manager is confronted, determine the actual content of his managerial networking behaviour. For the SSA-context, six different dimensions surfaced, each related to a specific aspect of the comprehensive policy setup. However, not every public policy network will have to accommodate for an evenly wide variety of interest and goals. The patterns to be found in networking behaviour may then vary across institutional settings, as

the specificities of the public service provided will have an effect on the individual actions the network manager undertakes.

At the theoretical level, an approach of this kind does not allow for generalization to other domains. Therefore, replication through similar studies in various institutional settings is strongly encouraged as to assess what general patterns surface *across* boundaries and to what degree the notion of context counts in the analysis of managerial networking behaviour. In that sense, we have to strike a balance between the general and the particular. To do so, the black box of what exchanges *actually* take place between the networking nodes needs to be opened. This requires extensive qualitative research. For now we have merely provided the structure around which such an elaborate analysis can be built.

Despite these shortcomings, however, the main objectives that underlie the central analysis of this paper seem unaffected. We set out to expose different dimensions of managerial networking as to facilitate the environmental complexity in which public managers find themselves. The analytical benefits of Mokken scaling analysis accordingly provided the empirical evidence compatible with this theoretical contention; public mangers differentiate between different external actors and organizations as they try to draw different types of support to the core agency. In that sense, the central thesis of different dimensions in managerial networking seems to hold.

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Appendices

Appendix A

The 9 "Performance-Fields" of the SSA (TK 2004-2005)

1. ***Improve the livability and social cohesion in villages, neighborhoods, and districts.***
2. ***A focus on prevention in supporting youth that has troubles growing up and parents that have difficulty raising them.***
3. ***Providing information, advice, and client support.***
4. ***Supporting informal care and voluntary work.***
5. ***Promote that people with a physical or mental impediment or people with a psycho-social disorder participate in societal traffic and can function independently.***
6. ***Facilitate people with (mental/physical) impediments or permanent mental disorders and people with psycho-social problems to function independently and maintain their participation in societal traffic.***
7. ***Providing community shelter, also for woman.***
8. ***Promote public mental health care, excluding psycho-social help in case of disasters.***
9. ***Promote addiction-policy.***

Appendix B

Stakeholders and Organizations

- *Regional Governments v15_1_dich*: Regional governments – together with the 'big four' cities – fulfil a supporting role in local level policy (Timmermans et al. 2010: 35). Their

support is expected to contribute to an adequate execution of the SSA. Municipalities can cooperate with each other in formulating and implementing the SSA policy. Regional governments can facilitate this process by providing financial resources, legislative obligations and other types of support. This provides the municipalities with an extra set of policy instruments for attaining the goals set out by the SSA.

- *Transport Companies v15_2_dich*: Various transport companies are used to ensure the mobility of clients with physical or mental impediments. These transport companies have to be adjusted to their specific needs. The biggest share of this work is outsourced to the best bidder.

- *Housing Corporations v15_3_dich*: Municipalities usually agree with housing corporations that whenever new houses are built or old ones are renovated, the needs of the physically and mentally impeded are kept in mind. These organizations thus have a central role in implementing the 'living' element of the SSA policy.

- *Health Care Service Coordination Office (Zorgkantoor) v15_4_dich*: This organization makes sure that everyone gets the amount and type of care to which he/she is entitled. This also means ensuring both quantity (enough supply) and quality of the delivered care. To the clients it can act as an information provider, a moderator, or an administrative office.

- *CIZ, SSA Client Eligibility Indication Office v15_5_dich*: The CIZ assures and controls whether clients' claims to SSA care are legitimate. The indication that the CIZ gives, informs the clients about what type and amount of care they are entitled to.

- *Home Care Organizations v15_6_dich*: Professional care provider (at the homes of clients); i.e. a pillar organization of SSA implementation.

- *GGD v15_7_dich*: Agency that falls under municipal responsibility. Has the legislative task to improve and protect the health of citizens against illness and calamities. At the operational level, this means a wide variety of tasks and projects, ranging from providing vaccinations and doing research, to employing school doctors and performing anonymous STD-tests. For the SSA, the GGD has an important monitoring and supporting function.

- *Residential Care Homes v15_8_dich*: If clients can no longer take care of themselves, the CIZ will refer them to residential care homes.

- *GGZ v15_9_dich*: Provides mental/psychological health care (+ addiction). Clients with mental disorders will thus fall under their target-group. The GGZ can then play an important role in SSA implementation.

- *Organizations for Disabled Clients v15_10_dich*: Organizations that provide a protected living environment to clients who are physically or mentally handicapped.

- *Financial Aid Organizations (excluding banks) v15_11_dich*: Clients that run into financial troubles can apply for financial aid at various financial institutions closely connected to the SSA-implementation (self-reliance).

- *Welfare Organizations v15_12_dich*: Organization that undertakes various social activities and services aimed at citizen participation at the local level.

- *Community Shelters v15_13_dich*: Provides temporary shelter for the homeless. Important pillar for the SSA because the policy aims to shift the strategy of shelter provision towards prevention, etc.

- *BJZ, youth health care coordination office v15_14_dich*: Takes over the role of the CIZ for clients under 18. Moreover, this organization has the authority to intervene/provide assistance whenever a child's upbringing is problematic for whatever reasons.

- *Schools v15_15_dich*: Their part in the SSA-policy can probably be found in the handling of special schools. Moreover, they have an important signalling function.

- *Police Departments v15_16_dich*: Provides assistance in dealing with problematic families. They also have an important signalling function.

- *Religious Organizations v15_17_dich*: Has an important function in enhancing participation of the elderly in particular. Moreover, churches and such can fulfil a signalling function.

- *Informal Care Organizations v15_18_dich*: speaks for itself.

- *Voluntary work Organizations v15_19_dich:* speaks for itself.

- *MEE, administrative aid office v15_20_dich*: National organization with regional departments that supports clients by providing information, building their personal networks, and eventually enhancing participation.

* *Client-interest organizations (11): v19_1 – v19_11*

Eleven client-interest organizations are included in the sample: Informal care clients, Voluntary Work Clients, Disabled Clients, Social Security Clients, Elderly Clients, Patients associations, Local Neighborhood Platforms, Homeless, Migrant associations, Individual Citizens, and Youth Associations. As the functions of these organizations speak for themselves no further elaboration is needed besides summation.

Appendix C

Raw Results Mokken Scale Analyses

1. ***Care Scale:*** *GGD, CIZ, Health Care Service Coordination Office, Transport Companies, Home Care Organizations.*

Item	Obs	Mean Score	Observed Guttman errors	Expected Guttman errors	Loevinger H coeff	z-stat.	H0: Hj<=0 p-value	Number of NS Hjk
v15_7_dich	335	0.8687	34	101.28	0.66429	12.5913	0.00000	0
v15_5_dich	335	0.7045	43	144.13	0.70165	14.9900	0.00000	0
v15_4_dich	335	0.6060	38	145.51	0.73885	15.2427	0.00000	0
v15_2_dich	335	0.2806	21	87.27	0.75936	9.9270	0.00000	0
v15_6_dich	335	0.8925	22	88.55	0.75155	13.4212	0.00000	0
Scale	335		79	283.36	0.72121	20.8061	0.00000	

2. ***Youth Scale:*** *Schools, BJZ, Police Departments.*

Item	Obs	Mean Score	Observed Guttman errors	Expected Guttman errors	Loevinger H coeff	z-stat.	H0: Hj<=0 p-value	Number of NS Hjk
v15_15_dich	339	0.6165	37	117.53	0.68518	13.5094	0.00000	0
v15_14_dich	339	0.7404	28	97.09	0.71159	12.2557	0.00000	0
v15_16_dich	339	0.4867	33	106.11	0.68899	12.1159	0.00000	0
Scale	339		49	160.36	0.69444	15.4640	0.00000	

3. ***Psychology Scale:*** *Community Shelters, GGZ, Welfare Organizations.*

Item	Obs	Mean Score	Observed Guttman errors	Expected Guttman errors	Loevinger H coeff	z-stat.	H0: Hj<=0 p-value	Number of NS Hjk
v15_13_dich	346	0.6705	7	53.64	0.86950	11.9985	0.00000	0
v15_9_dich	346	0.8237	7	56.55	0.87622	13.3643	0.00000	0
v15_12_dich	346	0.9451	0	28.39	1.00000	11.0561	0.00000	0
Scale	346		7	69.29	0.89898	14.7953	0.00000	

4. ***Support Scale:*** *Informal Care Organizations, Voluntary Work Organizations, MEE.*

Item	Obs	Mean Score	Observed Guttman errors	Expected Guttman errors	Loevinger H coeff	z-stat.	H0: Hj<=0 p-value	Number of NS Hjk
v15_20_dich	346	0.8613	7	42.20	0.83413	15.0731	0.00000	0
v15_19_dich	346	0.9249	6	43.66	0.86259	18.0011	0.00000	0
v15_18_dich	346	0.9335	3	41.08	0.92697	18.8774	0.00000	0
Scale	346		8	63.47	0.87396	21.0412	0.00000	

5. ***Housing Scale:*** *Regional Governments, Housing Cooperations.*

Item	Obs	Mean Score	Observed Guttman errors	Expected Guttman errors	Loevinger H coeff	z-stat.	H0: Hj<=0 p-value	Number of NS Hjk
v15_1_dich	343	0.2857	2	13.14	0.84783	3.9026	0.00005	0
v15_3_dich	343	0.8659	2	13.14	0.84783	3.9026	0.00005	0
Scale	343		2	13.14	0.84783	3.9026	0.00005	

6. ***Interest Scale:*** *Informal Care Clients, Voluntary Work Clients, Disabled Clients, Elderly Clients, Homeless.*

Item	Obs	Mean Score	Observed Guttman errors	Expected Guttman errors	Loevinger H coeff	z-stat.	H0: Hj<=0 p-value	Number of NS Hjk
v19_1	355	0.6620	67	168.35	0.60202	14.2316	0.00000	0
v19_2	355	0.6479	66	168.17	0.60754	14.2574	0.00000	0
v19_3	355	0.8451	46	118.55	0.61198	12.4417	0.00000	0
v19_5	355	0.8873	31	95.44	0.67518	12.3855	0.00000	0
v19_8	355	0.2310	26	78.54	0.66894	7.9950	0.00000	0
Scale	355		118	314.52	0.62483	19.3489	0.00000	