

This master thesis studies in what forms research is utilized in government policy, and what the underlying determinants for the different forms are. Results show that research is utilized in three different ways, resulting in research taking a supportive role in steering policy.

Research Utilization in Public Policy

A study on how research is
utilized in government policy.

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December 2012

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Master Thesis

Research Master Public Administration and Organizational Science

Utrecht University | Erasmus University Rotterdam | Tilburg University

Utrecht School of Governance

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Tilburg Law School

December 9, 2012

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Date of defence: December 18, 2012 at the Utrecht School of Governance, Utrecht University.

Summary

Focus of the research and methods

In 2006, the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations in the Netherlands starts a project called 'reducing aggression and violence towards public sector employees'. She transferred the project into a government programme called 'Serving the Public Safely' in order to gain a 15% decrease of aggression and violence in three years. The issue has only been problematized for a decade. Not much research was done on the exact topic, so with the start of the programme also many researches were initiated to gain relevant knowledge. Research is important for the Ministry. Their aim is to develop evidence-based policy and quite some time and money is spent on research. The question is however if in reality this utilization in government policy is present. Different scholars have questioned this idea of research being utilized for policy. They point at other ways of using research, for example in a symbolic manner or for a so-called 'enlightenment' function, whereby concepts and insights derived from research slowly descend in the minds of policy makers and finally in policy. In this thesis it is studied in what forms research utilization takes places and at the same time what the determinants for these different forms are. The research question that will be answered is: *'What variance in research utilization is present the government program 'Serving the Public Safely' and how can we understand this?'*

Based on current research utilization literature expectations are developed for the answer to the main research question. These expectations show the expected relation between the different types of research utilization and their determinants. Three types of research utilization are in general developed in literature the last forty years. First, research can be used instrumental. This means a direct impact of results or conclusions of research in policy. For example, research shows that certain interventions are effective and thus those interventions are implemented. Secondly, symbolic research utilization is an option. Then, research is mainly used to serve the interests of certain actors. For example, if contradicting research is present on the earlier mentioned effectiveness of an intervention, someone will use that research to strengthen their own interest for that issue. The last research utilization type is advocated by several research who do not see any utilization on the short term – instrumental, nor symbolic – and is called 'enlightenment utilization'. This means that results, concepts and insights from research will only slowly find their way into policy. This however takes a few years. Policy makers first have to get used to, for example, a concept. When this concept becomes more common, it will be used in government policy.

Research utilization literature shows several determinants of research utilization. Three major explanations can be found. Determinants of research utilization are engineering explanations (about the characteristics of research), two-communities and interaction explanations (about the links between the worlds of policy making and science) and organizational interest explanations (about the nature of policy issues). These determinants influence the extent of research utilization; the question is whether they also explain the variance.

To study if and how these determinants are linked to the three research utilization types an embedded case study design is chosen. Diverse research projects on the topic of 'Serving the Public Safely' are studied. A document analysis is conducted to see to what extent and how references are made to these researches in policy documents and debates. Was a concrete action related to the research project (instrumental utilization), was the reference made to legitimize an interest or for tactical reasons (symbolic utilization) or was the reference made after several years (enlightenment utilization)? Furthermore relevant actors are interviewed (policy makers, researchers and politicians). They were asked how studies were used (or not used) in policy making and politics.

Results and conclusions

From the results it can be concluded that there is variance in research utilization in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. Both instrumental, symbolic and enlightenment utilization can be found, whatever initiating organization and whatever type of research. This should be taken into account when further research is done. Indeed, most research utilization studies concentrate only on one of the research utilization types. This study however shows that more types are present and that their presence differs whether the research is commissioned or not commissioned. Commissioned research is more used instrumental and symbolic, non-commissioned research more enlightened. The characteristics of the research are not that important in explaining research utilization variance. For non-commissioned research, both the conceptual and the evaluation and monitor research projects are mostly used enlightened. For commissioned research, the explanation is that it depends more on the political 'issues of the day' whether a policy maker does the time and space to utilize research. Policy makers need to take political reality into account and thus instrumental utilization is not always possible.

The most common type of research utilization in the government program 'Serving the Public Safely' is enlightenment utilization: this happened with all the studied research projects. This is confirmed by earlier literature. The problem however remains that it is difficult to study variance of research utilization. Although the different types can be operationalized and indicators are available, it

remains difficult to say whether research has been used instrumental, symbolic or enlightenment. Enlightenment utilization can sometimes not be seen at all or remembered by policy makers. Symbolic utilization can at the same time be instrumental when for example recommendations from an evaluation are implemented, but this is to legitimize policy. Therefore, further research should concentrate on the operationalization of this variance. It should be studied how these types can be studied. Furthermore, more focus should be put on how policy makers deal with the political reality in their daily work. This is more prominent than expected, and clearly does hinder the so much wanted 'evidence-based' policy. This aim for 'evidence-based' policy should thus be lessened and instead the political reality should be taken into account when it is determined how research needs to be used in policy making. In this light, an argument is made in this thesis for connecting the research utilization literature to the incrementalism theory of Lindblom. That small policy changes can be understood by research having relatively low impact, whether it be instrumental, symbolic or enlightened. However, this will always be in the light of the political context policy makers work in.

Word of thanks

This thesis could not have been accomplished without the help of several people. First of all, I would like to thank my supervisor, Peter Scholten, for his advice, his feedback and the directions which way to go. It has been taken more than a year; your patience and time are appreciated! Secondly I thank Arjen Boin, the second reader and coordinator of the master's programme for his feedback, but also for his coordinating activities and his support during the first stages of the thesis. Many thanks to all my colleagues from the Ministry. First of all, the internship provided a fantastic opportunity for getting access to my data. Only by being there and talking with all of you, provided me many insights in how research utilization processes work. But secondly, and maybe more important, being at the Ministry provided me enough distraction, through all the laughs and good lunches we had, to keep going on with my research. I would like to thank in particular Terry Lamboo, research coordinator of the government programme 'Veilige Publieke Taak' for all her feedback and help with my thesis. Finally, many thanks to all of you who provided me with feedback and grammar checks (Sjoerd, Trineke, Sara, Sabine). And also a special thanks to my aunt Marian and uncle Laurens, who were called over in the final week for a check on correct English. Thank you so much for your time!

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Chapter one | Introduction

In 2006, the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations in the Netherlands started a project called 'reducing aggression and violence towards public sector employees'. Policy programmes related to this topic already existed, but there was a need for a coherent policy around this issue. Various government agencies, employee and employer organisations joined in to aim for a safe practice of the public sector jobs in the Netherlands. A series of incidents and the increased attention for the subject matter, led the new Minister of the Interior to make the safe execution of public jobs one of her top priorities in 2007. She transferred the project into a government programme called 'Serving the Public Safely' in order successfully decrease aggression and violence by 15% in three years.

The issue of aggression and violence towards public sector employees (hereafter called 'Serving the Public Safely') has gained more attention the last decade due to incidents of aggression being extensively reported in the media. Precisely because this attention has been relatively recent, not much research had been done on the topic yet. Research that has been done concerned only partially the issue. Research had been done, for example, on crime antecedents or labour circumstances, but these issues were scarcely combined. The programme 'Serving the Public Safely' started therefore from 'scratch' concerning the knowledge about aggression and violence. An important part of the programme from the start of 2006, was devoted to gaining insight into the safety issues surrounding the execution of a public job (Annex to Parliamentary Document II, 2006-2007). From 2006 onwards, the programme has commissioned and subsidized around 50 research projects, including pilot projects, evaluations and monitor research. This focus on research is underlined by how the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations perceives policy making in general. The Ministry states that: *"in order to develop good policy, knowledge is essential"* and therefore *"use of existing knowledge and room for developing new knowledge is important"* (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, 2012).

The importance of research to the Ministry is furthermore underlined by the amount of money spend on it. Every year, the Ministry of the Interior spends around 6 million Euro on research and development. The Ministry of Security and Justice is highly involved in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely', in particular concerning prosecution. The Ministry of Security and Justice spends around 25 million Euro on research and development (Van Steen, 2012). Furthermore, ministries have their own research departments, for example the Research and Documentation

Centre of the Ministry of Security and Justice (see <http://english.wodc.nl>) and 'Bureau Exploration and Research' of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations.

Research thus takes an important place in the Ministry. Many studies are done and a large amount of money is spend on it. However, it is often hard to discern what is exactly resulting from the research. Some reports and studies seem not to be used at all. They are put in the 'desk drawer' without anyone looking at it after it has been printed. Although this might, to a certain extent, be true, the idea that there is only 'non-use' is too simple. Utilization may not be directly visible, but can still be present. For example, research can have a sort of 'dormant' effect, whereby utilization is indirect. In that case it is hard to see the impact of such research. The point is, that precise insight into how research is used is rare. We do not know to what extent and how research is used in government organizations for policy making, although at the same time government agencies aim for a high extent of use and put a lot of money into research. This thesis investigates the utilization of research in policy of the programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. That is a study of policy areas of safety, public labour and public safety.

Problem statement

Although the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations clearly states that the utilization of research and evidence in policy is important, many scholars have questioned the direct impact of research (see for example: Oh & Rich, 1996; Weiss, 1979). In policy processes, research can play a substantial role; sometimes it does not, and sometimes it plays a more symbolic role (Boswell, 2009). In crime policy, for example, research has shown that higher sentences do not reduce crime rates. However, policy makers and politicians still doubled the possible sentences in the case of violence towards public sector employees. On the other hand, research can play a substantial role even in the case of politically salient issues. Concerning youth crime, for example, policy followed scientific research that cultural background matter with regard to crime determinants for youngsters (Van San, 2008). Government consequently developed a target group policy for prevention and repression of youth crime (Parliamentary Document II, 1997-1998). This policy change into 'target group policy', was not directly visible. It took a few years before policy was developed in line with that research. The variation in utilization of research requires an explanation. Therefore, this master's thesis aims to address the issue of how research is used, especially with regard to safety and crime policy.

Research question

The central research question is aimed at giving more insight into the mechanisms that explain this variance and is as follows:

- *What variance in research utilization is present in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely' and how can we understand this?*

In order to answer the central research question, supportive questions are developed to structure the research. To better understand the mechanisms around research utilization, one first has to answer the question of how research is used. In particular, the question is about what types of research utilization can be distinguished:

- *(1) What types of research utilization are present in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'?*

The answers to this question is not enough to answer the central research question. The determinants of research utilization must be studied and linked to the types of research utilization:

- *(2) What factors determine research utilization in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'?*
- *(3) How do these factors relate to the different types of research utilization?*

Schematically, the questions can be translated into the following model. Note that the arrow represents a relationship, but not a causal relationship. This thesis aims to discover certain patterns, but the studied topic and the methodology used are not sufficient to discover casual relationships.

Figure 1



Relevance

...for practice

Although government agencies aim at using research as a basis for their policy, it is often hard to see the direct impact of research. Therefore, a gap emerges between the aim of evidence-based policy and the reality within government agencies. Potentially useful research is not used to the extent one would expect from government agencies, working with an evidence-based approach. Consequently, scientific reports and research often are stored in the 'desk drawer', without anyone looking at it

anymore after printing. Above that, if policy makers have need information in order to develop policy, they might initiate new research, instead of using existing knowledge. This can lead to double efforts and is a potential waste of time, money and effort of the various research organizations, policy makers, executive institutions and their budgets. This master's thesis should result into more insight into how the process of research utilization works and what the variety of research utilization in policy processes explains. This will provide government agencies a better understanding of how to structure their policy processes more efficiently and effectively. The results and conclusions of the study are in particular relevant for the studied field: safety policy regarding violence towards public sector employees.

...and for theory

To understand the variance in research utilization of government agencies, many scholars have been researching the process of knowledge utilization in government agencies. Suggestions have been made for years through various explanations and conceptual frameworks. Despite these efforts, a coherent framework has not been developed yet (Boswell, 2009; Landry, Lamari, & Amara, 2003; Rich, 1997; Weiss, 1979, 1986). This master thesis – on the basis of existing literature and the empirical context of the study – contributes to the development of such a framework. It furthermore provides insight, by means of empirical research, to what extent this framework in reality explains the variance of research utilization in government agencies.

There is a second relevance for theory. Due to the lack of coherent frameworks, much research on the subject it is done with a grounded theory approach. This means that the results are mainly descriptive instead of explanatory. Descriptive studies only describe *how* research is used in government. This research aims, with a theory-guided framework – to go beyond the description of how research is used - by explaining *why* research is used differently.

Thirdly, current studies on research utilization do not include different types of research utilization, but rather focus on one type, in order to prove its legitimacy. Rather than one type of research utilization being 'true', it is more likely that different types of research utilization are present at the same time. Therefore it takes a more nuanced and wider view than earlier studies.

A reading guide

In the following chapters the theory of research utilization, the used methods for this thesis, the results and the conclusion are presented. In the next chapter, the definition of research utilization is discussed, followed by an elaboration on what types of research utilization can be derived from

research utilization literature. Also the literature on determinants of research utilization is discussed. The chapter ends with expectations for the answer to the central research question. This chapter is mainly meant for presenting, summarizing and discussing current literature on research utilization: what does this literature say about what types of research utilization are present in government policy and what determines research utilization in government policy?

Chapter three focuses on the method used in this thesis to answer the main question. The design of the study is presented, along with a small literature discussion on case study research. Different research projects related to 'Serving the Public Safely' are the main object of study. The specific search words and direct results of the document analysis for each research that is studied in this thesis are not put in the method section, but in Chapter four. In this chapter the results are discussed. The interpretation of this specific part of the methods requires an extended description of the research. This description of the research projects and of the first document analysis are put together with the results, to present one story per research instead of several, spread over different chapters.

Chapter four, as stated, will present the results. This will be done per type of research. The types of research are selected on the basis of the determinants of research utilization. The headings of each paragraph shows for which type of research the utilization is discussed. At the end of each paragraph a short 'in between' conclusion is drawn. The thesis will end with a short summary of the results and a question to the main answer. Also, the results are discussed in the light of other research utilization literature and suggestions for further research are presented. The appendices, finally, present some more information about the research projects that are studied and topic lists of the interviews held with several relevant actors.

Chapter two | Research Utilization: Types and Determinants

In this chapter the theory on research utilization is discussed. First, the concept of research utilization is defined. Secondly, the concept of research utilization is elaborated by dividing it in different research utilization types: instrumental, symbolic and enlightened utilization. Thirdly, the determinants of research utilization are presented and discussed on the basis of previous studies. Finally, the types of research utilization are linked to the determinants. These links result in expectations about what determining factor will lead to what type of research utilization and why.

The definition of research utilization

The first step in answering the central research question is defining the main subject of study: research utilization¹. According to the dictionary, utilization means ‘to make practical or worthwhile use of’. This definition can lead to many different interpretations and is too general to be useful to study. To make the concept of research utilization manageable, we will look at how other scholars have defined research utilization.

The concept of research utilization is a scientific term, used by scholars who study how and when research is used in government organizations. It is derived from the more common concept ‘knowledge utilization’. The interest for knowledge utilization in government organizations started when it appeared that the policy process was not as linear as assumed. Not all knowledge was handled in a rational matter during the process of policy making (Lindblom, 1959). The exact position of knowledge in fact became a subject of study. When this area of policy sciences further developed, scholars started to specifically focus on research utilization in government agencies.

Despite the attention for the subject matter, single definitions of research utilization are rare. This is due to the fact that it is an ambiguous concept, used in many different ways (Weiss, 1979). That research has been ‘utilized’ can have multiple interpretations. For example, that it has only been received by policy makers can already be a definition of utilization. However, one can also limit the definition of utilization, that research should have had a direct impact on a policy. Scholars argue that the ambiguity on what it means should be solved before a definition of research utilization can be developed (Weiss, 1979). They focused instead on different types of research (Caplan, Morrison,

¹ Utilization is chosen as the central concept, instead of ‘use’. This is because utilization focuses more on the application of research than the wider concept of use. In comparison with utilization, use is defined as ‘to employ for some purpose’. This definition is even more general than that of utilization and thus less ‘useful’.

& Stambaugh, 1975; Weiss, 1979) or different stages in research utilization (Heller, 1986; Knott & Wildavsky, 1980).

Although a definition of research utilization may not be possible yet in exact terms, it is necessary to present parameters. The lack of a good definition leads to diffusion about what scholars are exactly talking about in their journal articles. To determine the parameters, the definition of Beyer and Trice (1982) is used. They claim that: *“utilization of research entails people doing something with research results. What they do in using research can include a wide or narrow range of diverse behaviors over short or long periods of time”* (Beyer & Trice, 1982, p. 595). This definition leaves room for the specific context in which the utilization takes place, but at the same time offers a handhold for what we actually speak about. The diverse concepts from this definition can however be further explicated. First of all, the concept of ‘diverse behaviors’ can be made explicit. Scholars have developed frameworks that specify these behaviors. A common used framework is developed by Knott and Wildavsky (1980). These stages vary from ‘reception’ to ‘impact’ (see figure two).

Figure 2

1. **Reception.** Utilization takes place when policy makers or advisors receive policy relevant information. When the communication comes to rest in the "in-basket," so that the data "reach" the policy maker rather than remain on an analyst's desk or in the files of a distant consultant firm, utilization is complete.
2. **Cognition.** The policy maker must read, digest, and understand the studies. When the policy maker has done so, utilization has occurred.
3. **Reference.** If frame of reference is the criterion, then utilization somehow must change the way the policy maker sees the world. If information changes preferences, or understanding of the probabilities or magnitude of impact, utilization is a reality.
4. **Effort.** To make a real difference, information must influence the actions of policy makers. If they fight for adoption of a study's recommendations, we know a real effort was made even if political forces or other events block it.
5. **Adoption.** What is essential is not whether policy-relevant information is an input to the policy process but whether it goes on to influence policy outcomes. Policy results, not inputs, is the proper standard.
6. **Implementation.** Policy adoption is critical but, if adopted, policy never becomes practice, information has no chance to affect action. Adoption without implementation is a hollow victory.
7. **Impact.** A policy may be implemented but fails to have the desired effects. Hence it may be (and is) argued that only when policy stimulated by information yields tangible benefits to the citizen has utilization taken place.

Source: Knott and Wildavsky (1980).

Similar frameworks are used by Landry, et al. (2003), Heller (1986) and Rich (1997). These frameworks take a similar approach by starting with the idea that the research first needs to be received by policymakers and politicians. Secondly, some form of understanding and willingness to utilize the research must be present. Real impact by implementation is often the final step. In this thesis, the focus is on the explanation for (the lack of) transition from reception of research to implementation and impact. With this in mind, the last two stages are seen as moments where utilization takes place. Here, research is not only received by the Ministry or other actors, but they have actively done something with the research that is visible for others (implementation and

impact). 'Diverse behaviors' from the definition of Beyer and Trice are thus the implementation and the impact of research.

The concept of research itself also needs to be defined. This cannot be limited to university research only. There are many more institutes, including government agencies themselves, that produce research. Webber, for example, citing a policymaker says: *"to you academicians, research is in the journals or books in your field; to us research is any information we need to answer a legislator's question that we don't have on top of our desks"* (Webber, 1991, p. 11). Stone (2002a) acknowledges this and defines the concept of research as: *"a codified, scholarly and professional mode of knowledge production that has its prime institutional loci in universities, policy analysis units of government departments of international organizations and private research institutes and produced by academics, think tank experts and development professionals"* (Stone, 2002a, p. 1). Because this thesis focuses on research, not on other sources of knowledge, this definition of Stone will be leading when the concept 'research' is used. A last note on the definitions is that 'research utilization' is the central concept of this thesis, but this can be exchanged for the word 'use'. The verb 'use' always refers to the concept of research utilization as defined above.

Now research utilization is defined, the concept is further elaborated. There are different ways of how research can be utilized. In the next chapter these different ways are described.

Types of research utilization

In the previous paragraph the concept of research utilization is defined. This paragraph elaborates on the concept by – on basis of literature – defining three different types of research utilization (see also the right box of figure one). These types originate from perspectives on how policy processes should be approached.

Perspectives on policy and research

Research utilization has been studied from different perspectives. On the one hand, research utilization is approached from a rational perspective on policy processes, on the other hand from a political or critical perspective (Bekkers, Fenger, Homburg, & Putters, 2004). The rational perspective approaches the policy process as a linear movement. The process starts with a problem definition, followed by a selection of potential solutions and finally, an evaluation of the policy. In the literature on public policy until around 1970, research utilization is taken for granted in the policy process (Boswell, 2008, 2009; Dunn, 2008). It is inherent in the policy process and the process of research utilization is therefore not of importance.

From 1970 onwards more and more scholars started to study the process of research utilization in government (Fischer, 2003). The assumption that research is used regularly in policy making and has direct implications appeared to be wrong (Neilson, 2001). Contrary, research utilization in a direct manner seldom occurred (Neilson, 2001; Weiss, 1979, 1977).

One of the first explanations for the lack of this direct research utilization is the so-called ‘two-worlds hypothesis’ (Caplan, et al., 1975; Dunn, 1980; Hoppe, 2005). This theory argues that the worlds of science and government practice are too different. They do not understand each other and this lack of understanding translates to a lack of research utilization. Policy makers do not understand what scientists do and how they think. The same counts for the understanding of scientists of how policy makers work. Bolton and Stolcis (2003) argue that the culture gap can be traced back to various conflicting expectations and goals. Examples of these conflicts are that scholars aim for creating theoretical knowledge. Practitioners however, aim for pragmatic knowledge. Hoppe argues:

“The policy world is risk averse or even legally bound not to experiment, and it looks for verification; whereas, science is inherently interested in the new and unexpected, loves quasiexperimental evaluation designs, and looks for falsification. Policymakers want quick results for external administrative and political accountability; whereas, analysts need time for internal quality control” (Hoppe, 2005, p. 203).

The two-world hypothesis is criticized for being too rigid in the differentiation of use and non-use (Neilson, 2001; Webber, 1991; Weiss, 1979). In the two-world hypothesis, research is utilized when the gap is closed. If this is not the case, research is never used (Albaek, 1995). This does not comply with the more complicated reality of how policy processes work. As stated in the introduction, theory on research utilization should be broader than just use and non-use. Instead of research being either used and not-used, various types of research utilization (and non-use) are possible.

Around the same time the process of research utilization gained the attention of public policy scientists, the second, political, perspective on research utilization gained more popularity. The political perspective emphasizes that research is used in a policy arena. Different actors try to use the research in such a way that their own position is strengthened. This second perspective is embedded in the plural approaches of public policy. In those approaches policy is an answer to societal conflicts. Policy often stems from negotiations between different societal groups who each try to take to heart specific interests (Bekkers, et al., 2004; Grindle & Thomas, 1991). Research thus becomes part of a political conflict and does not stand 'above' it, as assumed by the rational perspective. Research is used to gain support, slow down decision making, or to position oneself strategically.

Both perspectives, the rational and the political, are the basis of different types of research utilization. The rational perspective relates to the instrumental type of research utilization, whereby direct utilization of research is assumed. The political perspective relates to the symbolic type of research, whereby it is assumed that research is used for own interests. Finally, there is a 'mixed type' that relates to both rational and political perspectives: enlightenment utilization. The next paragraph discusses these different types of research utilization

Paradigm Shifts

The shift from research utilization being implicit in the policy process towards research utilization not being self-evident can be seen as a paradigm shift. A paradigm is a set of standards, methods and theories in a certain scientific field that are widely accepted and thus not challenged (Chalmers, 1999; Kuhn, 1970). At a certain moment, the paradigm is undermined by new discoveries, and falsifications of the standards. The fundamentals of the paradigms are questioned and new standards are developed. These new standards will form a new paradigm (Chalmers, 1999; Kuhn, 1970). This also is the case with research utilization. In the earlier paradigm, it was assumed that research utilization was inherent in the policy process. This assumption was questioned more and more, until a new paradigm emerged where research utilization was not seen as rational nor as self-evident.

The instrumental type of research utilization

The rational view on research utilization is the basis for the first type of research utilization. The instrumental type assumes a more or less direct impact of research knowledge on policy. Research utilization takes place in a logical, linear policy process. Van Hoesel and Leeuw distinguish six phases in this process where research is considered relevant (Van Hoesel & Leeuw, 2005). The first stage is (1) an exploration and diagnose of societal problems. Here, a problem is defined and research plays a role by showing that for example crime rates or poverty figures increase. The problem definition is derived from the research by stating that increasing rates are a problem. Following phases are (2) policy design and ex ante evaluation and (3) research for obstacles in the policymaking process. Here, solutions are identified, evaluated and selected (Fischer, 2003; Parsons, 1995). Research is used to see what the most effective solution is and how it should be implemented. Research shows cause-effect relations and effectiveness of policy (Bekkers, et al., 2004). The last phases are (4) implementation of new and adapted policy, (5) monitoring of policy execution and (6) evaluation of policy. Here, research is used to test whether the policy is effective through monitor and evaluation research. The underlying assumption of the instrumental approach is that policy makers strive for the most effective and efficient policy, but diverse explicit factors like time and money can hinder this process. The variance of research utilization is thus explained by 'rational' factors like research quality and time limits.

This type of research is related to the aim of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relation to work 'evidence-based'. Evidence-based research implies a direct influence of 'evidence', thus research, in public policy. All decisions and policy changes should be underlined with research.

An important question is whether instrumental research utilization can be found in practice. Empirical evidence for this is rare. Hoppe states that *"much policymaking – particularly labor and economic policy – depends on a continuing stream of routinely collected data among other inputs."* Hoppe however continues by saying: *"this very direct decision support through policy analysis appears to occur only in a small minority of cases, especially when research outputs enable policymakers merely to do better what they planned to do anyway"* (Hoppe, 2005, p. 203). In line with this, Weiss (1979) argues:

"It probably takes an extraordinary concatenation of circumstances for research to influence policy decisions directly: a well-defined decision situation, a set of policy actors who have responsibility and jurisdiction for making the decision, an issue whose resolution depends at least to some extent on information, identification of the requisite informational need, research that provides the information in terms that match the circumstances within which choices will be made, research findings that are clear-cut, unambiguous, firmly supported, and powerful, that reach decision-makers at the time they are wrestling with the issues, that are comprehensible and understood, and that do not run counter to strong political interests" (Weiss, 1979, p. 428).

Thus many conditions need to be complied to make a path for instrumental type. Because the chances are low that all these conditions are complied, - especially when so-called 'intractable policy issues' are at stake - many scholars have criticized and doubted the relevance of this type. Several scholars (Boswell, 2009; Monaghan, 2009; Weiss, 1979) argue that in reality, direct instrumental utilization is rare. Boswell (2008, 2009) also argues that an instrumental view on research utilization cannot explain the frequent lack of knowledge use in direct policy making (Boswell, 2009, p. 7). Instead, research is used when it is in the interest of the policy maker. Scholars have looked at this for other explanations and a symbolic type of research utilization has been developed.

The symbolic type of research utilization

Boswell proposes to focus on the political perspective. From this perspective, research is used in policy making to strengthen one's own position. It takes places in the political arena where power is of decisive meaning (Bekkers, et al., 2004; Stone, 2002b). In this type, actors in the policy arena are the central object. With their different interests, they use research to strengthen their own position. This is an opposite approach of the instrumental model where research utilization is a logical step in a linear policy process and only aimed to support the development of policy.

Different subtypes are present in the symbolic type of research utilization. According to Boswell, symbolic utilization consists of two subtypes. First, research can *legitimize* political or policy action (Boswell, 2009). In order to do this, research is often used selectively and research that would undermine political action is selectively not used (Boswell, 2009; Hoppe, 2005; Weiss, 1986). Secondly, political or policy action can be *substantiated* by research utilization. This is often a more direct use of research, but again, highly selective. Only research that supports current political or policy action is used. The difference between those subtypes is in practice difficult to see: in both cases it is about defending a policy for the policy's sake and research is used as an argument to support that. A distinction when new or existing policy is at stake is difficult to make. We therefore put both subtypes under the heading of a political subtype. According to Weiss (1979), within this

type research *“becomes ammunition for the side that finds its conclusion congenial and supportive”* (Weiss, 1979, p. 429).

Weiss furthermore distinguishes a tactical subtype. The tactical subtype is about utilization of research that has nothing to do with the content of the research itself: research is only used as an argument to hold off certain policy issues or avoid responsibilities. Research is, especially in fragmented policy areas, used to control policy and policy agenda's (Weiss, 1979). Only the fact that research is conducted is used as an argument, without looking at results or content. Reputation of a research producer also plays an important role here (Boswell, 2009; Dunn, 1980; Monaghan, 2009; Weiss, 1979). A reference to a well-established university or research agency may enhance the authority that stems from a (proposed) research. Just that the research is done by such an agency or university is enough, without referring to the content.

The enlightenment type of research utilization

Weiss differentiates another utilization type: the 'enlightenment' function of research. Here, research is not implemented or used directly, but used on a conceptual, abstract level. Therefore, impact of research utilization is not direct, but conceptual. It takes a long time to see this impact (Caplan, et al., 1975; Weiss, 1986, 1977). This type is about influencing the public consciousness and by that shaping world views (Monaghan, 2009). The perspective has been developed by Weiss (1979), but is supported by diverse scholars. Sabatier, for example, argues that you need a timeframe from at least ten years to see research and evidence having an influence in policy (Sabatier, 1986; Wilcox, 2003). This confirms that research needs some time to land in the minds of policymakers and thus the policy itself. The enlightenment model does not exactly fit within the symbolic approaches, because power and interests do not *have* to be the main driver for research utilization. The model does not fit exactly with the instrumental type either. There is no direct utilization of research: you will not immediately see the research back in policy, but on the other hand research results can be used directly in policy, just over a longer period. Therefore, the enlightenment model is seen as another type, next to the instrumental and the symbolic ones, and is placed in between the scale from instrumental to symbolic.

Three types summarized

To summarize, three types can be defined from literature (Instrumental, Symbolic and Enlightenment). The symbolic type can be further divided to sub models. In table one an overview of all types is given.

Table 1: overview of research utilization types their characteristics

Types >>>	Instrumental Type	Enlightenment type (‘in-between’ type)	Symbolic Type <i>-legitimizing model</i> <i>-tactical model</i>
Characteristics >>>	-Direct implementation of research -Linear policy process	-Indirect implementation -Shaping concepts	-Power structures -Use determined by interests

Amara, Ouimet and Landry (2004) have been the first to empirically show to what extent the types are present in a study among public policy makers in Canada. Their results suggest that enlightenment utilization is more present in policy making than symbolic utilization. Symbolic utilization in turn is more important than instrumental utilization. This is however not significantly tested. By all means, they do show that all types are present in the daily process of policy making. For the empirical research it is thus expected that all types can be found, however not in equal terms.

The different types are all ideal types. They do not exist in reality in their pure forms. However, ideal types are necessary to develop a context to explain mechanisms and tendencies of research utilization (Albaek, 1995). The question remains under what circumstances the different utilization types are likely to occur. These explanatory factors are discussed in the next chapter. Consequently, empirical research will point out to what extent these links exist and explain differences in types of research utilization. This will answer the question when the different types of utilization appear. How does the context determine how research is utilized and how do types of research correspond with types of research utilization?

Determinants of research utilization

In the previous paragraph the different types of research utilization are discussed. The following paragraphs discuss the question what factors predict research utilization. This concerns the left box of figure one. In this thesis the focus is in particular on the variance of research utilization. Not much research is yet done on what factors explain the variance (thus what explains when research is utilized instrumental, symbolic or enlightened). There is however much research done on what factors explain the extent of research utilization. The first studies in research utilization focused their attention to the characteristics of the research (Caplan, et al., 1975; Knorr, 1977; Weiss, 1981). A second range of studies related the variance in research utilization to links between researchers and users (Caplan, et al., 1975; Dunn, 1980). A final group of scholars focused on the policy contextual factors (Sabatier, 1978; Webber, 1991). Landry, et al. (2003) have been the first to systematically research these groups of determinants and link them to the different types of research utilization. They identified four major categories of determinants: (1) engineering explanations, (2) two communities explanations, (3) interaction explanations and (4) organizational interest explanations. Each explanations has shown to have predictable power for instrumental, enlightenment and symbolic use of research (Amara, et al., 2004). These four categories will be explained and discussed. After that, the determinants are linked to the three types of research.

Engineering explanations

The first group of determinants that have identified are the engineering explanations (Landry, et al., 2003). Engineering explanations are factors that relate to characteristics of the research. It is assumed that utilization of research depends on characteristics of research and types of research (Oh & Rich, 1996; Rich, 1997; Weiss & Bucuvalas, 1980). For example, higher quality of the report, concrete and policy-related recommendations lead to more research utilization (see also the 'knowledge-driven' model of Weiss (1979, p. 427)). Also, when a policy issue is new and policy makers do not have an idea yet how to tackle it, research utilization is more likely (Bekkers, et al., 2004). Policy makers are than more receptive for research, because they are looking for sources of knowledge. Various scholars state furthermore that the type of information that is available is of importance (Oh & Rich, 1996; Rich, 1997). They argue that "*different types of information may lead to different types of utilization*" (Rich, 1997, p. 8). De Gier, Henke and Vijgen for example, argue that conceptual research, research that is aimed at framing policy concepts and issues, has more impact than evaluation research. Evaluation research is unlikely to influence policy, because most policy is already fixed and unlikely to change (De Gier, et al., 2004).

Landry, et al. (2003) show that the engineering explanation - in comparison to the other explanations - is not that important in explaining the extent of research utilization. In a follow-up study Amara, et al. (2004) add the different types of research utilization. When research utilization is added as a variable, the engineering explanation appears to be more important. These explanations thus influence which type of research utilization (instrumental, symbolic and enlightenment) can be seen. The results of Amara, et al. (2004) point for example to higher conceptual utilization when quantitative research is concerned.

The relation between type of utilization and engineering explanations has been further explained by Hoppe. He focuses on characteristics of research as an explanation. Hoppe states that the use of research and analysis takes place between a argumentative and a rational style. An argumentative style of policy making is about clarifying norms and values around policy issues through research (Hoppe, 2011, p. 190). This way of using research can be seen as enlightenment research. Hoppe links this type of research to external, non-commissioned research. This relates mostly to conceptual research like that from think-tanks or scientific councils. The rational style relates to the earlier mentioned instrumental approach whereby policy is directly based on research and the process of policy making is linear. This relates mostly to evaluation research, in the form of cost-benefit analyses (Hoppe, 2011, p. 190). With this in mind, the indicator of the engineering explanation, will be the type of research that is conducted (evaluation and monitor research or conceptual research).

Two-communities and interaction explanations

The second and third group of determinants of research utilization are the two-communities and interaction explanations (Landry, et al., 2003). The communities explanation has been discussed earlier. This explanation emphasizes the cultural gap between scientists and policy makers as an explanation for the lack of research utilization. Originally, the two-communities thus focused on why research is not utilized. However, recent studies linked the two community hypothesis, - as a determinant - to the diverse types of research utilization. This means that the two-communities explanation not only explains why research is used or not, but also why it is used in different ways; for example more symbolic than instrumental. Amara, et al. (2004) show that this determinant relates to all three types, but at the same time that the degree of this relation differs. They do not show whether this difference is significant. This thesis therefore will show what type of research is more present when the cultural gap is closer.

The general assumption of the *interaction* explanation is that the closer the links between government and research are, the more likely it is that research is used (Amara, et al., 2004; Landry,

et al., 2003; Oh & Rich, 1996; Rich, 1997). This idea is derived from the advocacy coalition theory of Sabatier and Jenkins-Smiths (1993). They argue that the research utilization is about intensive interaction between actors of different organizations, in this case researchers and policy makers. The setting in which such interaction takes place is called an 'advocacy coalition'. The stronger this coalition is, the more research will be used. Amara, et al. (2004) have indeed shown that intensive interaction and strong links are a determinant on research utilization. Both the two-communities and the interaction explanations focus on the relation and difference in culture between government agencies and researchers. The needs of the users are central: utilization is explained by to what extent the research matches those needs (Weiss, 1979). Therefore, these explanations are taken together.

The most direct indication that relates the two-communities and interaction explanation to the different types is the difference in use between commissioned and non-commissioned research. The general assumption is namely that the closer the links between researchers and policy makers are, the likelier research is used. If the research is commissioned by the government agency itself is of great importance (Heller, 1986, p. 7). It is even argued that the source of the information is more important than the content of the information (Oh & Rich, 1996; Rich, 1997). The received research, could have entered the Ministry in two ways, according to Weiss (1979). In the first place, policy can anticipate on research. Here, policy makers go out and search for information that fit to their knowledge question around certain policy issues. Also, this information can be provided by them by several actors like journalists, scientists, or consultants. The second possibility of getting in touch with research is when policy makers face a policy problem. They can ask scholars directly to do research into this problem and if possible, solve it. In the first option research utilization is probably smaller because 'chance' is a major factor here. There might not be research that fits the policy problem, or the policy maker does not receive it. Actors like consultants may fail in providing the right research. The second option is directly aimed at solving a problem and one does not have the problem of research not fitting the policy problem. Therefore, utilization is in that case more likely. Weiss (1977) states that the use of contract studies is higher than that of studies that are provided with grants from government (p. 233). Also Rich (1997) states internal sources are more likely to be used than external ones. The same counts for research from 'trusted sources': a producer of commissioned research is more likely to be trusted than a producer of non-commissioned research (Caplan, et al., 1975; Dunn, 1980; Rich, 1997). The producer of commissioned research is indeed chosen because the government agency had most faith in their ways of working.

Amara, et al. (2004) show that both instrumental, symbolic and conceptual utilization increase if linkage mechanisms are closer and efforts to 'close the gap' are higher. There are however differences in the explanatory power of this determinant for each of the research types. There are indications that these determinants are more related to enlightenment and instrumental utilization than to symbolic utilization (Amara, et al., 2004). If, and how this differs, will be studied in this thesis.

Organizational interest explanations

In the previous paragraphs, three of the four determinants are discussed. The fourth determinants of research utilization in government, is the organizational interest explanation. The organizational interest explanation assumes that factors around organizational interests determine the utilization of research. Organizational interests are (1) organizational structures, (2) needs of organizations, and (3) policy domains. Regarding organizational structures and needs, it is hypothesized by different scholars that research utilization increases when the research fits the needs of users, instead of own goals like advancement of scholarly knowledge (Landry, et al., 2003; Van de Vall & Bolas, 1982). However, this is not different from the earlier explanation of interaction and two communities. The origins still lie in the fact that there is a gap between the scientific world and the world of policy making.

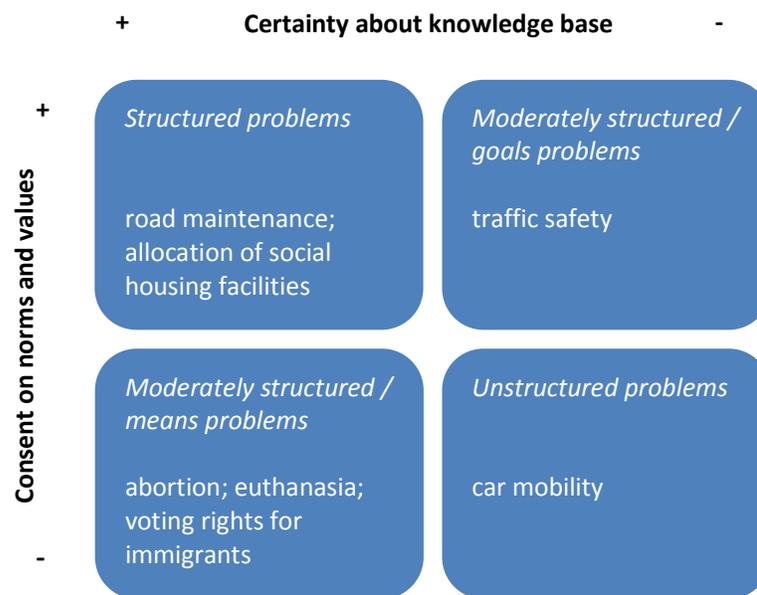
Regarding the needs of organizations, Landry, et al. (2003) showed that the focus on users' needs, is not related to utilization of research. What is related, is the context of the user and the work and policy relevance (Landry, et al., 2003). We will therefore look at the third organizational interest explanation: the policy domain. Sabatier, for example, argues that information for more technical policy domains is more (directly) used than domains in the social sciences (Sabatier, 1978). The policy domain is thus of importance: the more complex the policy issue is, the more complicated research utilization becomes as well. Also Landry, et al. (2003) and Amara, et al. (2004) have shown in their research that policy domains do matter. They have done research among six different policy domains regarding the extent of research utilization. The policy domain of Education and Information Technology has the highest level of knowledge utilization, the policy domain of Municipal and Regional affairs, Public Works and Public Infrastructures, the lowest. The domains that relate most to 'Serving the Public Safely' (Justice and Employment Standards) show a moderate level of knowledge utilization (Landry, et al., 2003). The level of knowledge utilization differs furthermore when the three types of research utilization are added. However, Amara, et al. (2003) have not studied whether one type of research utilization is more prominent than another in the different policy domains. In the following paragraphs the policy issue of 'Serving the Public Safely' is further explicated and related to a type of research utilization. First, it is identified what type of policy

problem relates to the policy issue and secondly, the political context and the actors around this issue are discussed.

The policy issue: Serving the Public Safely

Because only one policy domain is studied in this thesis, it is not an explanatory factor that can vary in the empirical data. Above that, the organizational interest explanation also assumes a quite strict way of behaving (bureaucratic behavior), because of institutional structures (Oh & Rich, 1996). The way research is utilized is will therefore not vary. At the same time it is of importance study what type of research utilization (instrumental, symbolic or enlightenment) is most prominent, indeed because of the specific policy domain. To understand how the type of policy issue influences the extent or type of use, the typology of Hoppe is used (Hoppe, 1989). Hoppe makes a differentiation of policy problems on the basis of two scales. The first scale is the certainty about the knowledge base, the second is the extent of consent of norms and values. This results in four types of policy problems: structured problems, moderately on-goals-structured problems, moderately on-ends-structured problems and unstructured problems:

Figure 3: Types of policy problems (source: Hisschemöller & Hoppe, 1996; Hoppe, 1989)



Safety policy is a moderately on-goals-structured problem. In general, everyone is against crime, aggression and violence and in favor of reducing it. The goal is clear: reducing aggression and violence. The big question is how the reduction can be achieved. Here, scientists, politicians and policy makers differ. Questions like: ‘Do longer sentences reduce crime?’ and ‘Does prevention work?’ are questions of debate. The problem is thus structured on goals, but not on means. Hoppe

defines these problems as scientific problems. Those problems are part of scientific debate of what the best solution is to achieve the goals. Hoppe states that *“this kind of problem (a moderately structured one, auth.) typically leads to disputes of what kind of research might deliver more certain knowledge for solving the problem”* (Hoppe, 2008, p. 299). This makes instrumental utilization difficult. Research is not conclusive about the most effective or efficient way to reduce aggression and violence. Instead, it opens the floor for symbolic research utilization, because different interests can all be supported by research.

Many scholars have argued that it is difficult to implement research on safety and crime issues (Martinson, 1974; Richards & Smith, 2002; Wilcox, 2003). There are for example many unknown explaining factors. Also in the case of ‘Serving the Public Safely’, this problem occurs. In one of the monitor research projects that measures the extent of aggression towards public sector employees, for example, it is estimated that from the factors than can reduce violence towards public sector employees, only 52% is known (Abraham, Flight, & Roorda, 2011). The other 48% is unknown, so policy can ideally solve only half of the problem.

Another issue is that there can be disagreements about crime statistics themselves (Wilcox, 2003; Wiles, 1971). This makes use even more difficult, because if one already disagrees on the research, using it will also be difficult. Furthermore it is argued that in practice social science does not have relevance: the crime and safety issue is so complex that it is more about experience than social science (Bolton & Stolcis, 2003).

The political context

Not only the structure of the policy issue, also the political context is of importance. De Gier, et al. (2004) for example, state that: *“the political context is the prime determinant of what happens with research results”* (p. 32). In the political context, there is not much debate about the policy issue of Serving the Public Safely. At least, not on ideological issues. Because it is a scientific problem, it can be seen as a technical issue. There is thus hardly debate among parliamentarians and the Minister; how safety is enhanced is left to the departments as long as it will be enhanced. In that sense are evaluation and monitor research of great importance: they give the House of Representatives a tool to ‘check’ whether the Minister achieves targets.

The actors

In the literature about policy making the focus is naturally on the use of research by policy makers. Use by other stakeholders is rarely discussed. In literature on research utilization, scholars do not distinguish towards different users. They talk about users as a sort of general concept (Weiss, 1977),

whereby it does not matter whether the user is a politician or a policy maker (Boswell, 2009). However, the rare literature on research utilization that refers to different users, it appears that this is an important factor. They for example have different criteria in judging research and this will influence their utilization (Clark & Majone, 1985). The question is to what extent the type of actor relates to the type of research utilization or its determinants. The actors are diverse: they have different interests, different priorities and thus different criteria for the utilization of research (Clark & Majone, 1985). They have different rules and procedures that influences their research utilization (Albaek, 1995; Sabatier, 1978). There are many users of research when policy making is concerned, but in this study they are limited to politicians and policy makers due to time constrains.

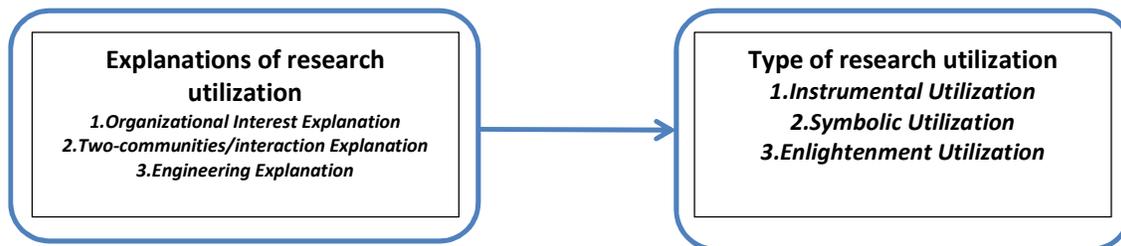
The most important group of this study are policy makers. They are main actors in the policy process: they decide what research is used for policy and what research will be commissioned for that. As stated in the introduction, they would like to base their policy on scientific knowledge. However, they cannot easily find the knowledge they want (Clark & Majone, 1985). According to Clark and Majone, policy makers therefore look at - among other things - the problem formulation, the familiarity and intelligibility of the output, the extent to which it lives up to ethical standards, and what policy indications are included. In principal this is likely leading to an instrumental way of research utilization, because if they select research on the earlier mentioned criteria, this research fits very well to what they see as good research (the right problem formulation, the right output). Therefore the research can easily be used in a direct manner. At the same time, because policy makers do look for such research that is in a way familiar, there is a bias for using research that will sustain or legitimate the current policies. Political utilization is therefore also a possibility.

Politicians are an important group when research in public policy making is concerned. They are the ones being held accountable for decisions (Boswell, 2009; Luhmann, 1991). Therefore, legitimizing a decision or statement is of importance to them. Using research symbolically utilization can help to legitimize their actions. Kingdon, for example, states: *"(...) proposals are constantly in the policy stream, but then suddenly they become elevated on the government agenda because (...) politicians find their sponsorship expedient"* (Kingdon, 1984, p. 181). Research can both present a policy problem and a policy solution, so when a 'policy window' opens, research is used by politicians to support their actions. This is a symbolic way of research utilization: tactical and legitimating utilizations are at stake here.

Expectations

The previous paragraphs discussed what theory tells about research utilization. First, three types of research utilization are identified: Instrumental, Symbolic and Enlightenment. Research utilization thus varies along three types. Secondly, the determinants for research utilization have been presented: engineering explanations, two-communities/interaction explanations and organizational interest explanations. The model presented in the introduction (see figure one) is thus amplified (see figure four).

Figure 4



Previous studies have only predicted whether those determinants have an impact on research utilization in general. However, as shown, research utilization is not a single concept: it can be divided in three types. But to what type of research utilization do the outlined determinants lead to? This paragraph describes on the basis of previous studies, which determinant is expected to predict whether research utilization will be instrumental, symbolic or enlightened.

Organizational interest explanations

This explanation assumes that the more organizational interests are taken care of in a research, the likelier it is that research is utilized (Landry, et al., 2003). However, in the previous paragraphs it has been argued that most interests can be related back to the two other main explanations. What remains is the type of policy domain. Referring to the typology of Hoppe (2005), 'Serving the Public Safely' is a policy problem which is structured on ends, not on means. There is a scientific debate on how aggression and violence can best be reduced. If there are contradicting results on the policy issue, policy makers and politicians can easier 'pick' the research that fits their ideas or proposed policy on reducing crime. Therefore, the nature of the policy domain is likely to lead to symbolic utilization of research. Contradicting studies provide an easy pick and take for the diverse interests.

Expectation 1a: The structure of the policy issue 'Serving the Public Safely' fits most with symbolic research utilization.

The political context shows that there are not that much different interests in the political arena concerning 'Serving the Public Safely'. When politicians agree on goals, the execution is left to the civil servants. There is probably not much political debate about the issue. At most, a conflict could emerge between politicians and the Minister, when the targets of the programme are not reached. This is conceivable, because it is difficult for government to influence rates of aggression and violence towards public sector employees. Politicians could use the numbers to point to the Minister that she did not reach her targets. This is instrumental utilization, but at the same time tactical, when the politician uses it to position oneself. Furthermore, following the policy window theory of Kingdon, political utilization is likely, because than research is used when it fits formulated problems and solutions by politicians.

Policy makers are likely to use the research instrumental, but this is mainly because they will use research that is familiar to them and fits their purposes (Oh & Rich, 1996). Therefore, at the same time, symbolic utilization is likely, because only research that will legitimate current policy is utilized by policy makers.

Expectation 1b: Both policy makers and politicians are likely to use research instrumental at first hand, but also symbolically for legitimating or tactical reasons.

Engineering and two-communities/interaction explanations

Above is discussed which type of research utilization is dominant in the policy domain of 'Serving the Public Safely' and how policy makers and politicians will act with regard to research utilization. This determinant is fixed, because the context and the policy issue itself does not vary in this research. Other determinants vary within the case of 'Serving the Public Safely'. The determinants that vary are related to engineering explanations and the two-communities/interaction explanations. The variation is explicated in expectations about what kind of results we can expect, based on the literature. The expectations clarify what determinants relate to which type of utilization. These expectations are not rigid like hypotheses in a quantitative study, but give an indication what results we expect, on the basis of the literature about research utilization.

Within the engineering factors, the characteristics of the research were the most prominent indicators for the variance in research utilization. In particular, the difference between qualitative, conceptual research on the one hand and quantitative, evaluation / monitor research types of

research on the other hand. In the following paragraph this variance in characteristic of research is linked to the different types of research utilization. The second determinant is the two-communities and interaction explanation. Here, the main indicator is the link between the researchers and the policy makers and the extent in which research fits the needs of the users. The closer the link, and the better the fit, the likelier the research is used. The difference in closeness of researchers and policymakers is in this thesis studied by looking at whether the Ministry has given order to do the research ('internal' or 'commissioned' research), or whether the research is initiated by the researchers themselves ('external' or 'non-commissioned' research). When policymakers initiate research, the link between researchers and policy makers is closer, because they need to have contact about the target, process, and outcomes of the research. Furthermore, because policymakers for a large part initiate research in accordance to their knowledge needs, internal research is expected to vary here from external research.

Consequently, we have four possible 'cases' if we combine the indicators of each explanation: (1) evaluation- or monitor research-commissioned research, (2) evaluation- or monitor research-external research, (3) conceptual-commissioned research and (4) conceptual-external research. Each possible combination is shortly discussed and an expectation is made about what type of research is likely to occur in this combination.

Evaluation/monitor research-commissioned research

Evaluation research and monitor research is likely to be used in a more direct, instrumental manner. This kind of research is directly applicable to policy. Monitor research for example, should reveal which parts, or targets of the policy are achieved and which are not. The policy can be easily adjusted to those parts that need extra attention. The assumption towards the results is therefore that research types like evaluation and monitor research will predominantly lead to instrumental utilization. However, this is probably only the case with commissioned research. Commissioned research is a reaction on a request from policy makers, because they would like to know how a policy works or what the situation at hand is, regarding a certain policy issue. The results from such commissioned research are likely to be directly implemented because there is a quest from the policy maker for the answers that the research should provide.

Expectation 2: Evaluation and monitor research that is commissioned by the Ministry itself is most likely utilized instrumental.

Evaluation/monitor research-external research

It is difficult to pinpoint what type of research utilization is most likely for this combination. External research might lead to less research utilization because this research does not easily reach the policy makers. Above that, external evaluation and monitor research does often not fit with the exact information policy makers need, while more conceptual research could still provide insights in the problem in a more enlightened manner (De Gier, et al., 2004). However, it can also be used to prove one's point, and support his/her interest. Using non-commissioned research, the actor can argue that his argument is proven by independent research. With commissioned research, this is more questionable. Therefore, *if* this research is used in policy making, symbolic utilization is most likely.

Expectation 3: Evaluation and monitor research that is initiated by external parties is most likely utilized symbolically.

Conceptual-commissioned research

It is assumed that conceptual-commissioned research leads most likely to an enlightenment type of research utilization. Conceptual research takes time to implement. It is therefore likely that conceptual research will predominantly lead to utilization in the way the enlightenment type describes. Conceptual research is meant to shape and refine concepts; similar to the process of enlightenment. Evaluation and monitor research can be used instantly and does not create concepts or visions that need to land and slowly implemented in policy. When conceptual research is concerned, the quest for research often stems from a policy issue that is not yet fully clear. For example, what type of offenders can be distinguished in case of aggression and acts of violence against public sector employees? In the previous paragraphs it has been argued that in the case of commissioned research (rather than external research) research links between researchers and policy makers are closer and research will more likely fit the needs of policy makers. Because the research of Amara, et al. (2004) indicates that the two-communities and interaction explanations are more related to instrumental and enlightenment utilization, the latter one is most likely when conceptual-commissioned research is concerned, because conceptual research relates most to enlightenment utilization.

Expectation 4: Conceptual research that is commissioned by the Ministry itself is most likely utilized in an enlightenment manner.

Conceptual-external research

This kind of research leads most likely to an enlightenment type of utilization. It is already explained how conceptual research leads to a slow implementation of research results, but the hypothesis is furthermore that it may not matter that much who the initiating organization is. If a policy issue is confronted with research that discusses its conceptual assumptions, this research will be used when a policy window opens. This however, leads immediately to the chance that research is used in a more symbolic matter. If a policy window opens, research is just used at that time, because it fits the actors interests. Therefore, also symbolic utilization is likely here.

Expectation 5: Conceptual research that is initiated by external parties is most likely utilized in an enlightenment manner and secondly utilized symbolically.

The assumptions are summarized in the following table.

Table 2: overview of the research utilization type ordered by initiating organization and type of research

Type of research	Initiating organization	
	Commissioned research	Non-commissioned
Evaluation/Monitor research	Instrumental utilization	Symbolic utilization
Conceptual	Enlightenment utilization	Enlightenment utilization Symbolic utilization

These assumptions are tested empirically in the context of the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. In the next chapter the methodology for this is discussed and in the following chapter the results are presented.

Chapter three | Methods

In this chapter the method to find an answer to the central research question is presented. First, the research design is discussed. The type of study is discussed, followed by the case and a more specific description of the design of the case study. The second part of the methods section shows how the research design is carried out: how is the data collected and analyzed and on basis of what indicators?

Research design

For this study, a qualitative design is chosen in the form of a case study. A case study is a study whereby one object is studied intensively. This generates a large amount of data (Boeije, 2010). This method is first of all chosen because it enables the researcher to go deep into one or several cases to examine in detail why something happens the way it does. In this case, the focus of the study is why research is used in a certain way and what determinants are related to that type of use. The case study is not meant to test the theory in a quantitative manner, but to give an illustration – in a rigorous manner – of research utilization in government agencies. Secondly, the literature on research utilization has not been developed in such a way that there is knowledge of underlying patterns of research utilization. Is it impossible to formulate strict hypotheses on the basis of literature which can be either accepted or rejected. The concept of research utilization is much more complicated. This gives rise to another argument for a qualitative study: patterns and concepts are not yet crystallized.

Flyvbjerg argues that a qualitative case-study research should be applied in the earlier days of research to a concept (Flyvbjerg, 2001). Because literature on research utilization is still lacking empirical evidence (see: Landry, et al., 2003), it is important to do the research with an ‘open’ mind. The influencing factors are not necessarily already known, and thus we need to keep looking for other explanations than identified in earlier literature.

The case of aggression and violence towards public sector employees

Which case is chosen is of importance, because it is targeted at answering the central research question. For this study the government programme ‘Serving the Public Safely’ is selected. In this section the case will be illustrated further and it is consequently argued why this case is chosen.

The object of study is the Ministry of the Interior, already referred to in the introduction. In particular, the programme ‘Serving the Public Safely’ is studied. This programme is an interdisciplinary programme aimed at reducing violence towards public sector employees. Almost all

ministries in the Netherlands are to a certain extent involved in this programme. The Ministry of the Interior is the coordinating agency. The project 'Serving the Public Safely' cooperates extensively with other departments within the state government. The main partner is the Ministry of Security and Justice. This Ministry is responsible for the police force in the Netherlands and for regulating the prosecution of offenders. Other cooperation structures are made with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport and the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. These departments are important because they represent the public sector employees that the project 'Serving the Public Safely' cares about. The project 'Serving the Public Safely' is placed within the Directorate-General of Administration and Kingdom Affairs of the Ministry. Within this Directorate-General, the project is placed in the Directorate Employment Affairs for the Public Sector.

The government programme 'Serving the Public Safely' is chosen for the study into research utilization because research in this programme is prominent. A substantial amount of money spent every year on this programme, goes to research. This can be via grants to organisations or via commissioned research. The programme does not conduct any research itself. Furthermore, this case is interesting because it involves many topics due to the involvement of a variety of ministries, although the Ministry of the Interior is the coordinating Ministry. The programme is, for example, aimed at preventing violence towards ambulance personnel, but also providing a safe work environment for employees by the employer. The first issue belongs to the Ministry of Health, the second to the Ministry of Social Affairs. This diversity is interesting because the wide range of issues and actors implies a lot of potentially useful research.

The programme made the issue problematic of how to use research. The question for the administrators of the programme is how research can be used better. In a focus group of the programme around this issue, one of the policy makers stated: *"There is a need for evidence-based policy. Above that, existing knowledge should be used more actively and this knowledge should connect better to practice. There should be less ad hoc-research and a firm mutually connection between the studies ought to exist"* (citation by policy maker A).

Embedded case study

The unit of analysis is a term that describes on what level the case is studied. The unit of analysis can be derived from the central research question. The central research question often states exactly what is studied (Yin, 1994). In this case, the programme 'Serving the Public Safely' is the unit of

analysis. This includes the civil servants who work for this programme, but also relevant documents and the context in which the programme operates.

Along with the explorative aspect, this study also includes an explanatory one. To explain when different types of research utilization emerge and why, variation within the case is necessary. Therefore the case of 'Serving the Public Safely' is not studied as a single case, but divide it into several case studies: a so-called embedded case study. The cases that are selected are critical cases. Critical cases are cases "*having a strategic importance in relation the general problem*" (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 78). A random or typical case does not provide that much information in terms of what type of research utilization is observed. "*It is often more important to clarify the deeper causes behind a given problem and its consequences than to describe the symptoms of the problem and how frequently they occur*" (Flyvbjerg, 2001, p. 78). Selected cases that differ mutually on key variables are a better way to test the theoretical framework than just random selections. Furthermore, with critical cases generalization from the results is eased, because critical cases include a wider context than typical cases. The selection of the critical cases will be discussed below.

Selection of critical cases

The project 'Serving the Public Safely' has developed an overview of all research done in the context of violence against public sector employees. This overview consists of reports, evaluations, scientific inquiries, analyses and one book. It is important to note that this is an overview of what the project has collected, and not the total amount of research that has been done on the subject. In table three an overview of all the research that has been received, in every form, by the programme is shown. The research that is received by the programme is stored in a digital storage system. This table is directly drawn from this digital storage system. The main determinants studied were the initiating organisation of research and the type of research. Therefore, the critical cases that are selected need to mutually vary on these determinants. There are two variations in the research that has been received by the programme in the last ten years. First of all, the *initiating organization* is a major factor in the amount of research being received by the programme. There is more research stored in the digital storage system that is initiated by the programme itself and from other ministries than by external sources. A second distinction is the *type of research*. The government programme is in possession of all kinds of research: monitor research, evaluations, media-analyses, conceptual research et cetera. The amount of research received per type of research differs.

Table 3: overview of the number of research projects around the policy issue ‘Serving the Public Safely’

	Period	Number of studies
Commissioned research (total)		188
Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations	2005-2012	68
- ordered by the project ‘Serving the Public Safely’	2007-2012	13
- ordered by the Police Department	2005-2012	5
Ministry of Security and Justice	2004-2012	66
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	2004-2012	12
Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment	2002-2012	31
Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport	2004-2012	9
Ministry of Defence	2001-2012	2
Un-commissioned research (total)		91
- Police	2000-2012	14
- Other government agencies	2000-2012	12
- Universities	2000-2012	7
- Research agencies	2000-2012	12
- Other organizations	2000-2012	46
Total		279

The critical cases are selected by purposive sampling. This is in line with the definition of qualitative research (see ‘design’) whereby a large amount of data per case is generated. With purposive sampling, “cases are specifically selected because they can teach us a lot about the issues that are of importance to the research” (Boeije, 2010, p. 35). Methodologists distinguish two types of purposive sampling. First of all theoretical sampling, is for developing theory, grounded in the data. There is no theoretical framework guiding the selection of cases. Secondly, purposive sampling can be done by selecting cases based on a theoretical framework, established in advance of the fieldwork. This latter type is chosen for this study. The theoretical framework has generated several guidelines on which the cases can be selected. These are both the type of research and the type of initiating organization (see Chapter two). An overview can be made where the data of table three, is put in a table organized by these determinants.

Table 4: schematic overview of the combination of the determinants of research utilization

Type of research	Commissioned	Non-commissioned
Monitor research / evaluation	Box 1	Box 2
Conceptual	Box 3	Box 4

From each of the ‘boxes’ of the above table two studies are selected. In total, eight cases are selected. The selection per box is done again with purposive sampling. For each box, cases are selected that are expected to be utilized at least once. This selection is made by looking at the relevance of the research for the programme. The results of the particular study must be potentially used for policy making. This will secure enough data to study for each ‘box’ (Boeije, 2010; Coyne, 1997).

The selection or sampling strategy determines the way in which results can be generalized to other cases (Smaling, 2003). With purposive sampling a researcher aims for analytical generalization. Analytical generalization is generalization towards theory, rather than to other populations or cases. Negative cases or extreme cases are used to test current theory. This is also referred to as falsification of theory (Smaling, 2003; Yin, 1994).

Carrying out the research design

Data collection

The methods used are interviewing and document analysis. Document analysis can be done in three ways: conventional, directed and summative. The documents in this thesis are analysed in a summative and directed manner. Summative document analysis means that in documents words are sought for and counted. This is not for giving meaning, but to explore the usage (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1283). From this, two ways of analysis are possible: manifest content analysis and latent content analysis. The first consists of counting words or concepts, the second attempts to go beyond that to give an interpretation of the context (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The latter method is used in this thesis. The words or concepts are linked to the context in which they are placed; for example who said it, what kind of document it is placed in et cetera.

Directed content analysis is a deductive use of theory whereby key concepts are the initial coding categories. All relevant documents fragments related to the key concept are labelled. In this way the theoretical framework from chapter two can be validated, specified and/or extended. It is a form of qualitative content analysis and differs from summative (quantitative) document analysis because it focuses on the whole text, or parts of it. Summative analysis focuses more on the frequency of concepts and words in texts, while qualitative document analysis is theory-guided. It focuses on those parts of the text that were identified in the theory as important for the study.

Document analysis is carried out before the interviews in order to verify the document analysis results in the interviews. For each research, the relevant actors are interviewed. This study limits the associated actors to researchers, policy makers and politicians. Quantitative methods are again not appropriate, as those methods need a clear measurement scale of all variables. This is not possible in the case of research utilization (Karapın, 1986, p. 238). How to measure what type of research utilization is at stake is only possible using in-depth interviews where the interviewer can ask follow-up questions about the exact type of use. In surveys, there is a higher chance of obtaining socially desirable answers, because it is impossible to ask the person surveyed exactly what he or she means, or to request examples. Thus, although in interviews at first also social desirable answers can be given, with the possibility of follow-up questions this is less likely.

Furthermore, Weiss states that actors in policy process are rarely able to identify when they have used research and how. This is mainly due to unconscious use of research, for example, when knowledge is internalized or has only a conceptual effect. Also, researchers mingle research with

other resources (Weiss, 1986, p. 218). In interviews, the interviewer can take into account these limits by asking follow-up questions about the exact process of research utilization. However, this limit cannot totally be solved by doing interviews instead of surveys. Document analysis is therefore a useful second method to check whether the answers of the interviewees are in line with the results of the document analysis. Also, the interviewer can confront the interviewees with the outcomes of the document analysis.

The interviews were held after the preliminary results of the document analysis were obtained. With the results of the document analysis, the topic list for the interviews was honed. Interviews were conducted with the relevant actors of the eight selected research projects. Interviews were done with five policy makers. They had been active with the commissioned research projects studied in this thesis. From the interviewed policy makers, two were already present from the beginning of the programme in 2006. Others started to work for the programme later, but none of them joined later than 2010. Secondly, seven researchers were interviewed. Some of them were involved in multiple research projects, so with these interviews all cases were covered. Finally, two politicians were interviewed who took part in the regular parliamentary commission of 'Serving the Public Safely'. A total of 14 interviews were conducted. I also used a focus group meeting of several policy makers about research. In that focus group five policy makers participated. When interviewees are cited in the next chapter, they are ordered by alphabet. For example: 'citation by researcher A' or 'citation by

Collecting data while being an 'insider'

The data collection is eased because I worked as an intern for the government programme. Therefore, I constantly had to 'step out' of the world I work in, to study it, while at the same time I was my own object of study, because I carry out, accompany and put into practice diverse studies. The interviewees are also my colleagues, or they are researchers who are also currently or potentially doing research for the programme and thus for me. This can lead to a biased view on the data: I can give my own interpretation to the data, because I know the context from which it originated. For example, I can give meaning to certain statement made by interviewees, because I know where they are talking about. I have dealt with this by explicitly interviewing the researchers at their institutes, not at the Ministry. This creates a different setting, where I am not the civil servant from the Ministry, but a university student. This was not possible for the policymakers, but I interviewed them at a different location at the Ministry away from the programme offices, to create a different setting. Furthermore, I have explicitly focused on the experience of the researchers and the policy makers in the past, when I was not around yet. In this way, they could reconstruct what had happened and. On the other hand, this had a positive influence, because it provided a large amount of extra information. All observations I made and the conversations I had during my internship will also function as input for the results. In this manner, I have a more complete view than if I were an outsider.

politician B'. To collect the policy documents and parliamentary debates, the search function of the website www.overheid.nl is used.

Operationalization

This section describes how data is collected. Part of that is how concepts are operationalized. Operationalization is complicated, because of the ambiguity of the concept (Weiss, 1979). Different types of utilization are distinguished (instrumental, enlightenment, symbolic). Landry, et al. (2003) have formulated diverse indicators for the different types of utilization. Also Bekkers, et al. (2004) have given some indicators. These are illustrated in the following table, showing operationalization and indicators for the different methods used.

Table 5: overview of indicators for data collection

	Type of Utilization			
	<i>General indicators for use</i>	<i>Instrumental</i>	<i>Enlightenment ('conceptual' in Bekkers, et al., 2004)</i>	<i>Symbolic (political-strategic in Bekkers, et al., 2004)</i>
Indicator for interviews		<i>It led to concrete action</i>	<i>It shed light on situations and problems</i>	<i>It served to confirm choices (already made) It served for reputation or determining the agenda</i>
Indicator for directed document analysis		When concrete action is linked to the research, including who said/wrote it and what type of document	When research is mentioned two years after it has been published, including who said/wrote it and what type of document	When research is linked to already existing or proposed policy (political) or to mentioned without reference to the context (tactical), including who said/wrote it and what type of document
Indicators for summative document analysis	Number of times the research is mentioned in the document; who said/wrote it and what type of document			

Data analysis

The data is analysed with a qualitative analysis programme, Nvivo. This includes both the documents and the transcripts of the interviews. Coding was used to generate results that can answer the central research question. The main code is type of research utilization. The other codes were developed during the coding, by open coding. The coding scheme beforehand was as follows:

- Instrumental utilization
- Symbolic utilization

- Tactical utilization
- Political utilization
- Enlightenment utilization

All documents and interviews were put in a directory that belonged to their specific research, and subsequently to their 'box'. Later, this data was coded. The code of instrumental utilization was applied to fragments that showed a direct action or link to the original research. For example: 'The research showed an increase of aggression and violence at the Social Services, thus we will intensify the policy for this sector.' Attention is paid that there was no 'selective shopping' from the research results. That was the case, for example when a policy document states that 'the programme is doing well, because aggression has decreased', but this is only a few percentages instead of the 15%. In those cases, the fragment is coded as symbolic utilization. Also when research results are clearly used to serve the interests of an actor or used to confirm choices already made, the fragments are labelled as symbolic utilization. When either research is mentioned two years after publishing (document analysis) or when interviewees state that a concept, results or conclusions from a research have influenced the policy for a longer time, fragments are code as enlightenment utilization.

When approximately half of the interviews and documents were coded a new coding scheme had developed. This scheme was checked by means of coding the other half of documents and interviews:

- Instrumental utilization
 - Informing
 - Drawing conclusions (utilization by means of *drawing conclusions* on the results)
 - Concrete direct action
- Symbolic utilization
 - Tactical utilization
 - Tactical-individual utilization
 - Reputation
 - Political utilization
 - Political reality
 - Selective utilization
- Enlightenment utilization
 - Using previous research
- No utilization
 - Lack of time
 - Ad-hoc research
 - Two-communities hypothesis
- Incrementalism
 - Research for steering current policy
 - Interaction (of research and policy)
- Moderated-structured problem, structured on ends

All codes from the earlier scheme are explicated by sub codes. Three main codes are added compared to the earlier scheme. First, diverse general reasons for non-utilization were put forward, like lack of time and the cultural gap between scientists and policymakers. Secondly, results pointed towards an interactive process of policy and research, resulting in small changes in policy. The last code refers to the type of policy issue. The literature discussion in Chapter two showed that the type of policy issue is likely to be of importance for how research is utilized within that policy area. References showing that indeed 'Serving the Public Safely' is a moderately structured problem on ends, and unstructured on means, are labeled with this code.

Chapter four | Results

The results concentrate on the extent and type of research utilization in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. The results are categorized on the determinants of research utilization variance. Recalling from Chapter two, these were engineering factors (type of research) and two-communities/interaction factors (internal or external research). As stated in the Methods section, for each combination of research utilization determinants, two cases were chosen. The results are discussed for each box (see table four). Per box, the studies are briefly discussed first. The specific search words and direct results of the document analysis for each research that is studied in this thesis are presented. This is not done in the method section, to present one story per research instead of several, spread over different chapters. Secondly, it is tested whether the expectation for a specific box, fits with the results. This is done by presenting the results of the summative document analysis, followed by the results of the directed document analysis and the interviews. In the second last paragraph of this chapter, the results of all summative document analyses are compared. The final paragraph concerns non-utilization. Non-utilization not explicitly within the scope of this thesis. However, it appeared to be of importance during the interviews (see also the coding scheme on the previous page).. Therefore, the results for this topic are also discussed.

Before the boxes are presented, the next paragraph will first discuss research utilization in general. This paragraph is focusing on expectation 1a about what type of research is likely to occur in general when looking at the programme. Also expectation 1b is discussed about what type of research utilization can be seen in particular by policy makers and politicians.

The policy issue of 'Serving the Public Safely'

In chapter two it was argued that the policy issue itself does matter as a determinant for how research is used. It was assumed that in general the structure of the policy problem (structured on ends, not on means), is of influence for what type of research utilization is present. A moderately structured problems whereby actors agree on goals, not on the means, will likely show symbolic utilization (see expectation 1a). Politicians are likely to use research instrumentally, which can at the same time be tactical. Also policymakers are assumed to use the research instrumental, which can be at the same time political for legitimating policies (see expectation 1b).

Interviewees state that the results of research about aggression and violence towards public sector employees are contradictory. Most policy makers say that, because of conflicting or context-based results, no direct implications can be made for policy. One of the policy makers for example says that: *“even measuring aggression is difficult, let alone making causal relations”* (citation by policy maker B). This makes developing policy, based on research, difficult. Instrumental utilization is thus not likely, but at the same time there are much references to research in policy documents concerning 'Serving the Public Safely'². If instrumental utilization is unlikely, but still many references are made to research, symbolic or enlightenment utilization might be present. Arguments can be made for symbolic utilization, because concerning research utilization, political reality is an important factor. There is no utilization when an issue is not on the political agenda. But policy makers, if they want to utilize research in policy, can use it tactically when the opportunity to put something on the agenda is there:

Author: “To what extent can research play a role?” Policy maker: “Often it just can’t. Especially, with politically sensitive documents, there we just need to do what needs to be done. But sometimes, if a Cabinet falls, or if new elections are coming, than that space for use suddenly is there.” (Citation by policy maker C)

Another issue addressed by policy makers and researchers is that outcomes of research are seen as things we already knew. If one has the feeling that they already know the results that is produced by research, what difference does it make when one uses research instead of just following your own

² All documents (policy documents and debates) related solely to 'Serving the Public Safely' are put under the file called 'to a safer society'. Within these files, 71 policy documents related to 'Serving the Public Safely'. Of these documents 60 referred to research, a report or a study.

knowledge? In their perspective, results confirm earlier hypotheses of those policy makers about, for example, the causes of aggression towards public sector employees. This leads to enlightenment utilization, because policy makers peruse the results, rather than use them directly.

Politicians state that they trust the policy makers to do their work well and that they use research in an instrumental manner. Not only to defend the current policy, but to give a honest insight to parliamentarians. This trust is tenable, according to them, because they check what the Minister says to them by external research and by so-called working visits.

Concerning the utilization of politicians themselves, they argue that there is not much political debate about 'Serving the Public Safely'. Parliamentarians use research to point at, for example, targets that not have been achieved. Thus symbolic utilization is in political debates around the issue is present. On the other hand, one of the politicians stated that this only a part of the parliamentarians. This parliamentarian utilizes the research in an enlightenment manner:

"There are also colleagues who constantly whine about percentages. Then I think, just look at the spin-off of such a total campaign. (...) It is also about the consciousness in society. Those percentages are of importance for background information, but they are not super leading for me." (Citation by politician A)

For more politicized issues than 'Serving the Public Safely', parliamentarians argues that some of their colleagues selectively shop in research results to prove their point. This lead to symbolic utilization, because they focus on their own interest:

"There is definitely manipulation. We all know that, politicians themselves are too happy doing it. You use data to steer something in the preferred direction. (...) Because you want to raise a political message or a political signal." (Citation by politician A)

Concluding, we can say that the results show a mix of all utilization types. When looking at the structure of the policy issue of 'Serving the Public Safely' indeed symbolic utilization is present from a policy makers' side. The political *context* makes instead instrumental utilization more likely because the issue is not that politicized. There are no different interests and if so, actors do not need to put their interest forward. This is also what politicians say about how policy makers utilize research.

At the same time policy makers point to the political reality in which they work. This leads to symbolic utilization. For politicians, it differs how they use the research: some use it for background

information, but others use it directly in debates to 'make a point'. Thus all types of research utilization are visible. The question is whether their appearance is moderated if the determinants of research utilization variance are included.

Box one: Monitor and evaluation research, commissioned by the Ministry

In this paragraph two specific research projects are studied that relate to 'Serving the Public Safely'. These studies are commissioned by the Ministry and concern evaluation or monitor research. See also the box in the upper left corner of table four:

Type of research	Commissioned	Non-commissioned
Monitor research / evaluation	Box 1	Box 2
Conceptual	Box 3	Box 4

Both an evaluation and a monitor research project are selected. The monitor research study consists of the so-called 0-, 1-, and 2-measures (Abraham, et al., 2011; Jacobs, Jans, & Roman, 2009; Sikkema, Abraham, & Flight, 2007). The monitor research is held every two years and measures the extent of aggression and violence towards public sector employees. The monitor research is seen by policy makers of 'Serving the Public Safely' as the most important research for the programme. It shows whether the aggression has increased or decreased and is meant to inform the Parliament about the progress of the programme. The evaluation study is the evaluation of the so-called 'Polaris directive'. This is a directive for the Public Prosecutor in the Netherlands to enhance the sentence demands in the case of aggression and violence towards public sector employees. Both the monitor research and the evaluation are briefly described below, including the results of the summative document analysis. This is followed by the results of the directed document analysis and interviews.

Monitor research

These measures provide the basic information for the programme, like the amount of aggression and acts of violence towards public sector employees and to what extent employers implement measures that will decrease aggression and acts of violence. The first measure was held in 2007, at the start of the government programme as a baseline study. The study was outsourced towards a research agency called DSP-groep. The second measure was held in 2009 and outsourced towards a research agency from Tilburg University, IVA. The third measure was held in 2011 and like the 2007 monitor research outsourced to DSP-groep. For the monitor research, a large and diverse array of public sector employees was surveyed. Among them were policemen, firemen and ambulance personnel. The measures cannot be seen separately: they are explicitly follow-up studies of one monitor research. They are thus analysed as one case.

The main result of the monitor research is that in 2007, 66% of all employees of the researched sectors became a victim of unwanted behaviour by external individuals in the last year. In 2009, this percentage had decreased to 65% and in 2011 to 59% (Abraham, et al., 2011; Jacobs, et al., 2009). Most of that unwanted behaviour regarded verbal violence like scolding, screaming, humiliating, provoking and bullying. Physical violence and intimidation are less common. Discrimination and sexual intimidation are the least used types of violence³. Another interesting result is extent in which the decrease of aggression and violence can be steered. In 2007, the percentage of unknown factors was 49% of the 66% of employees that said to have been victim of aggression and violence (Sikkema, et al., 2007). In 2011, this percentage was 48% of the 59% of employees that reported aggression and violence (Abraham, et al., 2011). In all reports it is emphasized that it is quite difficult to establish what the explaining factors are regarding aggression and violence towards public sector employees. An extended description of the monitor research and the results is presented in Appendix II.

References to research in policy documents

For each measurement, the documents were searched separately⁴. This led to 56 documents. Removing all the double and irrelevant documents (because they were the research itself, or another research) led to 24 relevant documents. In those documents, the monitor research was mentioned 119 times in total. Of these 24 documents, 17 were policy documents, originating from diverse ministries. On average, in policy documents the monitor research was mentioned 4.05 times per policy document. Debates and written questions of parliamentarians concerned seven of the 24 documents. They have an average of 7.14 references per document. This indicates that utilization of

³ Number of public sector employees that has been confronted with aggression and violence in the last year in %

	2007	2009	2011
Verbal violence	62	61	57
Physical violence	23	21	20
Intimidation	18	22	19
Discrimination	15	16	12
Sexual intimidation	11	10	7

Source: Abraham, et al., 2001.

⁴ Search words, search dates and results per monitor

	Search words	Search dates	Results
0-measure	1) 'Veilige Publieke Taak' (serving the public safety) + '0-meting' (0-measure) 2) 'Veilige Publieke Taak' (serving the public safety) + 'ongewenst gedrag besproken' (name of the report)	March 3, 2007 (half a year before the report was published, around the start of the research) until July 19, 2012	1) 23 policy documents, 2 debates (used for analysis) 2) 19 documents
1-measure	1) 'Veilige Publieke Taak' (serving the public safety) + '1-meting' (1-measure) 2) 'Veilige Publieke Taak' (serving the public safety) + 'aard en omvang van ongewenst gedrag' (name of the report)	January 1, 2009 (three quarter of a year before the report was published, around the start of the research) until July 20, 2012	1) 20 policy documents, 1 debate (used for analysis) 2) 14 documents
2-measure	1) 'Veilige Publieke Taak' (serving the public safety) + '2-meting' (2-measure) 2) 'Veilige Publieke Taak' (serving the public safety) + 'onderzoek voor veilige publieke taak' (name of the report)	January 1, 2011 (three quarter of a year before the report was published, around the start of the research) until July 20, 2012	1) 8 policy documents, 2 debates (used for analysis) 2) 2 documents

the monitor research is present, because both policy makers and politicians use research in documents and debates.

The policy documents are mostly letters from the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. In these letters, the progress of the programme 'Serving the Public Safely' is published. The relevant, in all cases commissioned, research is mentioned and the results are discussed. Other documents are the so-called trend-memoranda and published budgets of the ministries. The written questions are questions from parliamentarians. The answers of those question by the Minister of Safety and Justice and of the Interior and Kingdom Relations refer to the monitor research. The higher average of references in the debates and written questions is probably because those debates focus in particular on 'Serving the Public Safely'. In policy documents like trend memoranda and budgets, also many other policy issues are discussed. In that case, only one reference to the monitor research is made, for example to show the costs.

The evaluation of the directive 'qualifying victims'

In this paragraph the second research of box one is discussed: the evaluation of the Polaris Directive. The public prosecutor in the Netherlands employs a system of sanction points to determine a certain sentence demand. This system is recorded in a criminal proceedings directive, called the Polaris-directive. This directive allows a doubling of sanction points in cases of aggression and acts of violence against *"those who became a crime victim in the course of carrying out their profession, or were hindered in carrying out their profession by a crime"* (Van der Aa, Van der Vorm, Pemberton, Van Kesteren, & Letschert, 2008, p. 115). In Dutch criminal law those victims are called 'qualifying victims'.

In 2008, the Ministry of Safety and Justice and of the Interior and Kingdom Relations asked for an evaluation of the Polaris-directive. The goal of the research was to evaluate to what extent cases of aggression and acts of violence were treated conform the Polaris-directive. In addition, there was a quest for improvements. The Research and Documentation Centre of the Ministry of Justice and Safety entrusted the evaluation to the International Victimology Institute Tilburg (INTERVICT). The main conclusions of INTERVICT concentrate on the communication about the Polaris-directive towards the Public Prosecutors and the calculation on which the directive is based on. Communications should be improved and the calculation of the sanction points should be re-valued. An extended description of the evaluation and the results is presented in Appendix II.

References to research in policy documents

The document analysis resulted in 20 documents⁵. Seven of them were not useful because they did not concern 'Serving the Public', nor the Polaris directive. Secondly, three of the 20 results were the study itself or other studies. These ten documents are irrelevant to the research. Utilization cannot be expected in those documents. Of the remaining ten documents, five are a policy document and five are a debate or questions from politicians to the Minister. The research is referred to on average 1.2 times per policy document and 2.4 times per debate. This is clearly less than the monitor research is referred to. This is to be expected, if one takes into account that the monitor research is perceived as the most important research for the programme. At least, the evaluation is utilized by both politicians and policy makers. Also here, there is more utilization on average in debates than in policy documents.

The policy documents show that the evaluation is used to adapt policy. For example, the evaluation showed that the exact content of the direction is not fully known by all the Public Prosecutors. Therefore, a promise in one of the policy document is made to improve this communication. This is a direct implementation of a suggestion of the report itself. With the other suggestions, regarding the maths behind the directive, nothing has been done. This could be due to the difficulty of this issue, but even the policy documents do not refer to the suggestion of the report and until now there have been no signs that something has been done with the recommendation to look at the calculations of the directive.

Utilization of internal evaluation or monitor research

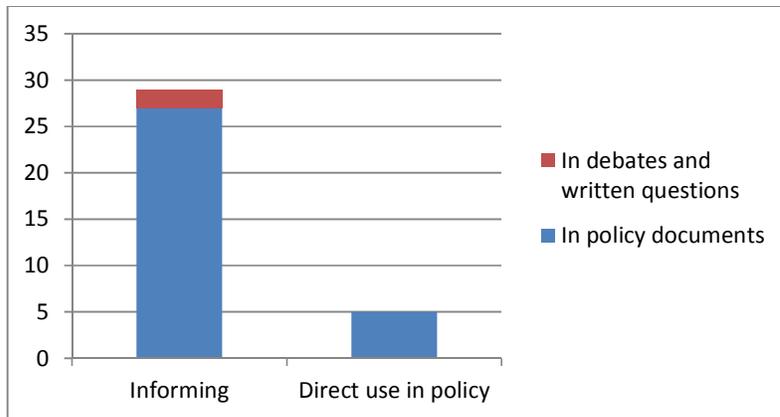
The expectation for the utilization of the research projects in box 1 is that instrumental utilization will stand out. At first sight, this is also the case. If we look at the monitor research, most documents illustrate and explain the results of the research. The policy documents directly take over the measurement results. However, it cannot be concluded that we can speak here of 'concrete action'. A reader is only informed about the results, without relating an action to it. For example:

⁵ For this case, documents were searched via www.overheid.nl. Search words were 'Polaris' and 'Veilige Publieke Taak' (serving the public safely). The search period was May 1, 2008 until the current date (June 6, 2012). On November 1, 2008 the report was published.

“recent analyses show that the majority of employees face aggression and acts of violence as a consequence of their public sector job” (Annex to Parliamentary Document II, 2007-2008)

“I can inform you that the 2-measure shows a significant decrease compared to 2007; the percentage of victims has been decreased from 66% in 2007, via 65% in 2009, to 59% in 2011” (Parliamentary Document II, 2011-2012a).

The results reveal that this informing function of research is much more present than concrete action in policy. If we, for example, look at the number of times the monitor research is used to inform Parliament, whereby no concrete action is mentioned, we see that this has happened more than a reference made to concrete action that has or will derive from the research.



What document analysis cannot reveal is whether this ‘informing’ is only instrumental, or whether it is also tactical. Therefore interviews are held with policy makers who dealt with the monitor research and the evaluation and with the researchers who produced them. Concerning the monitor research, most interviewees confirm that the monitor research did not lead to much concrete action. Concrete action is seen as an ideal, but not something that happens automatically. Informing the Parliament is one of the most important tasks for a Ministry. The monitor research gives the minister the ability to account for how the programme ‘Serving the Public Safely’ is doing. One of the researchers even argued that: *“it is therefore a contribution to democracy”* (citation by researcher A). Policy makers further argue that informing themselves is another important way of research utilization. The measurements show increase or decrease of aggression and violence, and more important, which sectors perform better and which perform worse. The informing function of research is explicated by one of the policy makers:

“In VPT (serving the public safely, auth.) you can use the 0, 1 and 2-measures, to see whether you make progress. In any case, you want to start first with a sort of status quo of ‘where are we standing at the moment?’ And you want to see whether the measures that are set down have effect. And this has a double function: one, does it bring in something? But also because the minister and politics want to have something concrete, something tangible. Like, where are you talking about? All this money that is spend: what are the results?” (Citation by policy maker D)

The interesting thing is that, although there are no examples for instrumental use in the sense of ‘concrete action’, both policymakers and researchers argue that monitor and evaluation research has a lot of potential for instrumental utilization. They argue that such research like monitor and evaluation research is intended at instrumental utilization, just as assumed in Chapter two. The question is, why the results does not point towards this direct, concrete action. Policy makers provided very few examples of instrumental use of the evaluation and the monitor research. If both the document analysis and the interviews did not show much instrumental utilization in policy, it might only be ‘a wish’ of the policy makers.

Political utilization

While instrumental utilization is not present that much, symbolic utilization might be. Especially, because ‘informing’ parliament happens a lot if we look at the evaluation and the monitor research. The question is whether this is a symbolic way to show that research has been done and thus the policy is at least on paper ‘evidence-based’. In Chapter two, two subcategories of symbolic utilization (political and tactical utilization) were developed. The two types are all present in the data. Starting with the political utilization, it can be argued that instrumental utilization is ‘used’ for symbolic utilization: e.g. policy makers ‘argue’ that they base their policy on research, and thus legitimize it. The references are the same references as when instrumental utilization is concerned, but in another perspective. In this case, in particular researchers confirm that, - even with the ‘hard’ data derived from the monitor research – research is used to legitimate the already existing or developed policy. One of the researchers for example argues:

“What you see is that the political context actually determines how research is used, and that there are many ways for that. Often is it put forward like ‘these are the facts, you cannot ignore them. This is set, where it should go’. That is an illusion. And legitimating is indeed a part. Many research is been done as a consequence of political statements. The House of Representatives than says: prove that.” (Citation by researcher B)

If we elaborate further on the results found for legitimating research utilization, there is evidence that the measurements are used selectively. This happens when results only partly confirm the

existing policy, or proposed policy. With a selective use of results, the pressure is taken off the current or proposed policy. One of the debates concerned the target of a decrease of 15% of aggression and acts of violence. This decrease had by far not been accomplished, as shown by the third measure of the monitor research. The Minister, in a debate, on the one hand confirms this ('informing'), but in second instance argues that *"nevertheless I (the Minister, auth.) am pleased about the fact that the trend (of increasing aggression, auth.) has been stopped, a turning point has been applied and a decrease initiated"* (Parliamentary Document, 2011-2012b). The focus of his argument is not placed on the target, but on the results of the research in general: 'a decrease'. Looking at the evaluation, there are also indications for selective utilization. Despite policy changes relating to better communication - which are directly derived from the research - there is also a part of the research neglected. The fact that a Public Prosecutor does not always follow the Polaris directive was one of the conclusions of the evaluation. This is widely discussed in the parliamentary debates, and to a certain extent also in the policy documents. It is however not connected to the solution the researchers offer. When one of the policy makers was asked why not, it was argued that utilization of research depends for a large part on what your position is vice versa relevant actors, in this case the Public Prosecution. The position of both ministries towards the Public Prosecutor was not that strong. Normally, when political pressure is put on it, recommendations are easily implemented because of this political pressure. However, because of the quite selective use of results and conclusions of the evaluation report in the policy documents that were sent to the House of Representatives by the ministries, this same House of Representatives did not put any pressure on the ministries to change the policy along with the recommendations:

"It is used selectively. Yes, and then you see that this selection is done just by the people here. What do they see and what is their experience in the fight with other actors. And above that, what is the thing the Minister stands for? And what does the (parliamentarian, auth.) Commission lights out: did they see it or not? (...) I also believe that we should not hope that the House of Representatives will put pressure on it. There are multiple factors that in that case work together which make the process go faster. Some persons who will stand for it or not. It is a game of power. (...) It depends on the position you have; if you can use that very concrete research for that area. What I just said, we wanted to use that research of Polaris to immediately change something at the Public Prosecution institutions. That did not work out, we do not have that position to do that. Our neighbours in front (the Ministry of Safety and Justice, auth.) have that more, but less than wanted, because they face such a magistrate institution like the Public Prosecution and its independence. (...) So we have to see whether it really works."
(Citation by policy maker E)

Tactical utilization

Tactical research utilization differs from political utilization in the way that utilization has little relation with the content of the research. The mere fact that research is done, is used as an argument to postpone or carry out a policy. The document analysis revealed some interesting results. There are some citations that show reference to the monitor research without using any content. In personal conversations with civil servants from the Ministry, it was argued that, to give their policy documents more authority, they use research only for the fact that it is research. In this way, managers of civil servants will easier agree upon the policy document.

Indications for tactical utilization can also be found with politicians. Parliamentarians in diverse parliamentary debates ask multiple times why the targeted reduction of aggression and violence has not been reached, which is shown by the diverse measures. However, in the monitor research reports already can be seen that the intervention possibilities are small. The 2-measure, also debated in the following examples, shows that around 75% of the incidents of aggression and violence is caused by unknown factors (Abraham, et al., 2011). When parliamentarians ask questions about why a reduction is not accomplished, it seems to be something to position the politician themselves. This way of asking questions that are actually superfluous, is confirmed by the diverse civil servants.

Mr Marcouch, member for the Social Democrat Party:

“Could the minister explain why the cabinet did not accomplish the agreed-upon results for his policy area? Does he agree with me that the problem is not so much the employee, but the is on the side of the perpetrator?” (Minutes II, 2011-2012).

Ms Berndsen, member for the Liberal-Democratic Party:

“The aimed effect of the program Serving the Public Safely in the period 2007 till 2011 is reducing the number of victims with 15%. Unfortunately we have to ascertain that this aim has not been achieved. How is this possible? Are the right measures taken?” (Parliamentary Document II, 2011-2012b).

Enlightenment utilization

The document analysis did not reveal any signs of enlightenment use. There were no mentions of research in policy documents more than two years after the document has been published. This indicator is of course limited. Research can also be utilized enlightened without naming the research. There are multiple ways in how policy makers and scholars look at the enlightenment function of the monitor research. Two policy makers, for example, argued that the monitor research is not intended for enlightenment use and are also not suitable for that. Direct and concrete conclusions should from research and these should be directly applicable. Research that sheds light on concepts is not

something the programme should spend money on. Another policy maker argues that although the monitor research is not intended at enlightenment use, it leads to a higher awareness of the policy issue. The aggression towards public sector employees gets in that sense more 'problematized.' One of the researchers adds to that, that because of the still scientifically unravelled field of violence towards employees, it has also an important enlightenment function.

With regard to the evaluation, interviewees did not relate this research to enlightenment utilization. The evaluation results and conclusions are so context and time-bound that it does not shed light on wider issues or concepts of 'Serving the Public Safely'.

Researchers stated, that enlightenment utilization is also present, when research is used via new research. Researchers always provide a literature review in a research. Such a literature review provides a framework of the current standings of the policy issue. Earlier research is then used in a more enlightenment function, because it gives a framework for the current standings, a basis of how one should think and from where the research is further started. Regarding the monitor research, one of the researchers for example argues:

"It was not the first time: DSP (the research agency, auth.) already has done some research and within the sectors several research has been done. It is not the case that suddenly the wheel is invented. (...) It is a good thing to use it (previous research, auth.). Then you also use existing materials. (...) It is often that you used existing registration. That is the idea of science. This is applied scientific research. In that sense it works conceptual. (...) Step one is among others things looking at your target, but also looking at what is already done in that field. That you can build on to that or can actualize something. Literature research is thus necessary to put down good research." (Citation by researcher A)

Conclusion

The monitor research and evaluation were mostly utilized for informing. Whether this is instrumental utilization is questionable, because real concrete action was only slightly found. Instead, there were several indications that the evaluation and the monitor research were used to legitimate policy, mainly by selective and tactical utilization. At the same time, there is a gap between how policy makers perceive potential utilization and what the real utilization is. Contradictory, the monitor research is not perceived to be intended for enlightenment utilization, but in fact does have some enlightenment utilization. Especially if we take into account that enlightenment utilization can also take place when researchers use earlier research to build a theoretical framework. An evaluation is

specifically context-bounded and the results might be difficult to shed light on something for the long term.

Box two: Monitor and evaluation, non-commissioned research

The next research projects that are analysed are non-commissioned studies, and like the previous box an evaluation and a monitor research. These stem from the upper right corner of table four:

Type of research	Commissioned	Non-commissioned
Monitor research / evaluation	Box 1	Box 2
Conceptual	Box 3	Box 4

The monitor research is initiated in 2008 and 2009 by a news show of a Dutch television channel to research the extent of aggression and violence towards public transport employees (De Beer, 2008, 2009). It was carried out by a research agency, called TNS NIPO. The first measure of this monitor research was done in November 2008 by a survey among 1,644 bus-, tram-, and metro-drivers. All drivers were members of a labour union. The second measure was a so-called repeating measurement. It was held in December 2009 among 544 bus-, tram-, and metro-drivers, again all members of a labour union. The second study is an evaluation of the approach to handle aggression and violence towards public sector employees of municipalities (Rosenboom & Donkers, 2010).

Monitor research of violence against drivers and conductors in Public Transport

The main conclusion of the first survey was that 79% was confronted with minimal one act of violence in the past year. This violence is often pushing (61%), beating (48%), struggle (32%), punching (30%) or kicking (15%). Furthermore, 20% of the surveyed has received death threats and 67% was insulted. The results from the second survey were somewhat different. Here, 75% of the surveyed were confronted with minimal one act of violence in the past year. Furthermore, the question whether the employer puts enough effort in prevention of aggression is answered positively by 21%. This was 16% in the first research. An extended description of the monitor research and the results is presented in Appendix II. This research is of importance for the programme, because it shows the extent of aggression and violence in one of the important sectors for 'Serving the Public Safely', namely public transport. This provides insight in the extent of the problem for this sector. An extended description of the research is presented in Appendix II.

References to research in policy documents

The summative document analysis led to 169 results⁶. Of those results, 116 were deleted because they were not a policy document or debate record (22), were double (2), or did only very little concern (aggression in) public transport, like only one sentence (92). These were deleted because no reference to the research can be expected or required from such documents. From the remaining 53

⁶ For this case, documents were searched on the website www.overheid.nl. Search words were 'openbaar vervoer' (public transport), 'agressie' (aggression) and 'geweld' (violence). The search period was December 1, 2008 until June 3, 2012. In December 2008, the first report was published.

documents, 28 concerned aggression in public transport, but no reference to research is made. 25 documents concerned aggression in public transport and references to research were made, but in none of the documents the specific monitor research was mentioned. The direct use of the surveys is therefore not directly visible in written policy.

Evaluation of the approach to aggression and violence within municipalities

The second study is an evaluation of the approach of handling aggression and violence towards public sector employees of municipalities. The evaluation was published in February 2010 and is commissioned by the Labour market and Education Fund for Municipalities. This is a fund that stimulates and supports innovating activities concerning labour market and HRM-policies of municipalities. The evaluation is performed by a research agency called Stratus Panteia. In 2009, the Working Conditions Catalogue for Aggression and Violence was established. It was agreed by the Labour market and Education Fund for Municipalities to evaluate the policy on aggression and violence in municipalities one year after this catalogue was established. A survey was sent to all the Occupational Health Officers of municipalities in the Netherlands. The main conclusions were divided in 'strong points' and 'improvements'. The strong points related to municipalities providing protocols and policies around the issue, providing training for employees to handle aggression of citizens, providing aftercare when incidents of aggression takes place, and having contact around this issue with relevant partners like the police. The first point of improvement was the registration of incidents. The registration system was not sufficient in all municipalities and the willingness of employees to report incidents should be enhanced. Secondly, communication towards citizens about what behaviour will not be tolerated, needed improvement. Finally, measurements for specific functions were not implemented in all municipalities, in particular in larger municipalities. An extended description of the research is presented in Appendix II.

The evaluation is of importance for the programme, because it shows whether one of the import sectors for 'Serving the Public Safely' (local government) has a sufficient policy for preventing and controlling aggression and violence. In particular concerning the improvements, the programme can stimulate municipalities to make work of those recommendations.

References to research in policy documents

The search order resulted in 14 results⁷. Of those results, 10 documents were irrelevant because they did not relate to aggression and violence policy in municipalities. Three policy documents that did

⁷ A search order was performed on the website www.overheid.nl. The time slot was September 1, 2009 (half a year before the evaluation was published) until June 6, 2012. Search words were 'gemeente' (municipality), 'evaluatie' (evaluation), 'veilige publieke taak' (serving the public safely) and 'aanpak agressie en geweld' (approach to aggression and violence).

concern this issue did not mention the particular evaluation. Those were all policy documents (no transcriptions of debates) and concerned letters from the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations to Parliament about the progress of the programme. One result referred specifically to the evaluation. The reference was found in a written answer from the Minister of the Interior to questions from a Parliamentarian about aggression towards fire fighters. One of the questions was which initiatives were taken in the sector of fire fighters to reduce the number of aggression incidents. The minister used the evaluation research in his answer to show what the current state of the approach around aggression and acts of violence of municipalities is (Annex to Minutes, 2010-2011). Because fire fighters are also part of the municipality, the results of the evaluation also provide insight in the approach for that sector.

Utilization of external evaluation or monitor research

The expectation for this box is that external evaluation or monitor research is more likely to be utilized symbolically. The policy makers could not remember the studies, let alone the use of it. They did however provided ideas how this kind of research in general was used. Most policy makers here point to a legitimating function of research. In a policy process, solutions are often already set down, due to political or societal pressures. Then, this kind of research is used afterwards if it matches with the sketched problem and with the proposed solutions. If research shows opposite results, it is not used. The wish of politics and of society *“is more important than the results of scientific research”*, according to one of the policymakers when talking about research that provides ‘numbers’, like monitor research. She furthermore argues:

“Our job is to execute the cabinet policy. Research can be done at independent institutes, and we can take notice of it. But we are not researchers, but policy makers. If we include all research of a certain area in our policy documents it will not work. (...) What we are dealing with, primarily, is the wish of the Cabinet. (...) We can do so much research, (...) but at that moment it is not relevant, although we have the numbers. Than we are not working purely evidence-based. We do not say: these are the numbers and we are doing it conform the numbers. Than the political wishes go first.” (Citation by policy maker C)

It is therefore a combination of political and tactical utilization. It is utilized when it confirms existing or proposed policy. At the same time will it strengthen the position of policymakers or politicians, because it shows that their policy (or their argument in case of politicians) is underlined with ‘scientific evidence’. One of the researchers of the monitor research for example stated:

"It is never a direct question of government: do research for our policy. (...) For example if you measure public support, it is often used, if it fits by chance those results point that the people are happy. Then they say: the policy goes well. And we can legitimate it. (...) If you really approach it politically, if you come close to the Minister, and if public opinion is of importance, than you see indeed that research plays an important role. Sometimes for good, sometimes for bad. It is just in who's street it fits. But it is really used, or misused in this case." (Citation by researcher C)

Next to symbolic utilization, enlightenment utilization is most common with this type of research. Concerning the monitor research, for example, the attention for the sector public transport has been increased in relation to aggression and violence. In 2009 the 'Taskforce Public Transport' started, because *"the general view is that the safety in public transport has not been decreased in the past years, but that incidents are getting more serious"* (Beleids- en Stuurgroep Taskforce Veiliger Openbaar Vervoer, 2009). This quote is in line with the results of the monitor research.

Policy makers said they are aware of relevant data and relating research, but do not so much use it. There is no problem here with receiving, but implementing it. One of the policymakers said: *"concerning that (this kind of research, auth.), we take notice of it."* But because of the large amount of research and the different results that different studies provide, direct utilization is not so easy, according to policy makers. It however does give an indication which problems are present around the policy issue and which solutions can be thought of. It is difficult to really pinpoint which research has been utilized on the long term for policy, but both researchers and policymakers argue that monitor and evaluation research from external sources do shed light on issues. It draws attention towards problems and solutions, and as one of the researchers states: *"it is more being used for forming thoughts."*

This is specifically the case for monitor research, because those are repeatedly performed. Those studies, on the long term, provide general images of how a sector is doing concerning aggression and violence. This has a specific enlightenment function, because not the direct results are taken over from monitor research, but the general trends that stem from them:

"Look, if you do monitor research, you do that every year. Than you do see – on the long term – that measures are taken based on the outcomes and policy will change." (Citation by researcher C, comparable comment made by policy maker D and researcher B)

Just as within box one, researchers referred to enlightenment use via other research. Because research itself develops by means of earlier research, this will shed light on the subject itself.

Instrumental utilization was found in the document analysis once, when a written answer was given to a Parliamentarian by the Minister. The outcomes were not related to concrete action. No concrete utilization of the research projects were provided by interviewees. However, in general some of the interviewees have said something about the use of numbers that come from other source than the Ministry. Here, a very instrumental direct use, speaks out:

“You see it in Parliamentary documents. Some reports are directly received by members of parliaments. And then you see that the minister is been taken account for it. That is nice to see. (...) Research does determine policy. Policy change, that for sure.” (Citation by researcher C)

Conclusion

Although with the research projects of TNS NIPO and Labour market and Education Fund for Municipalities there might be some instrumental utilization, the most common types found in the results were legitimating and enlightenment utilization. The legitimating utilization was expected, but enlightenment utilization not. It should therefore not be underestimated what external data can show, and how this eventually will shed light on policy makers how to design their policy.

Box three: Conceptual research, commissioned by the Ministry

The next two research projects that are analysed are commissioned studies that can be qualified as conceptual research. See also the bottom left box of table four:

Type of research	Commissioned	Non-commissioned
Monitor research / evaluation	Box 1	Box 2
Conceptual	Box 3	Box 4

For conceptual, commissioned research, it was assumed that enlightenment utilization would stand out. To see whether the third assumption holds, two studies are analysed. The first is a study of perpetrator profiles. In this case the Verwey Jonker Institute was ordered to sketch profiles of perpetrators of aggression and acts of violence towards public sector employees. The second research analysed in this section is related and concerns victim profiles in the case of aggression and acts of violence towards public sector employees. These studies are conceptual because they aim to describe a phenomena, namely what types of offenders and victims are present in the area of 'Serving the Public Safely'.

A description of the research typology of offenders

This research was commissioned by the government programmes 'Serving the Public Safely' and 'Violence in the (semi-) public domain', the latter one being a programme initiated by the Ministry of Security and Justice. The research was targeted at giving insight in personal and situational characteristics and in the social context of perpetrators of violence. Secondly, these characteristics should lead to the development of a typology of different types of perpetrators. With this typology differences and similarities between public violence and violence towards public sector employees can be explained. It is a qualitative research. Methods used were a literature review, document analysis and interviewing perpetrators and victims. Based on the data, six types of 'perpetrators of violence' are distinguished. This is done by looking at personal, social and situational characteristics. The typology provides, according to the researchers, organizations a view on which type of perpetrators they will face in their daily work. Policy makers can use the insights to develop directed policy. The research was published in July, 2010. An extended description of the study and the results is presented in Appendix II.

References to research in policy documents

The document analysis resulted in four results for the offender typology⁸. The research was mentioned one time on average in the four policy documents. In two documents the research is just named and the reader is informed what the research is about. In the third document the research is used to develop a general policy concerning public disturbances. The typology is used to make a division in perpetrators. In the fourth document a new developed pilot is based on the research. The pilot focuses on behavioural influence of youth.

A description of the research typology of victims

This research was commissioned by the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. The goal of the research was to gain insight in the characteristics of individual employees and of organisations, the individual norms and the organisational norms, and the way employees and organisations deal with physical and verbal acts of violence towards them. These insights should give keynotes to decrease aggression and acts of violence towards public sector employees. The research was addressed at the same time as the research of perpetrators. The cases and document studies for that research are also used here, and led to entrances for interviews with victims. Because of the qualitative nature, the researchers stress that the findings cannot be generalized towards the whole public sector. It is therefore framed as an explorative research (Roeleveld & Bakker, 2010). The researchers concluded that, regarding personal characteristics, two things are of importance. First, victimization is more likely when an employee is not able to find a balance between setting boundaries and flexible handling of regulation. Secondly, the mood of the employee is of importance. Regarding the organizational characteristics, four things are of importance. First, the extent in which the client is depending on the organization or the employee. For example, welfare organizations imply more dependence of the client than public transport organizations. Secondly, the target group of clients of the organization is of importance. Third, the type of clients are of importance and the fourth factor relates to the extent of frustration the interaction of the client with the organization can give. The researchers recommend, based on the results, to focus on prevention, training, aftercare, and good registrations. Furthermore, organizations should develop protocols of how to deal with aggression and violent behaviour, organizations should report crimes themselves instead of letting the employee do that, and they should claim the damage by the perpetrator. The research was published in September, 2010. An extended description of the study and the results is presented in Appendix II.

⁸ Search words were 'veilige publieke taak' (serving the public safely), dader (offender) and typologie (typology). The time slot was from 01-01-2010 until 31-07-2012.

References to research in policy documents

The typology of victims gained more results than that of perpetrators: 103 documents⁹. Of them 99 were not relevant because they did not relate to the typology, documents were double published, they were other studies or were not related to serving the public. Of the remaining four documents, two policy documents did not mention the research. Instead, they discuss other research around victim profiles. With a reference to that other research, it is proposed to develop a victim profile per public sector. The two policy documents that do mention the research, inform the reader about the nature and the conclusions of the research. In these documents a reference is made to the research once per document.

Utilization of internal, conceptual research

Internal, conceptual research is expected to be utilized for enlightenment purposes. The document analysis shows however little indication for enlightenment utilization. The only reference made that is significantly later than the publishing date is that the idea of the 'influencing youngster' is used to develop a pilot aimed at influencing behaviour of youth. This was mentioned in a policy document approximately two years after the research had been published. Thus enlightenment utilization is present, but not that much (one out of eight documents). This is confirmed by the interviewees. The idea of enlightenment utilization is mainly focussed on researchers using other research and thus 'keeping the knowledge alive.' Consequently one of the researchers argues: *"So I do not worry that no specific policy has come out of this report"* (citation by researcher D). The researchers furthermore mention that other organisations do use the research, for example when developing local community safety policies.

At first sight, the results point mostly at instrumental utilization. The document analysis shows that informing is most common, like the studies from box one. The studies are actually mentioned several times quite directly after publishing in policy documents. Parliament is informed via policy documents about the research and their main conclusions. However, no concrete action is related to the research. Whether this is tactical utilization by means of showing that research has been done, is not clear. Only in one policy document the research is utilized for a policy around public disruption:

⁹ The research was published in September 2010. Therefore documents were searched for from August 1, 2010 until July 31, 2012. Search words were 'veilige publieke taak' (serving the public safely), 'slachtoffer' (victim) and 'onderzoek' (research).

“Research shows that a large part of the offenders of aggression and violence towards public sector employees in the public space exists of influenced youth, whether or not intoxicated by alcohol. Therefore is from the program ‘Serving the Public Safely’ a pilot carried out in Groningen to achieve a behaviour change with this target group.” (Parliamentary Document II, 2011-2012c).

Interestingly, the research projects were carried out during a transition towards a more perpetrator-oriented approach, with regard to repression (see for example: Parliamentary Document II, 2009-2010) and an orientation to youth regarding prevention (see for example: Parliamentary Document II, 2011-2012d; Parliamentary Document II, 2010-2011). The question is whether the research influenced this policy change, or if this policy change was already there, and this research is just used to specify it. The general transition towards a focus on perpetrators is mentioned earlier than how the research will be utilized, but - especially with regarding to prevention and youth - this research seems to have steered the initiated transition somewhat. This specific focus was indeed named later in policy documents.

According to the researchers, a ‘knowledge question’ from the Ministry was the basis for this research. This explains why instrumental utilization is more prominent as expected. Researchers emphasize that although the research itself does not provide policy choices, definitely choices are made, based on this research. However, at the same time, this is put into a more symbolic sphere by the researchers. The policy choice can be converted from the research, but is definitely something civil servants should do themselves:

“There also just a policy choice that you cannot do on the basis of your research. You can clearly point what the directions are , what the problems are and where you can think about. But what you really do with it, or if you say, so we put more blue on the street or we take care that the police is better educated, that are really policy choices. And as a research you should not do that yourself.” (Citation by researcher D)

If civil servants should make these choices themselves, it means that other factors are of importance than only research results that influence the policy direction. These are for example interests of other ministries.

Just as the research in box one, the potential direct utilization of this type of research is again emphasized. The background information about specific contexts, about how it ‘really works’ has much potential to be translated into policy. Causes of non-use are sought in organizational (engineering) factors. To improve the instrumental utilization, researchers suggest that beforehand

the already existing knowledge should be studied better in order to see what you really want to know.

The researchers state that although this research is not used instrumentally by policy makers at the Ministry, it is used by other actors in the field of 'Serving the Public Safely'. Different organisations use the typologies to develop policy for their own organisation:

"Well, you see things that supports the results. You see that in other policy it is put forward. That organisations, concerning bullying at schools, they have to perform strict policy, because organisation does matter. So you see that it is verified." (Citation by researcher D)

Conclusion

For external conceptual research, the results show a mixed picture. There are indications for enlightenment utilization, just as expected. Symbolic utilization is not so much present, except for the fact that research is referred to in many documents without relating it to concrete action. It is difficult to see whether this research has directly been utilized, but it seems to be the case once. Paradoxically, there is again a call from the side of the researchers, that potentially, this research can be used directly, but due to several organisational factors this is hindered.

Box four: Conceptual, non-commissioned research

In this section research is discussed that is not commissioned by the Ministry itself: external research. Above that, it is conceptual: it shows cause-effect relations, elaborates or develops concepts. It is expected that this research is mostly used in a symbolic and / or enlightenment manner:

Type of research	Commissioned	Non-commissioned
Monitor research / evaluation	Box 1	Box 2
Conceptual	Box 3	Box 4

Frontline of Tracing and Enforcement

For this box two studies are selected. The first study is called 'Frontlinie van Opsporing en Handhaving' (the Front Line of Tracing and Enforcement). This study is done by a research agency of Tilburg University, commissioned by the Academy for Policing. The study was done in 2007 and 2008 and the report has been published in February 2008. The main goal of the study was to give insight in how and how often citizens systematically try to frustrate civil servants on duty (Jacobs, Bruinsma, & Van Poppel, 2008). The reason for this research was that *"because of their (of civil servants, auth.) way of working that is directed at certain areas, persons or target groups, they have daily contact with citizens who would rather get rid of the interferences of local authorities or the police. This leads to certain risks. Counteractions of citizens can have large consequences"* (Jacobs, et al., 2008). The research was done among upholders and detectives: a survey was sent to around 4,000 of them. 1,557 filled in the survey. Furthermore, 35 of the surveyed were interviewed and a literature scan was done. An extended description of the study and the results is presented in Appendix II.

References to research in policy documents

This research is important, because it shows where an important part of the violence and aggression public sector employees deal with, originates, and what consequences and current approaches exist. Twelve results were provided by document analysis¹⁰, but none of them related in any sense to the research directly. Only one other research referred to the research in a footnote.

The Untouchables

The second research is called 'the untouchables ('de onaantastbaren'). This research was done by the Nicis Institute. The goal of the research was to see whether those who are to be perceived as 'the untouchables' in reality existed and how these people should be approached. The idea is that there are, mostly young, people who are often criminal and have multiple social problems. However they are unmanageable for social work and police. The results were collected in the summer of 2011 by

¹⁰ To see whether the research has been used in policy, a search order has been put on the website www.overheid.nl. The search words are: 'Frontlinie' (Front Line), 'Opsporing' (Tracing), 'Handhaving' (Enforcement), 'Politieacademie' (Police Academy) and 'onderzoek' (research). The time frame was from September 1, 2007 until June 6, 2012. September 2007 is half a year before the research was published.

focus groups and conversations with forty ‘front line workers’ from the police, probation, youth care and local authorities (Eysink Smeets & Bervoets, 2011). The research is interesting for the government programme ‘Serving the Public Safely’, because these ‘untouchables’ seeks *“regular actively the confrontation with government”* (Eysink Smeets & Bervoets, 2011, p. 10). Furthermore, the target group of the research is public sector employees. The results provide insight into what public sector employees face in their daily work, including intimidation, violence et cetera. An extended description of the study and the results is presented in Appendix II.

References to research in policy documents

One result came up, relating the research towards problematic youth groups¹¹. This reference to the research describes the research and what the Minister will do with the results in policy.

Utilization of conceptual external research

External conceptual research is expected to be used first in an enlightenment manner and secondly symbolic. From the interviews it can be concluded that the most common form of utilization is enlightenment utilization. It is been argued by both policymakers and researchers that this type of research is just not applicable for instrumental utilization, but can definitely be seen indirectly. Concepts and explanations that external research provides, will return in policy. Policymakers emphasize that this research can rarely be found directly in policy. If however many research is done into a certain topic, it will influence the discussions that are present in society and politics:

“How good all research is, it can rarely be found directly in the policy picture. It is more, that, sometimes, when many research is done into something, that that influences a little bit the discussion in society and politics. And finally you will see it return in society.” (Citation by policy maker D)

A conceptual research, provides sometimes a better indication of what to do than ‘just numbers’. *“With a real large conceptual study, you can influence the theoretical frameworks of follow up research and, consequently, the vision in policy. (...) Policy formation is more of the conceptual side”*, according to one of the researchers.

For external conceptual research to be utilized, contact with scholars from university is the key issue to utilization, according to diverse policy makers. And this university knowledge is research for long term implementation. Several policymakers and researchers indicate that due to time limits and the

¹¹ A search order was carried out on www.overheid.nl, with the search word: ‘onaantastbaren’ (untouchables). The time frame was from January 1, 2011 until June 6, 2012. January 2011 is half a year before the research was published.

large amount of possible interesting research it is impossible to check all sort of conceptual external research. One of the policy makers for example argues about research regarding policing:

"You cannot expect that we, as a core department, get inside all those things that are researched at the police force. That should be reached to us.(...) Without the need for us to follow everything." (Citation by policy maker E)

At the same time results also point to symbolic utilization. The Nicis-report was published in December 2011. Just after the research was published, a political and societal debate started around a family in Utrecht that had been badged so bad, they had to move. This was done by a so-called problematic youth group, exactly those groups the research of 'the untouchables' speaks about. The incident gained a lot of media attention (Huisman, 2012; Lauret, 2011). The same media also related the issue to the research. Also the policy documents relate the incident to the research. One parliamentarian asked questions to the minister of the Interior and of Safety and Justice about the incident. In a preparation-briefing on the subject of the civil servants towards the minister for answering these questions, they use the research of the Nicis Institute. They argue that the police has done nothing wrong but the problems originate, according to the research, in the *"destructive continuation of untouchables in the neighbourhood"*. This is however not in line with the conclusions of the report. The report concludes that indeed the government, including the police do not use the right approach. Interestingly, this is not mentioned in the briefing.

Later, in April 2012, the minister refers to the report when problematic youth is concerned in a letter to Parliament (Parliamentary Document II, 2011-2012e). In this case, however, the recommendation (and thus current shortages) are mentioned (public leadership, an amplified, targeted and continuous approach, and tough repression interventions). These recommendations are now used as an argument for the current policy of the minister:

"I establish that the Nicis Institute report underlines the necessity of the policy, initiated by me (the minister, auth.). (...) I have organized the program in such a way to support necessary improvements. The actions, sketched by me above, are in line with the, according to the Nicis Institute, necessary actions. Nobody is untouchable." (Parliamentary Document II 2011-2012e)

So, the document analysis shows a symbolic utilization of the research to legitimate current policy. In the interviews, this type of research utilization was not mentioned for this type of research.

Both from document analysis and from interviews, there is no evidence that this kind of research is used directly. In answer to the question why it is not used instrumentally, policymakers argue that due to organisational factors, this research does not enter the Ministry. Another argument is that policy making is all about short term and fast decisions:

“There is not so much ‘free’ research towards it and it of course often takes a very long time. Scientific research just takes years. (...) You do not always have the time to wait for it.” (Citation by policy maker D)

From researchers we hear again the argument that instrumental utilization is in theory possible for this type of research. Policymakers could look more actively to research to base policy decisions on. However, policymakers in return argue that this is difficult due to the large amount of research and time limits. If research is used, it has to be checked for its validity and reliability, and policymakers just do not have time to do that. A few researchers argued that indeed the type of research does not lend itself for instrumental utilization. One of the researchers for example stated:

“Very founded empirical research is just as contumacious as reality itself. Look at the PhD-studies: you are glad when it only gives a ripple in the pond. It is nuanced: you have this, and this is also of importance. You work on a model, but it is said quickly: the reality is more contumacious.” (Citation by researcher B)

Conclusion

The conceptual, external research projects studied in this thesis are most utilized in an enlightenment way: conceptual research provides frameworks where policy is or can be based on. For the research regarding the untouchables also indications in documents were found that the research is used to legitimate current policy. Thus symbolic utilization is also present.

Summative document analysis

In this paragraph the summative document analyses of all four different boxes are brought together and analysed. Summative document analysis is a form of document analysis whereby words are counted and from their frequency a meaning is derived (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In this thesis latent summative document analysis is used to insert the context in which such words are placed in the document. And, instead of looking for exact words, references to the research projects are looked for. In the following table the references towards the particular research are compared, including the mean per document and the difference between policy documents and debates. In this way, we can see whether there are differences between origins and types of research when the numbers of references are concerned.

Table 6: overview of references resulting from summative document analysis

		Number of references / documents	Average reference per document	Difference in average policy document / debate
Commissioned evaluation / monitor research	0-,1-,2-measures	119 / 24	4.96	4.05 / 7.14
	Evaluation of the Polaris-directive	18 / 10	1.8	1.02 / 2.4
Non-commissioned evaluation / monitor research	Use of violence towards drivers and conductors in public transport: 0- and 1-measure	-	-	-
	Evaluation of the approach of municipalities to handle aggression and violence	1 / 4	0.25	.25 / -
Commissioned conceptual research	What do perpetrators have in common?	4 / 4	1	1 / -
	Victims of violence while serving the public	2 / 2	1	1 / -
Non-commissioned conceptual research	The Untouchables	-	-	-
	Frontline of Tracing and Enforcement	1/1	1	1 / -

Table six shows that the commissioned research projects are used more when looking at references in document analysis. Especially regarding evaluation and monitor research, it seems that those research projects are more useful to put in documents and for debates. If we look at the type of research, an explanation is that monitor and evaluation research provides such concrete results that they are easy to put in documents or to debate about. Another interesting feature of this table is that for this latter type of research the monitor research and evaluation is more used in debates than in

policy documents. An explanation for this is that the debates are especially focussed on this subject, while policy documents often also concern other policy issues.

Non-utilization

The results provided both insight in the utilization per research and in the general process of utilization of the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. The results focussed on which types of research utilization were present. It is not the aim of the thesis to show why research is not used, but to show how research is utilized. When document analysis pointed to non-utilization (when no reference was found to research in policy documents), other results from interviews showed that this could also point to be symbolic or enlightened utilization. This was just not something the data (directly) reveals. However, explicit statements were made by policy makers and researchers during the interviews there are situations where research utilization is not present at all. Non-utilization is a prominent issue for most interviewees. Interviewees gave different reasons for non-utilization.

The first argument for non-utilization concerns lack of time. Lack of time to look for relevant research, to read research and to implement it. Research related to 'Serving the Public Safely' is not sent to the Ministry or to parliamentarians. It is furthermore sometimes hard to read if one has little time.

A second point was made around the issue of ad-hoc research. Research was done on an ad-hoc basis without a clear vision. If the idea came forward that a research needed to be done, it was done, without much search to earlier research on the same topic. This also relates back to lack of time. Furthermore, the political context leads to ad-hoc research, because of parliamentarians asking for research on an ad-hoc basis. Above that, non-commissioned research is per definition ad-hoc, viewed from the perspective of the policy maker. With this 'ad-hoc culture', research is done double, or in wrong contexts or with the wrong questions. Therefore, research is not used. An example is given by one of the researchers:

"I think it (why research is not used in policy, auth.) is also because at the same time a comparable research was done (...), also a research on typologies. We were also cited in that report (...). It is the task of the commissioner to look beforehand: what is my real question, and what is already been done? It was a pity, a missed chance. If you say, there has already research been done, than we could have, for example, specifically research only one type. (...) I think it could be more rational and thought-out. I think that a lot is done double. That one thinks, that could have been added to that research, or be part of that research." (Citation by researcher D)

Chapter five | Conclusion and Discussion

In this chapter the answer to the main question is presented and the results are discussed. The main question of this thesis is:

- *What variance in research utilization is present in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely' and how can we understand this?*

To answer the question and discuss the results, this chapter contains several parts. The presence of different types of research utilization are discussed first. Secondly, the results are discussed in the light of the determinants of research utilization. Thirdly, an answer to the central research question is provided. The expectations (see chapter two) are discussed to see whether they are in line with the results. Fourthly, implications for policy are presented. Finally, limitations of the research are put forward, together with suggestions for further research.

Types of research utilization

The first supportive question is what types of research utilization are present in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. It can be concluded that all research utilization types were present in practically all research projects of 'Serving the Public Safely' that were studied in this thesis. This is in line with earlier research of Amara, et al (2004) and Bekkers, et al. (2004). Instrumental, symbolic and enlightenment utilization can thus be present at the same time.

The extent in which they are present differs. Instrumental utilization is least present. Few examples of instrumental utilization in the sense of 'concrete action' were found in the results. According to policy makers, lack of time is the main reason for this. Also, because many research is done 'ad-hoc', policy makers find it difficult to utilize research directly. Furthermore, in many policy documents it looks that instrumental utilization is actually 'informing'. This means that research is mentioned in policy documents concerning 'Serving the Public Safely' to inform Parliament or themselves about for example the current rates of aggression and violence towards public sector employees. No concrete action is derived from research. This however at the same time symbolic utilization, because it serves to show that at least research has been done. Because it is not conclusive whether it 'informing' is instrumental or symbolic, it is put down as single utilization type.

Symbolic utilization is further found when research results contradict and thus direct, instrumental application into concrete policy is difficult. This does lead to symbolic utilization. Not because the issue is politicized in Parliament, but because policy is determined on a political basis and research that would contradict the policy will not be used. The presence of symbolic utilization in the

government programme 'Serving the Public Safely' is widely acknowledged by both policy makers and researchers, without problematizing it too much: it is just political reality and thus inevitable.

Enlightenment utilization is present in the form that policy makers 'take notice' of results. This builds on their knowledge and will eventually return in policy. Also, researchers use earlier research to provide a starting point for a new study. Enlightenment utilization is much more present than expected. This is in line with findings from Weiss (1979, 1981), who argues that enlightenment utilization is actually the most common form of research utilization. However, Weiss does seem to suggest that because enlightenment utilization is so dominant, no room for other types is left. This focus on either one of the research utilization types is common in research utilization literature. Other scholars, for example, focus on evidence-based policy making or fact-free politics. Instead of a focus on one type, this study shows that multiple types have to be taken into account. This has been suggested by more scholars who studied different research utilization types (Albaek, 1995; Bekkers, et al., 2004; De Gier, et al., 2004). In this manner we can understand fully impact of research on policy instead of only one part. When only looking at instrumental utilization for example, results will suggest that there is not much utilization at all, but when we take other perspectives into account there is more utilization present.

At the same time it has to be concluded that it remains difficult to discern the different types of research utilization. What the exact differences are is pointed out by means of indicators, but the results point out that it is hard to conclude whether research is used instrumental, because Parliament is informed, or symbolic, because it is shown that research is 'evidence-based'. It depends on the interpretation of the researcher which type of research utilization is put to a fragment. The types overlap and are present at the same time. Therefore the question is whether these types can be combined or should be discerned at all.

If we take one step back, it seems most evident that research is utilized as a sort of process-support. Policy problems and solutions are largely set and research 'polishes' both problem definition and potential solutions. In general we know how the world looks like, but we need research to specify and to polish our knowledge. Diverse interviewees suggested, instead of a linear utilization of research, an interaction of research and policy is present. They argued that research can be used for policymaking, but not always. Policy steers what research should be done and in what direction. The role of research is to support the policy process by doing relevant research. Not to point what policy should be developed, but to steer and change the policy with incremental steps along the insights research provides. In that case there is no direct instrumental utilization, nor pure symbolic or

enlightenment utilization. It is a mixed picture, whereby all types of research are present. This is in line with the incrementalism theory of Lindblom (Lindblom, 1959). This theory assumes that only very small changes in policy will appear, because policy makers do not deviate much from current policy. This is what we also see when studying research utilization in government policy: only small changes will be made based on research: research will not fundamentally change a policy. Nor will a policy maker start from scratch to collect all research when developing new policy, but he or she will build on what is currently known and done. This perspective can take a middle position between those who advocate a 'fact free politics' view and those who promote 'evidence-based' policy. Both perspectives melt together in policy making reality. It is interesting that the results show that the interviewed policy makers and researchers themselves already take up this view in practise. Studies to research utilization should follow this movement.

Determinants of research utilization

The second supportive question is: *What factors determine research utilization in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'?* Three determinants were put forward in this study: the policy domain, the type of research and the origin of the research. The policy domain was originated from the *organizational interest explanation*. The policy domain of 'Serving the Public Safely' is not a variable, because it contains only one policy domain. It does however has an influence on what type of research utilization can be found (but see the next section). Type of research was derived from the *engineering explanation*. The origin of research came from the *two-communities/interaction explanation*. The origin of the research (commissioned or non-commissioned) is a factor of importance for research utilization in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. Commissioned research is more utilized than non-commissioned research in the research projects studied in this thesis. If we look at commissioned research, the evaluation and monitoring studies are more used than the conceptual studies.

Most current literature focuses on the uptake of scholarly literature (e.g. Amara, et al., 2004; Bolton & Stolcis, 2003; Monaghan, 2009; Weiss, 1977). The results of this thesis show that internal research is used much more than external research in 'Serving the Public Safely'. This suggests that a large part of (the variance of) research utilization is overlooked when only taking into account external scholarly knowledge.

Research utilization in government policy: how and when?

The third supportive question relates the determinants to the types of research: *How do these factors relate to the different types of research utilization?* When research utilization was studied in

the light of the policy issue, ‘Serving the Public Safely’, it was expected that, because ‘Serving the Public Safely’ can be seen as a moderately structured problem, structured on goals, symbolic utilization would be more prominent. When problems are not structured on means, research on the policy issue provides different problem definitions and solutions. Diverse interests can be served with that and thus symbolic utilization is likely. Policy makers stated that in general for government policy the political context is more prominent than what research tells at a specific moment. Research is ignored when it does not fit current policy, or suddenly used when it does. Zooming into the policy issue of ‘Serving the Public Safely’; the results are slightly different. Policy makers and politicians argued that this issue is not politicized and thus symbolic utilization is less prominent. At the same time, politicians do use research sometimes, to make a point, although this is somewhat superfluous. Therefore, also tactical research utilization is present.

The literature on research utilization pointed towards different dominant types of utilization when a) different types of research were concerned and when b) a differentiation was made towards the initiating organization. Expectations were presented for four possible types of research. The results of this thesis point to a refinement of these expectations. Table two, providing expectations for the results, is slightly adapted based on the results.

Table 7: adapted overview of research utilization types ordered by initiating organization and type of research¹².

	Initiating organization	
Type of research	Commissioned research	Non-commissioned
Evaluation/Monitor research	Informing utilization Symbolic utilization Enlightenment utilization Instrumental utilization	Enlightenment utilization Symbolic utilization
Conceptual	Informing utilization Enlightenment utilization Instrumental utilization	Enlightenment utilization Symbolic utilization

¹² The type of utilization that remained based on the results are blue; the added types are in black and the types of research utilization that were not found are in grey.

First, based on the results we could specify that the studied commissioned research projects of 'Serving the Public Safely' are mostly used to inform, rather than other types of utilization. Above that, for the monitor and evaluation research, selective and tactical utilization was found when this informing took place. Enlightenment utilization was also found for commissioned research.

Second, the non-commissioned research projects are used in an enlightenment manner for a large part. Policy makers argue that they take notice of such research, but use it indirectly: they inform themselves and use it to gain general images about for example effective prevention measures. Also symbolic utilization is present with non-commissioned research, but then mostly when evaluation or monitor research is concerned. Symbolic research utilization then concentrates on legitimating policy: when research 'fits' a current or proposed policy it is used, if not it is ignored.

The initiating organization is an important factor concerning the variance in research utilization in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. Especially commissioned research can be used very symbolically, because influence of policy makers on the research is large. Non-commissioned research is somewhat less symbolic used than expected. Here, Weiss does prove her point that enlightenment utilization is more prominent (Weiss, 1979). The two-communities and interaction explanation (initiating organization) are thus also of importance when different types of research utilization are concerned instead of only the extent of research utilization like previous studies have shown (Caplan, et al., 1975; Dunn, 1980; Oh & Rich, 1996).

The engineering explanation (type of research) might be relevant for utilization internal research, because there is more symbolic utilization of monitor and evaluation research, than of the conceptual research projects. However, because monitor research takes such a prominent place in 'Serving the Public Safely, this might bias the results, because it is used more than the conceptual studies. Than symbolic utilization is automatically more present. The relevance of the engineering explanation is furthermore less than expected, because for commissioned research, it seems to be more of importance what the political reality is about instead of which type of research is utilized. It depends on whether Parliament needs information or want the Minister to do something, or leaves room to the policy makers to decide whether do develop policy and thus can choose to use research. In current literature on determinants of research utilization, the engineering explanations are of importance (Machlup, 1980; Rich, 1997). An explanation for the fact that they are less importance when studying research utilization in the government program 'Serving the Public Safely, might be that they do explain the extent of research utilization, but not the variance of explanation. Therefore,

whether a research is used instrumental, symbolic or enlightened depends more on the political issues of the day.

There are two answers to the main research question. First, there is variance in research utilization and we can understand this through whether the research is commissioned by the Ministry itself or not. At the same time, this variance can be largely questioned due to the fact that operationalization of the research utilization types is difficult. When does one exactly measure instrumental utilization, symbolic utilization and enlightenment utilization?

Implications for current policy

The results indicate that there is definitely research utilization in the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. This may not always be instrumental utilization. Evidence-based policy might be a wish of government organizations, but can hardly be accomplished. Therefore, government organisation should also look honestly at how her policy making process works. Political reality is present, so aiming for full evidence-based policy is not possible. Instead, they should focus on the idea that research can shape policy, although in small steps. All types of research utilization will still be present. Instrumental utilization, when insight is provided by research that can be used directly for policy. But also symbolic utilization to legitimize current policy, or changing it to meet results of a research. And enlightenment utilization that provides insights for the long term.

Another important issue is that the idea of incremental research utilization leaves room for further research into democratic processes. Many scholars emphasized the idea of joined-up government or democratic policy making (Fischer, 2003; Freiberg & Carson, 2010). Although a policy maker will stay the main author of a policy, this policy can and will be shaped by research during time, but also by input from other sources like interest groups.

Finally, if government organizations want to enhance instrumental utilization, they should use the insight this study provided that instrumental utilization was most found of commissioned research. To enhance the instrumental utilization of non-commissioned research, it should be more read by policy makers. On the other hand, researchers need to enhance the fit with research questions that policy makers could have. This is in line with the findings of, for example, Dunn (1980), who argues that improving interaction will enhance the fit.

Limitations

This research has shed light on how research is utilized in government organisations. However, there are several limitations that are of importance. First of all, operationalization of symbolic and enlightenment utilization is a complex process. Indicators are difficult to determine. Although indicators for this thesis were derived from earlier research it was difficult to discern what type of utilization was present and this depended a lot on the researcher; how he or she interprets the research utilization at stake. There is an uncertainty whether, if results indicate no utilization of one of these types, there is in fact *really* no utilization. However, regarding symbolic utilization this study has shown that for the government program 'Serving the Public Safely', symbolic utilization is not that hidden as theory sometimes assumes. It is just acknowledged, but without problematizing it too much. It remains a lack of current research that not much scholars have discussed this issue of operationalization. There is discussion on how to measure the extent of research utilization, but not so much on the variance. Amara, et al. (2004) and Boswell (2008) for example do not discuss if they also measured the different research types that they assumed to have measured.

The interpretation of the researchers being too subjective is strengthened, because I at the same time worked for the government program 'Serving the Public Safely'. Although I have tried to take an objective view, it could not be prevented that sometimes I have filled in how research was used, while this is actually not used that way. To limit this, I have tried to provide as much evidence by citations from documents and of interviewees as possible when claiming something. At the same time, it has to be noted that results are heavily context-bound and thus generalization of results is limited. This lowers the impact of my own interpretation of the data.

A second limitation is that some non-commissioned research projects could not be remembered by policy makers at all. This resulted in less data, because the exact type of how that research projects was utilized, was difficult to discern. Related to this, it is difficult to study research utilization, because even in interviews policy makers are not fully able to reconstruct their behaviour around research utilization. Or even more important, to reconstruct which research they took into account, without even being aware of it themselves. To increase the amount of data, policy makers were asked to how non-commissioned research in general is or was utilized by them.

Finally, because this research is a qualitative case study, one has to be careful with generalization. Case study research gives insight in mechanisms, but cannot predict variance, like statistical research (Flyvbjerg, 2001). It can therefore not be concluded that there is indeed a relation between the

determinants and the type of research. This case study is largely context-bound and thus insights remain in particular relevant for the government program 'Serving the Public Safely.' and provides actually hypotheses for further research instead of a full explanation of research utilization variance.

This is also related to the fact that the different boxes in reality overlap, especially regarding type of research. Often, evaluation comes together with more conceptual research. The literature study at the start of such an evaluation is for conceptual purposes, while the evaluative element of the research can be considered monitor research. The studies are chosen to function as an ideal type for their 'box', but may in reality diffuse with other boxes.

Future research

Empirical research to research utilization variance is at this moment in an early stadium. As this thesis has shown, this is because it is difficult to operationalize research utilization (Landry, et al., 2003; Rich, 1997; Weiss, 1981). Earlier studies do provide measurement scales for different stages of research utilization, but - although different forms of research utilization are acknowledged and also found in practise (Bekkers, et al., 2004; Weiss, 1979) - not much indicators are given of how to operationalize these different forms. Quantitative research should therefore test whether the concepts instrumental, symbolic and enlightenment really differ from each other. If so, it should be studied what these concepts exactly mean and how they are to be defined. If not, the focus should be more on getting insight in processes of research utilization. Furthermore, focus should be on more sources than scientific research from universities, for example, from research agencies. The most influential studies on research utilization do still concern this specific part of university research. Studies have shown that more sources of knowledge than just research are of influence on policy and only studying research shows half of the picture. This thesis support this by showing that there is more utilization of commissioned research than of non-commissioned research. Most studies however, only focus on non-commissioned research, while this is clearly of less impact. Other sources of knowledge include also interaction with different actors. Politicians for example check with subjects of research, whether the results and conclusions of such a research are correct. Subject of research regarding 'Serving the Public Safely' are for example police officers. When studying this more complete picture of knowledge sources, also the relative importance and impact of research can be measured. This is of importance, because only than we can see where policy on government level is based on. Is it really evidence-based and what sources of knowledge are of importance?

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Appendix I | Interview Topic Lists

Topics and questions for policy makers

Introduction

1. Function of the policy maker, to what extent dealing with research?
2. Can you describe the goal of research for 'Serving the Public Safely'?
3. Is there in general a difference between the goal of the research in theory (in advance) and in practice (afterwards?)
4. Which of the research (studied in the thesis) do you know and which of them did you use in your work?

Utilization of research

1. How do you use research and how do you think you colleagues use it? (Related to the relevant research.) Examples?
2. In the literature three different types of research are distinguished (explain). How did you use research most? Examples?
 - a. Did you used it directly for policy? Does it influence policy directly? Examples?
 - b. Do you recognize symbolic utilization? How? Legitimizing, tactical? Or different? Examples?
 - c. Did you used research on the long term? How, because of concepts et cetera? Examples?

Determinants

1. What determined when you used research direct, symbolic or enlightenment? Examples?
2. Is the nature of the policy issue related tot that?
3. Was the origin of the research part of that? Did you used external research different than internal research? Examples?
4. Was the type of research part of that? Did you used different types of research differently? Examples?

Other questions

1. To what extent is social science research on itself an obstacle for utilization?
2. What is first: policy or research? And what determines what?
3. Research argues that research is mostly used enlightened. Do you agree?
4. Additions?

Topics and questions for researchers

Introduction

1. What is the rate between scientific research and consulting research? And how much research is done for the Ministry of the Interior?
2. Which of the research (studied in the thesis) do you know and which of them did you do yourself?

Goal of the research

1. Can you describe the goal of the relevant research for 'Serving the Public Safely'?
2. Is there in general a difference between the goal of the research in theory (in advance) and in practice (afterwards?)
3. Do you take into account utilization for policy or other organisations, when do not to research commissioned by government/ the Ministry of the Interior?

Utilization of research

1. Do you have insight in how your research is utilized by the Ministry? And if so, how is it used? Examples?
2. Is it important for you that your research is used by a Ministry or other organisation / by the one who commissioned it?
3. In the literature three different types of research are distinguished (explain). What type do you think relates most to your research? Examples?
 - a. Did you see the research being used directly for policy? Did it influence policy directly? Examples?
 - b. Do you recognize symbolic utilization? How? Legitimizing, tactical? Abuse of your research in your view? Or different? Examples?
 - c. Did you see utilization of your research on the long term? How, because of concepts et cetera? Examples?

Determinants

1. What determined how your research is been used? Examples?
2. Is the nature of the policy issue related tot that?
3. Was the origin of the research part of that? Do you think external research is used different than internal research? Examples?
4. Was the type of research part of that? Do you think different types of research are used differently? Examples?

Other questions

5. To what extent is social science research on itself an obstacle for utilization?
6. What is first: policy or research? And what determines what?
7. Research argues that research is mostly used enlightened. Do you agree?
8. Additions?

Topics and questions for politicians

Introduction & vision on the role of research

1. Introduction of the interview and research
2. The extent in which a politician can see whether and how research is used by the Ministry / civil servants.
3. If not much, how come and if much, how?
4. The importance of policy being in general 'evidence-based' or underlined by research.

Use of research by 'Serving the Public Safely'

1. The extent in which policy of the programme is underlined by research? Examples?
2. Is there only instrumental utilization. Or do you also see symbolic utilization? And to what extent is enlightenment utilization present? Examples?
3. Does this differ per type of research? And is there difference in utilizing research initiated by the Ministry itself and external research? Examples?

Use of research by politicians around 'Serving the Public Safely'

1. To what extent are you searching for and reading the research around 'Serving the Public Safely'? Examples?
2. To what extent do you use research in debates? Examples?
3. How do you use it? Do you recognize instrumental, symbolic or enlightenment utilization when you use research or with other politicians? Examples?
4. Does that relate to the type of research or whether the research stems from the Ministry or not? Examples?

Relation research and policy

1. What is first: policy or research? And what determines what?
2. Research argues that research is mostly used enlightened. Do you agree?
3. Additions?

Appendix II | Descriptions of the Research Projects

This appendix describes the different research projects that have been studied in this thesis in an elaborated manner. The following research projects are described:

Table 8: overview of the studied research projects

Commissioned evaluation / monitor research	0-,1-,2-measures
	Evaluation of the Polaris-directive
Non-commissioned evaluation / monitor research	Use of violence towards drivers and conductors in public transport: 0- and 1-measure
	Evaluation of the approach of municipalities to handle aggression and violence
Commissioned conceptual research	What do perpetrators have in common?
	Victims of violence while serving the public
Non-commissioned conceptual research	The Untouchables
	Frontline of Tracing and Enforcement

0-, 1-, 2-measures

The largest research done by the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely' are the so-called 0-, 1-, and 2-measures. These measures provide the basic information for the programme, like the amount of aggression and acts of violence towards public sector employees and to what extent employers make work of measures that will decrease aggression and acts of violence. The first monitor research was held in 2007, at the start of the government programme to give an overview of the current state of aggression and violence towards public sector employees at that time. The monitor research was outsourced towards a research agency called DSP-group. The second monitor research was held in 2009 and outsourced towards a research agency from Tilburg University, IVA. The third monitor research was held in 2011 and like the 2007 monitor research outsourced to DSP-group. A large and diverse array of public sector employees was surveyed. Among them were policemen, firemen, ambulance personnel et cetera. The measures cannot be seen separately: they are explicitly follow-up measures of one monitor. They are thus analysed as one case.

For the three measures, public sector employees from 14 sectors were surveyed: ambulance, Labour Inspection, mayor and aldermen, tax services, firemen, members of city councils, train conductors, the police, primary education, social services, secondary education, hospitals, the Custodial Institutions Agency, the Institute for Employee Benefits Schemes and the Centre for Work and Income. In the 2009 monitor research, the sectors youth care and bus drivers were added. In the 2009 and 2011 measures, the sector of bailiffs was added. Prior to the quantitative element of the monitor research, a small literature study has been conducted. In this literature study prior studies towards the issue and policy documents are analysed. The main conclusions of the research are:

- In 2007, 66% of all employees of the researched sectors has become a victim of unwanted behaviour by external individuals in the last year. In 2009, this was percentage was decreased to 65% and in 2011 to 59% (IVA, 2009; DSP-groep, 2011). Most of that unwanted behaviour regarded verbal violence like scolding, screaming, humiliating, provoking and bullying. Physical violence and intimidation are less common. Discrimination and sexual intimidation are the least used types of violence¹³.

¹³ Number of public sector employees that has been confronted with aggression and violence in the last year in %

	2007	2009	2011
Verbal violence	62	61	57
Physical violence	23	21	20
Intimidation	18	22	19
Discrimination	15	16	12
Sexual intimidation	11	10	7

Source: DSP-groep, 2011.

- Three out of fifteen sector are confronted most with unwanted behaviour: train conductors, Custodial Institutions employees and bailiffs. The sectors with the least reported aggression and violence are firemen, primary education, tax services, members of town councils and the labour inspection. The social services were the only sector where the reported aggression and violence was increased since 2007 (DSP-groep, 2011).
- The feelings of insecurity are reduced from 11% of the public sector employees in 2007, via 10% of the public sector employees in 2009 to 8% in 2011.
- A last interesting conclusion is extent in which the decrease of aggression and violence can be steered. In 2007, the percentage of unknown factors was 49% of the 66% of employees that said to have been victim of aggression and violence (DSP-groep, 2007). In 2011, this percentage was 48% of the 59% of employees that reported aggression and violence (DSP-groep, 2011). In both reports it is emphasized that it is quite difficult to establish what the explaining factors are regarding aggression and violence towards public sector employees.

Evaluation of the Polaris-directive

The public prosecutor in the Netherlands employs a system of sanction points to determine a certain sentence demand. This system is recorded in a criminal proceedings directive, called the Polaris-directive. This directive allows a doubling of sanction points in cases of aggression and acts of violence *against “those who became a crime victim in the course of carrying out their profession, or were hindered in carrying out their profession by a crime”* (Van der Aa, et al., 2008). In Dutch criminal law those victims are called ‘qualifying victims’.

In 2008, the ministries of Safety and Justice and of the Interior and Kingdom Relations asked for an evaluation of the Polaris-directive. The goal of the research was to evaluate, to what extent cases of aggression and acts of violence were handled conform the Polaris-directive. In addition, there was a quest for improvements of the process.

The Research and Documentation Centre of the Ministry of Justice and Safety commissioned the evaluation and the International Victimology Institute Tilburg (INTERVICT) carried out the evaluation.

The main conclusions of the evaluation are (quote from the report):

“First, the results indicate that the PPS (Public Prosecution Service, red.) more frequently demands pre-trial detention and follows the Arrest – Administer procedure¹⁴ in qualifying victim cases than in non-qualifying (‘ordinary’) victim cases. Second, more summonses are issued and fewer settlements are imposed Third, it was found that in cases where summonses are issued, more imprisonment sentences are imposed. Fourth, it was found that, in similar cases, the Public Prosecutor demands a higher sentence in cases with qualifying victims than in cases with non-qualifying victims. The higher sentence does not become apparent in the reported averages of imposed sentences in qualifying versus non-qualifying victim cases relate to lighter offences. The BOS¹⁵ outcome, however, is not fully observed. The increase of the sentence is below what is stipulated in the directive. Rather 50% than 100%. Professionals at the PPS explain that they consider BOS to be a tool from which they may deviate in any specific case, depending on the circumstances relevant to the case. It appears that these circumstances have a curbing effect on the increase” (Van der Aa, et al., 2008, p. 122).

¹⁴ In certain crime cases, the arrested suspect immediately receives a summons or is proposed a settlement. This is called the Arrest-Administer procedure.

¹⁵ The BOS (Beslissing Ondersteunend Systeem) is a computer system that supports the Public Prosecutor in formulating a sentence demand in line with the Polaris-directive.

The main improvements concentrate on the communication about the Polaris-directive towards the Public Prosecutors and the calculation on which BOS is based on.

In the following analysis of the use of the evaluation, the above conclusions and improvements are further clarified. A note has to be made, however, that these conclusions do not exactly replicate the results from the research. One interviewee made clear that the conclusions and recommendations were slightly changed at the request of the ministries. In the analysis, this is taken into account. When the report is used in policy documents or debates, it is checked whether the concept-version shows a different conclusion or interpretation than the final version.

Use of violence towards drivers and conductors in public transport: 0- and 1-measure

In 2008 and 2009 the news show of a Dutch television channel has given the order to research the extent of aggression and violence towards public transport employees (TNS NIPO, 2008; 2009). The first study was done in November 2008 by a survey among 1,644 bus-, tram-, and metro-drivers. All drivers were members of a labour union. The second study was a so-called repeating measurement. It was held in December 2009 among 544 bus-, tram-, and metro-drivers, again all members of a labour union. In the summer before the first survey was held, various accidents of aggression were reported in the media. The most salient one was about bus drivers being molested in Gouda, a middle-sized city in the Netherlands. The bus-drivers in Gouda decided to stop the service in the neighbourhood where the molesting took place. This gained a lot of media attention and was even debated in the Dutch Parliament.

The main conclusions that stemmed from the first survey are that 79% was confronted with minimal one act of violence in the past year. This violence is often pushing (61%), beating (48%), struggle (32%), punching (30%) or kicking (15%). Furthermore, 20% of the surveyed has received death threats and 67% was insulted. The results from the second survey were somewhat different. Here, 75% of the surveyed was confronted with minimal one act of violence in the past year. Furthermore, the question whether the employer puts enough effort in prevention of aggression is answered positively by 21%. This was 16% in the first research.

Evaluation of the approach of municipalities to handle aggression and violence

This evaluation is published in February 2010 and is commissioned by the Labour market and Education Fund for Municipalities. This is a fund that stimulates and supports innovating activities concerning labour market and HRM-policies of municipalities. The evaluation is performed by a research agency called Stratus Panteia. In 2009, the Working Condition Catalogue for Aggression and Violence was established. It was agreed by the Labour market and Education Fund for Municipalities to evaluate the policy for aggression and violence one year after the catalogue was established. A survey was sent to all the Occupational Health Officers of municipalities in the Netherlands. The main conclusions were divided in 'strong points' and 'improvements'. The strong points are:

- Four out of five municipalities have a policy or protocol related to aggression and violence. In almost all of these policies and protocols is put down that (non-)verbal aggression, personal threats and physical aggression is not tolerated. Three-quarter of the municipalities communicates this to their employees. The content of the policy is in general quite complete.
- Municipalities are busy with training employees in handling aggression and violence. 41% of the municipalities trained all employees with public contacts. In the rest of the municipalities, on average 71 % of the employees with public contacts were trained.
- Concerning the execution of the policy, the aftercare and support for employees after incidents took place are sufficient. This is also the case for measures towards the perpetrator.
- A majority of the municipalities with 100.00 or more residents have made agreements with the mayor, police and Public Prosecutor about the process after incidents take place. 72% of the municipalities states that these agreements are lived up to.

The points for improvement are:

- Measurements for specific functions are not implemented in all municipalities, in particular in larger municipalities. Slightly more than half of the municipalities with more than 100.000 residents took measures for specific functions. These larger municipalities seem to lag behind with the approach, while aggression and violence is more present in these municipalities
- Of the municipalities who have an aggression and violence policy, only 38% also communicates to citizens which types of aggression and violence will not be tolerated.
- The registration of incidents. Municipalities also say that incidents are only slightly reported and registration is done badly. Only a quarter of the municipalities possesses a registration system for incidents that lives up to all demands. Based on the answers of 97 municipalities, the total number of reported and registered incidents can be estimated: around 4,200.

Another research, focusing on the perception of employees, shows that 61% of the municipality employees was victim of aggression or violence. This would mean that on a yearly basis at least 100.000 incidents would be present. There is thus a gap between the number of incidents and the number of incidents that is reported and registered.

Based on the results, the researchers conclude that the approach of municipalities to handle aggression and violence is incident based. The majority of the municipalities only discusses the approach when they have reason to. This will be the case when one or more incidents took place. Only a quarter of the municipalities once a year discusses the approach on management level. Feedback towards teams and periodical analysis of incidents for improvements can only be found with one-fifth of the municipalities. A number of times municipalities said that there is no problem, because there are hardly any incidents. This is a contradiction with the results of the research on perception of employees: in that research 61% of the employees with public contacts said to be confronted with aggression and violence. The assumption of municipalities that incidents are rare hinders a systematic and learning approach, based on good registration. Because of this, an impasse in the approach to aggression and violence will exist. Another thing that is remarkable is that on the one hand three-quarter of the municipalities states that nothing hinders the approach to aggression and violence and there is sufficient knowledge internally. On the other hand, only five percentage of the municipalities is demonstrated to be successful for this policy issue. Although a quarter of the municipalities states that policy is only recently introduced - so it is too early to evaluate its success – there also seems to be little attention for the effectiveness of the approach. Especially when this is compared with absence-tough-sickness policy.

What do perpetrators have in common?

This research was commissioned by the government programmes 'Serving the Public Safely' and 'Violence in the (semi-) public domain', the latter one being a programme initiated by the Ministry of Security and Justice. The research was targeted at giving insights in personal and situational characteristics and in the social context of perpetrators of violence. Secondly, these characteristics should lead to the development of a typology of different types of perpetrators. With this typology differences and similarities between public violence and violence towards public sector employees can be explained. It has been a qualitative research. Methods used were a literature review, document analysis and interviewing perpetrators and victims.

Based on the data, six types of 'perpetrators of violence' are distinguished. This is done by looking at personal, social and situational characteristics. The first type is called the 'powerless frustrated person'. These persons are mainly older men and mentally instable without necessarily having a psychiatric disorder. Prior to an incident, the perpetrator feels extremely powerless and gets frustrated, because he feels that he cannot handle the situation. This type will likely not be violent toward other citizens than public sector employees. The second type is called the 'short-tempered person' and is a diverse group. Their common characteristic is their short-temperedness. This can happen in any situation, as long as the perpetrator feels the reason to use (mostly verbal) aggression. The third type is the confused person. This type exists mainly of older male persons, with a psychiatric disorder and sometimes addiction. Their acts of violence are unpredictable and can be both physical and verbal. The group is often present in the welfare and care sector. The fourth is called 'violence as a lifestyle'. These perpetrators are mainly male and their daily lives are characterized by aggressive and violent behavior. This type of offender uses violence in an instrumental and calculating manner. Violent behavior is seen as normal. The fifth is the juvenile that can be influenced. This type is young, and can be both male and female. They are mainly 'first offenders' and the violence, both physical and verbal, takes place in a group. Group pressure and 'wrong friends' are the main issues and the violence can be seen as a signal, a call for attention for other problems. Violence is mainly used towards other civilians, police, supervisors, teachers, bus drivers and conductors. The sixth is the occasional, intoxicated perpetrator. They are mainly young and male persons and lives a normal life. It will only occasionally use violence when he is intoxicated by alcohol or drugs. This happens in case of going out or at events. It includes all kinds of violence and is directed at those people who are in their immediate surroundings. The victims can be both civilians and public sector employees.

The Citation by researcher Concludes that these types of perpetrators overlap with those of public violence, except for the powerless and frustrated type. They furthermore make a connection of the aforementioned types with effective interventions. The clearly distinguished types confirm the importance of a perpetrator-oriented approach. The classification by personal characteristics, social context and situational characteristics provides opportunities for more personalized and tailored interventions. Different types of perpetrators may ask for different approaches. Situational prevention will likely have less effect in the case when violence is heavily related to personal characteristics (examples are the confused type and violence as a lifestyle), than is the case with the occasional perpetrator. With this latter type, situational characteristics play an important role when acts of violence are concerned. Concerning the easy-to-influence-juvenile is early signaling of importance. Public sector employees faced with acts of violence of this type of offender should realize that: a quick, adequate reaction and referral to the authorities can be of importance to stop further negative behavior. In this light is good registration, also of lighter incidents of importance. Concerning all types of offenders: good signaling, risk calculating and differentiation are of importance for both the judicial and the preventive side. The typology provides, according to the researchers, organizations a view on which type of perpetrators they will face in their daily work. Policy makers can use the insights to develop directed policy.

Victims of violence while serving the public

This research was commissioned by the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely'. The goal of the research was gaining insight in the characteristics of individual employees and of organisations, the individual norms and the organisational norms and the way employees and organisations deal with physical and verbal acts of violence towards them. These insights should give keynotes to decrease aggression and acts of violence towards public sector employees. The research was addressed at the same time as the research of perpetrators. The cases and document studies for that research are also used here, and led to entrances for interviews with victims. Because of the qualitative nature, the researchers stress that the findings cannot be generalized towards the whole public sector. It therefore is framed as an explorative research (Roeleveld & Bakker, 2010).

The main conclusions of the research are:

- Regarding personal characteristics are two things of importance. First, victimization is more likely when an employee is not able to find a balance between setting boundaries and flexible dealing with rules. Secondly, the mood of the employee is of importance.
- Regarding the organizational characteristics, four things are of importance. First, the extent in which the client is dependent on the organization or the employee. For example, welfare organizations imply more dependence of the client than public transport organizations. Secondly, the target group of clients of the organization is of importance. Third, the type of clients are of importance and fourth factor relates to the extent of frustration an interaction of the client with the organization can give.

The researchers recommend, based on the results, to focus on prevention, training, aftercare and good registrations. Furthermore, organizations should develop protocols of how to deal with aggression and violent behaviour, organizations should report crimes themselves instead of letting the employee do that and they should claim the damage by the perpetrator.

Frontline of Tracing and Enforcement

This study is done by Tilburg University, commissioned by the Academy for Policing. The study was done in 2007/2008 and the report has been published in February 2008. The main goal of the study was to give insight in 'how and how often citizens systematically try to frustrate civil servants on duty' (IVA, 2008). The reason for this research was that 'because of their (of civil servants, *auth.*) way of working that is directed at certain areas, persons or target groups, they have daily contact with citizens who would rather get rid of the interferences of local authorities or the police. This leads to certain risks. Counteractions of citizens can have large consequences' (IVA, 2008).

The research was done among upholders and detectives: a survey was sent to around 4,000 of them. 1,557 filled in the survey. Furthermore, 35 of the surveyed were interviewed and a literature scan was done.

The main conclusions of the research are:

- 'around eight percentage of the respondents from the research has dealt with contra strategies in the narrow sense (...)
- Around three out of ten repeatedly threatened civil servants say that they have been influenced in one way or another (by the threats of contra strategies of citizens, *auth.*); (...)
- The typology of perpetrators (...): hang around youth form one category, groups of adolescents – often doing criminal activities – form a category, the, trough the judicial and police system, frustrated citizen is one (...) and the caravan camp inhabitants are a category (...);
- There, where effectively countermeasures are applied, the dilemma between a tough and a soft approach stands out. Some choose a zero-tolerance-approach, others opt for sometimes overlook something, to get closer to the hang around youth. (...) The most countermeasures are not taken by the organisation, but by the civil servant in the front line. (...)
- The effects of the taken counter measures are diverse and depend strongly on the kind of perpetrator. A targeted approach and/or intervention of the management on one individual is often successful (...);
- It is of importance, in the case of repeating threats, to create a certain level of elusiveness by canalizing threats and divide them on more persons.

The Untouchables

The second research is called 'the untouchables ('de onaantastbaren'). The goal of the research was to see whether the term *"the untouchables in reality existed, and have the experience that the current approach is absolutely failing. The results were collected in the summer of 2011 by focus groups and conversations with forty 'front line workers' from the police, probation, youth care and local authorities"* (Eysink Smeets & Bervoets, 2011). The research concludes that:

- *"In quite a few local communities, intimidating youth and youngsters are present. The neighbourhood does not dare to stand up against them, but the government also does not seem to know how to deal with them. They feel unassailable, and they are so, in fact (...);*
- *The powerlessness of the government seem to be underlined by three clusters of problems: (1) all classic bottlenecks of the current integral safety policy, which count within these groups even more; (2) a 'Web of Fear', through which, also within government! – more people (the approach of) untouchables evade than one would want and (3) a – for this group – failing of the judicial system as an ultimate remedy.*
- *The problem of the untouchables is not only a safety policy issue, but above all a moral question. Can and do you want to accept that structural situations exist where not the constitutional state predominates, but the right of the strongest one?*
- *In the field hard work is carried out to prevent that untouchables will come into existence in the future. But the approach of the current untouchables needs to go to a higher level. Courage and leadership is needed for that. The approach needs to be amplified, with sharper differentiating and unconventional repression"* (Eysink Smeets & Bervoets, 2011).

The research is interesting for the government programme 'Serving the Public Safely', because the groups the research concerns 'seeks regular actively the confrontation with government' (Eysink Smeets & Bervoets, 2011, p. 10). Furthermore, the target group of the research are public sector employees. The results give a view of what they face in their daily work, including intimidation, violence et cetera.