

# Post-Empowerment

A qualitative fieldwork study in the Indische buurt of Amsterdam on how active people within the community shape their neighbourhood after the Empowered Neighbourhoods Program finished

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# Abstract

Neighbourhoods are important places for their residents and get increasing attention from governments for executing social policies. This is especially relevant as the Dutch government has over time been investing more and more in deprived neighbourhoods in order to tackle social issues. In context of the participation society, the government expects residents to be active within their own community. Therefore, they involve neighbourhood initiatives and its active residents to help tackle such social issues. We know that areas hit by urban renewal programs, such as the Empowered Neighbourhoods Program, are afterwards seen as flourishing. The Indische buurt in Amsterdam is such a neighbourhood and both seen by the council of Amsterdam as well as its residents as a neighbourhood to be proud of. However, what we do not know is what exactly happens to the neighbourhood as a renewal program ends and less resources are once more available. This paper will look at this specifically within the context of people owning or active within a neighbourhood initiative. What role do they play within their community? How do they relate to each other? What behaviour do they show? A qualitative ethnographic fieldwork study was conducted in order to ascertain how these active participants shape the Indische buurt after the Empowered Neighbourhoods Program finishes. Merton's Strain Theory and Agnew's General Strain Theory were used to get an understanding of the field and its active participants. This paper will show that certain people have more opportunities for being successfully active within the neighbourhood. Next to personal consequences, such as being excluded, feeling unvalued and experiencing competition, on a bigger scale this leads to division within the neighbourhood and less faith in local authorities. These consequences are contrary to the councils social policies for the neighbourhood.

# Introduction

*“Whenever I step out on the street I am happy already [...]. I always believe in a kind of neighbourhood energy and that energy is really good here. [...] I feel safe here. I think there are enough opportunities. I live pleasantly. Everything [is] in the area” – I9*

The *Indische buurt* in Amsterdam is a most beloved neighbourhood. The atmosphere in the area is described as energetic, the people enthusiastic and the way it looks beautiful. The stories people tell of the area and its community are rich and its (recent) history is eventful. Once you enter here, you will never leave. Your heart is sold forever. This is how I got to know the *Indische buurt* when I decided to conduct research in the area. This is the way people almost unanimously describe the place they call their home, work in or simply just visit. More than just a place to be. The people of the *Indische buurt* are proud of their neighbourhood.

Literature also shows us that neighbourhoods are important places for residents. They can be seen as meaningful places for people who live there as well as determine their quality of life and economic standing (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018; Baffoe, 2019). Moreover, they are places we see as home, that hold memories and are connected to our family (Drozdowski & Webster, 2021). With increasing attention, also policy makers and social scientists are interested in neighbourhoods, specifically in problem areas (Catney et al., 2018; Baffoe, 2019; Van den Brink et al., 2012). In order to target social problems in deprived neighbourhoods, the Dutch government has since the 2000’s started to invest in urban renewal programs (Van der Pennen & Van Bortel, 2016; Tonkens & Verhoeven, 2019). They created the Empowered Neighbourhoods Program, in which the state started working together with local housing corporations, to upscale these so-called ‘Vogelaarwijken’ (Van der Pennen & Van Bortel, 2016; Sakızlıoğlu & Lees, 2020)<sup>1</sup>. This method of state-led gentrification is aimed towards upgrading a neighbourhood both physically as well as socially (Van der Graaf & Veldboer, 2009; Lees et al., 2013). The *Indische buurt* is such a neighbourhood and is, according to the council of Amsterdam, “a pioneer in getting business and residents groups involved in the community” (Gemeente Amsterdam, 2022). Research after the

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<sup>1</sup> The program came into place in 2007 and found an early termination of the program in 2011. The *Vogelaarwijken* are named for then minister of Housing, Neighbourhoods and Integration Ella Vogelaar.

effect of such renewal programs has thus far been conducted from a policy perspective (Broekhuizen & Van Wonderen, 2012), after commercial gentrification (Sakızlıoğlu & Lees, 2020) and towards professionals and residents (Van Hulst et al., 2012; Van den Brink et al., 2012; De Graaf et al., 2015; Van der Pennen & Van Bortel, 2016). However, less is known about the role active residents play in shaping their neighbourhood once such programs finish and less resources are available again. This theme will be central to this paper.

Simultaneously, and on a broader political scale, the Dutch welfare state experienced a shift, moving from being more government-led towards a so-called participation society (Van der Pennen & Van Bortel, 2016). This society is characterized by government retrenchment, decentralization of power and a decrease of government interference into citizens daily lives (Van Hulst & Mateleski, 2021). Moreover, as the government retreats from private life, the ball is in the citizens court. This means they are expected to be active within their own community (Van der Pennen & Van Bortel, 2016; Van Hulst & Mateleski, 2021). Against this backdrop the Dutch government rediscovered citizen engagement and started using neighbourhood initiatives as a means to tackle social issues (Verhoeven & Tonkens, 2011; Vanleene et al., 2018; Van Ankeren et al., 2010; Teernstra & Pinkster, 2016; Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018). Emphasis hereby from a government perspective was, and currently still is, on creating a ‘social mix’ of people within the neighbourhood and encourage social cohesion among them (Van der Graaf & Veldboer, 2009; Van Kempen & Bolt, 2009). Although heavily contested worldwide, social mix strategy is used for policies as, according to Putnam’s theory, the absence of social cohesion can lead to distrust and undermines social connections within a community (Putnam, 2007; Laurence et al., 2018; Portes & Vickstrom, 2011; Van der Meer & Tolsma, 2014). While an integral part of executing government policies, this also gave residents themselves an opportunity to use such initiatives as a means to add to the quality of their living environment (Wentink et al., 2019; Hoekstra & Pinkster, 2019). Since, as De Graaf et al. (2015) put it: “without [citizen] participation, there is no society”.

As residents and their initiatives are paramount to shaping a neighbourhood, it is unsurprising that social studies have been conducted within this field. Several qualitative urban studies found that neighbourhood initiatives contribute greatly to the neighbourhood, its social cohesion and facilitation of social connections (Tonkens et al., 2012; Teernstra & Pinkster, 2016). Yet, most research that is done takes a political perspective. Yet, it is important to not only

understand a political point of view, but also experiences of people actually living and working in the neighbourhood. Especially since, as Van den Brink and colleagues (2012) describe, there is growing tension between the government and the daily lifeworld of citizens. While van den Brink et al. (2012) therefore look at professionals in the field that bridge this gap, so-called ‘best persons’, I will look at all active people within the neighbourhood. This includes owners of initiatives, active initiative volunteers, active paid initiative employees and council officials stationed in the area. These people do not necessarily live in the Indische buurt, however they do spend a great deal of their time there. I will be looking to answer the following research question:

*“How do active residents and other participants active in the area shape the Indische buurt after the Empowered Neighbourhoods Program finished and less resources are available?”*

In order to comprehend the field and changes the urban renewal program brings about for active participants in the community and to explain their responses to these changes, this paper makes use of Merton’s Strain Theory (ST) and Agnew’s development of it into General Strain Theory (GST). These theories help understand how people with certain resources and in certain contexts react differently to reach a similar goal, namely to have or be part of a successful neighbourhood initiative. After an in-depth description of used methods, I will start my Empirical Chapters by first explaining ST and GST framework. Following, I will make use of gathered data to explain how active participants fit within this framework and react differently to certain situations. The third chapter will explore possible consequences of these different reactions for the neighbourhood. Lastly, I will conclude by briefly comparing this paper to the existing body of literature and give an answer to the research question.

# Methods

For the undertaking of the current study I chose an ethnographic fieldwork design. To be able to properly answer the research question I deemed it important to submerge myself into the field. As Van Maanen (2011) describes this type of fieldwork: “live with and live like someone else”, in order to understand how things work according to the people you study (Hammersley, 2006; Watson, 2011). Therefore, over a period of five months, I went to the Indische buurt multiple times a week at different days and various times, participated in activities, shadowed and observed people, visited home bases of initiatives, had casual conversations with people as well as conducting in-depth interviews and holding a focus group. This way of setting up my research allowed me to get an ‘insider view’ of participants lives and about the doings of this neighbourhood over a longer period of time (Wolf, 2012; Blommaert & Jie, 2020). I did not just study the neighbourhood, I studied *in* the neighbourhood (Van Maanen, 2011). Moreover, by being a participant observer, it gave me an opportunity to collect both verbal and non-verbal data within a natural environment (Macgilchrist & Van Hout, 2011). However, as ethnography is highly interpretative (Van Maanen, 2011), this research does not claim to be able to draw conclusions for a general public. Nevertheless, this study adds to the growing body of literature trying to understand neighbourhoods from a bottom-up perspective.

I conducted this research together with fellow junior researcher E. Grift<sup>2</sup>. While both participating in the field and thus collecting data together, our different themes have led to two individual studies (see Grift, 2022). Inclusion criteria involved residents of the Indische buurt and non-residents that are a) involved through initiatives based in the neighbourhood, or b) involved through council work based in the neighbourhood. All participants involved were 18 years or older<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore, all gender, socio-economic status, class and ethnicity are included, as together they form the neighbourhood. Prior to our research we both individually attained ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of Utrecht University (Appendix I). Further on in this paper I reflect on merits and possible disadvantages of doing team ethnography.

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<sup>2</sup> We both follow education within the masters program Social Policy and Public Health at University Utrecht.

<sup>3</sup> While all age groups are important in making up a neighbourhood, different ethical considerations need to be taken into account when studying children. This study therefore focuses on adults only.

Getting access to the field was paramount to being able to (successfully) conduct this research. In order to build up rapport, close relationships based on confidence and trust that help advance communication and understanding (Wolf, 2012; Morling et al., 2018), we started at the end of December by slowly connecting to different people in the field. A big advantage was being linked to our ‘key-person in the field’ through our supervisor. We developed a close relationship with him and he took us around and connected us to different active people in the neighbourhood. Through this kind of snowball-sampling, we did not only reach our target group quicker than if we were on our own, but it also gave us access to certain people who might otherwise not have let us in. We were warned that residents and others active in the area have been exposed to many types of research over the years and would be weary for more. Without our key-person therefore, this study in its current form would not have been possible. We furthermore tried to establish ourselves within the neighbourhood by dividing our fieldwork into three rounds<sup>4</sup>. In round one we took our time to get acquainted with the neighbourhood and all people we met through our key-person. Building up these relationships was done by things like visiting, having a coffee, small-talk, lending a hand and simply being present. Smalltalk according to Driessen & Jansen (2013) is essential when doing fieldwork, which they call both the “hidden core as well as the engine” of ethnographic research. They even argue that it is far more important than taking field notes or doing interviews (Driessen & Jansen, 2013). This is one of the reasons we recorded voice memos of almost everything we saw, did or heard outside of ‘official’ conversations. Additionally, we regularly offered our services in return to people in the field, so we would not only ‘fetch’ information, but also give something back to the community. These services ranged from helping out during an event, prep work or advertising an activity, to conducting a small-scale qualitative study for one of the initiatives<sup>5</sup>. Moreover, these activities in turn provided us data as well. When entering our second round of data collection we already bonded with (some of) the people in the field and this is when we conducted our first official interviews. In round three we went back to the field after analysing our data and were able to conduct further interviews with more focus towards certain topics. This is also when we held a focus group and conducted a final interview with our key-person.

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<sup>4</sup> Every round of data collection took roughly one-and-a-half months.

<sup>5</sup> This study is made available on: <https://ec-o.nl/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/de-bakker-en-grift-2022.-mijn-kans-mijn-keuze.-ervaringen-van-studenten-van-ec-o.-pdf.pdf>. For further information see also the website of Educatief Centrum Oost: <https://ec-o.nl/>

Gathered data exists out of in-depth interviews, emails, fieldnotes and voice memos of conversations, observations and participation, and a focus-group. Sixteen interviews were conducted, of which ten were recorded and transcribed verbatim. For the remaining six we took extensive fieldnotes. We also conducted one focus group with three participants, which is also transcribed verbatim. Interviews took usually a little over an hour. While we constructed a general semi-structured interview guideline (Appendix II), we most of the time did not per se adhere to it. However, due to our prior literature study and information from our key-person, we were already completely doused in certain topics, which at the same time lay close to our participants' hearts. These topics were concerned around 'how you perceive the neighbourhood', 'the neighbourhood initiative you are involved in', 'working together with others', 'power relationships', and 'how you play the field'. We consciously divided 'the work' by sometimes conducting interviews separately and sometimes together (see also the paragraph on team ethnography). To make sure we were both completely up-to-date with what was going on in the field, the person not conducting the interview would transcribe it. When doing interviews together we agreed beforehand on certain roles or signals. However, in practice this proved difficult. In our enthusiasm we were often not aware of the other person making a signal. Conversations were therefore less structured and more left to the spur of the moment. Even so, I feel like we gathered valuable data and one could even argue that our sincere interest and emotions made people open up more. After every round of data collection we would thematically analyse our gathered data together to identify patterns. For this we have used different techniques, both digital (e.g. through NViVo or tables in Word) as well as analogue (e.g. pen, paper and sticky notes). For the final coding of the analysis I preferred to use old-fashioned pen and paper. The ensuing code tree can be found in Appendix III.

From the start we have been open and transparent about who we are and our aim of doing research. For recorded interviews we got written informed consent from our participants (Appendix IV & V). For all other gathered data involving people oral consent is obtained. Participants were told that partaking is voluntary and they could quit or request to be omitted any time during our research without reason. We did not have any such drop-outs. Furthermore, all data is processed anonymously and a separate code key corresponding with participants' information is stored in a safe space. Within this paper all quotes are freely translated as this research is conducted in Dutch. While things do get lost in translation, I stayed as close to the meaning of gathered data as possible.



## Team Ethnography

As researchers we were central to the execution of this research since we determined what would be talked about (Le Dantec & Fox, 2015). As mentioned earlier, this type of research provided an opportunity to observe people in their natural environment. It is thus inevitable that the way we behaved and topics we brought up changed the field we studied. As Le Dantec & Fox (2015) put it, our presence in the field “shapes the empirical work in pervasive and important ways”. It is therefore important to discuss ourselves, as the choices we made helped shape methods used and outcome of this study (Le Dantec & Fox, 2015). Due to previous education, work as an occupational therapist and qualitative research assistant, and several followed courses (e.g. Motivational Interviewing and Non-Violent Communication), I have been able to, according to Van Hulst et al. (2012), gather skills necessary to be able to conduct ethnographic fieldwork: social skills, flexibility, sensibility and reflexivity. Besides, house visits in different neighbourhoods in Amsterdam as part of my previous jobs, have made me familiar with working in the field. New was to do fieldwork within a community as well as working together so closely in the field.

One of the advantages of being together in the field was to be able to cross observe one another during research. Besides being able to collect more data, it also enriched the data. Working together gave us an opportunity to try out different combinations of data gathering (alone or together) and to assume different roles (observer, mediator, instigator). It was helpful that one person would be able to shine a critical light over the others behaviour or thoughts. Moreover, with two different perspectives, new inspiring directions or ideas came up regularly. As we interpreted our data differently, we heightened the chance of getting closer to see ‘what was really going’. In relation to our research I saw that our participants connected very well to topics we presented, as well as bringing up topics themselves which related to what other participants mentioned. Thus, we hoped to convey our participants narrative as close to their truth as possible, despite the fact that it is impossible to speak for others (Richardson, 2000). Another point for reflection is that while we will have influenced participants and the field, this is true the other way around as well. Van Maanen (2011) writes “while I was watching the watchers, they were watching me”. Whatever the people in the field observe about us will in all likelihood influence us and the way we interpret our data. Moreover, the behaviour of people can actually change when they know they are being observed, which also influences the data (Morling et al., 2015). In practice we saw that people would sometimes stop whatever they were doing when we arrived or involve us in an activity.

However, while I acknowledge it will be hard for me to know, I did not feel as if people changed around us. Besides, over time this effect usually fades as people who are being observed get used to the researchers (Morling et al., 2015). I therefore think it an advantage that we were able to be in the field for a longer period of time and got to build up relationships.

A disadvantage of team ethnography in the current context is that we both hold a position of *whiteness*<sup>6</sup>. As the Indische buurt is highly ethnically diverse and poverty is one of the big social injustice themes these neighbourhood initiatives fight, not all participants within this study hold such a position. This is relevant, as it can create distance between ourselves and the people and field we research. When trust is low this can lead to not being able to get close to ‘their truth’, as information can be withheld or wrongfully given. Within this research I felt we were able to bond with almost all people we contacted and studied. Some were out of reach, but this seemed more a matter of time constraint. As someone within our study described “*everyone is just bloody busy and working together is [therefore] really difficult*” – I2. And although I truly feel I am able to relate the narrative from a neighbourhood perspective, as another participant put it “*can you be colourblind if you can’t see colour?*” – G1, relating to the question of whether or not you can really judge others if you hold a privileged position yourself.

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<sup>6</sup> Whiteness is referred to as a privileged status, which includes, but is not limited to, white colour. The term also indicates a relational and hierarchical position in society, involving social and legal status, rights, opportunities, privileges and power (Myser, 2003; Garner, 2017; Lindner, 2018). I hold a position of whiteness as I am among other things white-coloured, highly-educated and from a middle-to-high socioeconomic background.

# Empirical Chapters

As portrayed in the introduction, the Indische buurt is very much loved by participants in this research. While this sentiment has been dominant throughout this study, in further conversations people gave such different accounts of the current position of the neighbourhood as at first puzzled me exceedingly. Some are reminiscent of the past and think it used to be better.

*“The neighbourhood just had something. [...] What no one liked, I really liked. Those frayed edges. [...] And that was what we got taught in the past, like ‘hey, we are one and you belong together, no matter who or what you look like’. [...] But yeah, those things you don’t see anymore, sadly” – I6*

Others add to this by comparing dynamics of the neighbourhood and its possibilities to a wave and say *“we are currently at an all time low” – I20*. Someone even adds that they do not feel at home anymore *“I have to bend over backwards to still have a good time here” – I7*. However, the complete opposite is also heard many times *“we are still going up” – I5* and *“currently, in my experience, there is a very good atmosphere” – I22*. Frequently people praise the ethnic diversity of the neighbourhood *“I do enjoy the colourfulness over here” – I23*. And even though people often mention points for improvement, they are still happy with how things are at present *“I think it’s fine the way it is now, excellent” – I4*. Moreover, some mention that because it is going well at the moment, conversations should centre around *“how can we keep this?” – I9*. This also corresponds with the theme of one of the neighbourhood meetings I attended and was visited by roughly 70 people active in the community. Although some people miss the past, others are happy with how the neighbourhood developed *“Yes 25 years ago the Indische buurt was just ghetto. Very dark and gloomy. Well, that is not the case now” – I1*. And, lastly, quite some people compare the Indische buurt to other neighbourhoods in Amsterdam and know where they like it better *“There is just so much more here. People are more enthusiastic” – I2*.

## Chapter 1: Strain Theory and General Strain Theory

In order to be able to understand these different sentiments from various people, it was important to find a framework in which those feelings can be understood without generalizing opinions and feelings that cannot be generalized or taking away from the diversity of those people and their context. Vertovec (2007) especially emphasizes the importance of looking at differences within a

group of people (e.g. gender, class, ethnicity, education, age, sexual orientation; Foner et al., 2019). I therefore chose Merton’s Strain Theory (ST) and Agnew’s further developed General Strain Theory (GST), which is usually applied to crime studies to explain violence and deviant behaviour. However, within this research it will also allow us to understand feelings, actions and reactions of active participants in the community. ST and GST state that strain or frustration comes about when a discrepancy exists between a cultural prescribed goal (e.g. earning money) and the means to achieve this goal (Brezina, 2017; Agnew, 1999). While Merton emphasizes that people in a lower social class get less opportunities to reach that goal and are therefore more likely to offend, Agnew broadened this view to explain offence in other social classes as well (Brezina, 2017; Agnew, 1999; McCluskey, 2001). According to Agnew it is important to not only include the actual achievement of a goal, but also the anticipation of it (McCluskey, 2001). His theory involves three sources of strain, namely 1) inability to achieve goals, 2) presentation of negative valued stimuli, and 3) loss of positive valued stimuli (Agnew, 2009; Brezina, 2017). Besides, the way in which people react to strain differs from person to person (McCluskey, 2001). In both ST and GST these ideas about arising strain to reach goals can be classified into five different typologies (see figure 1).

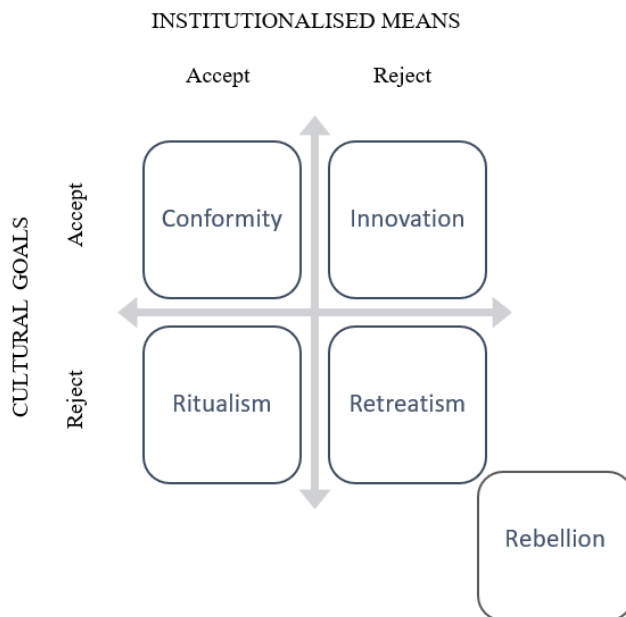


Figure 1. Five typologies of Strain Theory and General Strain Theory

To further adept ST and GST to this research, it is important to look at the ‘cultural prescribed goal’. Where this is about monetary means in the original theory, within this research it has more to do with status and success. As I look specifically at active participants within the neighbourhood on a level where neighbourhood initiatives operate, the goal in particular is about ‘being successful with or within a neighbourhood initiative’. While this is a subjective term, the majority of people within this study find successful initiatives to be organizations that “*contribute to society*” – I1, and “*really feel sincerely passionate and involved with [fighting] social injustice*” – I20. Successful initiatives are usually well established and well able to reach their target group. When trying to ascertain what ‘successful’ is, it is furthermore also important to have a look as to who plays a role in making and maintaining an initiative. While, naturally, people owning or (voluntarily) working within an initiative are key to its success, the majority of participants within this research also allocate a big role to local government. On the one hand there is the topic of ‘being recognized’ by local authorities as well as the neighbourhood, which is mentioned by everyone in this research. “*Being valued, feeling [valued], by money, attention, by whatever, that is fundamental for our work and the neighbourhood*” – I22; “*Everyone, me as an employee, you want to been seen. A little recognition for what I do and what I’ve done*” – I6. It is implied here that the more recognition and attention someone gets, the more successful they are. “*Even if you do 60 things, if you don’t show it to the neighbourhood, then who are you?*” – I6. On the other hand, according to participants in this research, social policy and what the council is propagating also influence success of neighbourhood initiatives. The council holds a certain power to grant funding. Hence, there are certain standards an initiative needs to comply with in order to get finances, which make an initiative and its activities possible or not. Thus, the cultural prescribed goal is to have or be involved in a successful neighbourhood initiative which can be derived from 1) recognition from both the neighbourhood and the council, and 2) fitting the expected set-up. While people can have different motives, the goal is the same for everyone in this research.

Exploring the different typologies of ST and GST, we distinguish five: conformists, innovators, ritualists, reatritists and rebels. Conformists are most common and committed to the goal, plus have legitimate means to reach it (McCluskey, 2001). Those means are things like opportunities, finances, resources and skills. This indicates that within this research these are usually people who have established themselves well within the neighbourhood with or within an initiative, have a target group they are able to reach and are also recognized for it. Innovators are

also committed to establish themselves successfully within the neighbourhood, however they do not have the means to do so. Hence they resort to using innovative techniques or even illegitimate means to reach their goal (McCluskey, 2001). In this research those people are accused of committing fraud, stealing other people's ideas or not using gotten subsidies for intended purposes. Ritualists, on the other hand, are determined to stay within the boundaries of what is (legally) possible, which results in them having to compromise on their goal (McCluskey, 2001). In this research those would be people who are unable to establish themselves well or not in the way they want. They often do not feel recognized and are unable or do not want to play the game according to current rules, e.g. in relation to getting funds. Retreatists are both not able to establish themselves well, but also do not have means to do so. This group is usually characterized by 'escaping the system' and abandoning both goal and means (McCluskey, 2001). While not explicitly seen within this research, people do show certain traits of this group, like threatening to quit, stop collaborations and leaving the neighbourhood or moving activities elsewhere. Finally, rebels are comparable to retreatists in the way that they also fail to succeed goal achievement through legitimate means. However, this group of people responds by coming up with a new social structure (McCluskey, 2001). This means they gain new goals and a new set of norms and fall out of the existing social structure. As rebels do not appear in this research, they will not be further discussed. It should furthermore be mentioned that these categories are not static and that people can move in between them depending on which activities and means they use to achieve the goal and their sensitivity to pressure of others within the system (McCluskey, 2001). We will therefore see that certain people have traits of multiple typologies, depending on topic or context.

## Chapter 2: Typologies within the neighbourhood

This chapter will describe how these typologies play out in the neighbourhood and how people feel and act accordingly<sup>7</sup>.

### The Conformists

By far most people I spoke to during this research have traits of conformity. Within this group there is a variety of people with different opinions, feelings and ways of establishing themselves. What they have in common is that they are seen as successful within the neighbourhood. They are

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<sup>7</sup> As people are less likely to talk about themselves in terms of 'unsuccessfulness', I also derived information about participants typology traits from what others have been telling me.

mentioned frequently by others as being or having been significant in forming the community and are not afraid of showing who they are and what they do. In fact, showing what you do, even when altruistic motives are the reason for seeking attention, is done left, right and centre by people in this group. They make use of (social) media platforms of others and their own, organize formal and informal meetings, set up new partnerships, organize events and invite important people from both within the neighbourhood as well as council officials or the district chairman. *“I continually had worldwide visitors from everywhere around the world to see how we do it” – 13.* Some add that the council specifically seeks them out *“I get approached by the council, when it’s about [topic] of course. They ask my idea, what I think about it and what needs to happen according to me” – 15.* However, others say that the council, in line with earlier talked of participation society, leans back with a sort of ‘wait and see attitude’. *“The council has of course a certain position, like if there is something, if you have ideas, come to us. Yes they are there, but they don’t come to us” – 12.* This corresponds with what the district chairman said as well in a neighbourhood meeting I attended. He gave a short opening speech, wished everyone good luck and told them that if the council was needed *“I will hear it then”*. This however, for conformists, who we might call empowered, creates an opportunity to jump into that vacuum left by the council.

A number of people within this group agrees with this stance from the (local) government. This does not mean they do not have criticism on the way things are arranged or executed, but they do for instance agree that if you want something you are responsible for it yourself, *“you can’t say gosh I don’t know anything about it, just let it go. I mean, you want something right” – 14.* The government cannot and should not look after everyone. It is even seen by some as old-fashioned, something that ‘the old set’ of active people in the neighbourhood was doing. Namely, waiting on the government to give them subsidies and resources. These people say that your right to exist should not be dependent on the government and that there are enough other ways of getting finances.

*“There are certainly enough neighbourhood initiatives that constantly point their finger at the council. [I] really can’t stand that. [If] your right to exist depends on council subsidies, there in that time we don’t live anymore. I can apply for all sorts of funds. You can do crowdfunding. With a little bit of creativity you can make sure your initiative can keep existing one way or another. [You] can’t point, that district and [that district chairman]*

*are not giving me subsidies anymore. No, it doesn't work that way at all. Because you are sitting on the couch with your lazy ass and just want that the council arranges it for you. And that I think is a problem of the old set. They are used to it that it has been like this for a very long time and that the council just does things for them. And that is just not true" – 12*

In practice these people, who believe that your right to exist should not depend on the council, are not completely independent of governmental subsidies themselves. However, they do seem to find it easy to network, apply for different sorts of subsidies and be creative in thinking up activities that would help them succeed in achieving their initiatives goal. When one option becomes unavailable, therefore, this is often not felt as a big loss. *"I am very happy with every cent I get, but if I don't get it I won't be angry"- 15.* These people also usually have a broad network and can choose who they want to work together with. *"And we have enough collaboration partners. If one does not want, well that's fine, there are enough others that want to" – 13.* They are part of groups or committees, present during neighbourhood meetings, and are often part of new partnerships, activities or organizations that are found. Moreover, they are named by others as being or having been important for the neighbourhood. *"I feel like people ask me [to work together] when a big group of people wants something and they are unable to get it organized" – 19.* Those people in general do not have to fear for their position and what they build up in the neighbourhood. They themselves are also active in establishing these contacts, something we saw as well during our research. People with a good network in the neighbourhood, we often saw at other initiatives.

*"I'll show my head at those initiatives. Then I'll ask 'How are you doing? What are you doing? What are you doing now?'. Then I'll get all sort of information back and I give all sorts of information in return. It's like bees pollinating flowers" – 16*

They are also not afraid of speaking up to others, even when those others are considered hierarchically above them. *"I'll just go straight to the board of directors [and] I'll say 'hey, I want to talk with you'" – 16.*

Furthermore, conformists speak or know how to speak the same language as the (local) government and have found ways to navigate the system. They usually have certain contacts within the council, work actively together with council officials and know who to talk to if they need or want something. This is acknowledged by someone working at the council as well when musing



about which people have easier access to subsidies and resources, *“I think that they are eventually people who know how to connect to how the council works, you know. I think that is the key”* – G1. Being able to speak the same language as the authorities makes it easier for active community members to ‘get things done’, as council officials we talked to as well as active people in the community accede to it being thus easier to get resources and subsidies. *“I have a good line of communication with most council officials. [Look], if I say something, then people will show up. If I need money, then I will always get what I need”* – I6. Someone even got substantially more money than what they asked for (I3). Despite generally knowing their way around, within the conformists we can also distinguish differences in how people perceive difficulties in getting what they need. Someone particularly mentions that initiatives *“have ties to the council and the council protects them”* – I6. For (big) initiatives affiliated with the council, it seems therefore even easier to become or keep being a successful initiative. *“For the council those organizations are more convenient to work with, because they can just nicely show it on paper. Show numbers. Those sort of things”* – II. A council official explains it as follows:

*“[Council affiliated initiatives] they of course study the councils social policy plans every year and they write then what their expertise can add to those goals. Yes, and then it is, on paper anyway, [easier] to get a match. Yeah and in a welfare institution you know that there are employed people educated to do this work. You know that they have roots in the neighbourhood. You know that they work on it through a certain method and from their network and knowledge. So then you don’t really have to wonder if it’s going okay”* – G1

Although still able to mostly get what they need, by comparison to council affiliated initiatives other conformists find they have to do more in order to get the same. They furthermore expand on those differences by despondently saying:

*“With me [ the council has] all sorts of requirements. ‘you have to work together, you have to do this, you have to do that’. Really, I have such long lists, if you see those lists you will be shocked of all the things I have to comply with. But then there is a big organization that... pfff... they can just come and go as they please... They don’t work together, only sometimes show up”* – I6

While conformists are able to navigate the field, there are differences in whether or not they recognize that it can be more difficult for others to do the same. I2 suggests that *“neighbourhood*

*initiatives have perhaps become very old-fashioned*”, that you therefore have to “*move with the current flow*”, which involves being able to “*create your own right to exist. [To] have your own income stream*”. Others say that while all initiatives should be acknowledged for what they do, those people or initiatives that are less successful should follow the lead of initiatives that are successful.

*“I won’t perform less, because others feel like we stepped on their toes. It is their problem. They also have to grow. And what’s even more, I always reached out to help others and share everything I’ve built up. Like, well this is how we do it, you can also do it this way”*  
– I3

However, other conformists are aware that what they are able to achieve is not so easy for others. “*Our name is well anchored, [but] maybe the newcomers, they still have to prove themselves*” – I5; “*It’s easy for me to say, because I don’t have my own place. When I don’t get subsidy, I’ll think of something else*” – I26. And while they are all firm that they have worked very hard for a long time to build up vertical relationships and to get to where they are now, they also do not always agree with the arbitrariness they observe. “*If I ask money, 10.000 or so for an activity, then I will get that. But if someone else does the same, that is not possible*” – I6.

### **The innovators**

Just as with conformists, for innovators it is also very important to achieve having or participating in a successful neighbourhood initiative. However, as this goal is not available through common or accepted means, they will have to be either incredibly innovative or use illegitimate means. Innovators know the system well and can use that to their advantage. Albeit the innovators are a smaller group within this study, all conversations concerning them turn one way or another to ‘having to earn or secure money’. Money is by all participants within this research seen as a tool to be able to become or maintain successful. However, some also imply it is an end goal in itself for some people active in the neighbourhood. Without naming them explicitly, people accuse others of fraud. “*There were always hidden agendas. [I] am talking purely about finances, personal financial gain. [That] seemed to be a temptation that was too big for a lot of people. [That] is fraud. That really happened*” – I20. These hidden agendas make them question other people’s motives.

*“I think [their] first priority, or first goal, is to specifically get those finances. Afterwards they think of what they will do with it. Whether or not those things are relevant, or if they do it with love... Well I haven't done my own research, but I have no faith in it” – I1*

Besides, someone even said that certain people go to all lengths in order to earn money, even if that is contrary to why an initiative was set up in the first place. *“[They] want to keep [their] activity how it is now and it doesn't help [their target group]. [In] other words, ‘I prefer to keep them dependent, then I'll always have my target group’” – I7.* Another point of frustration to some, is the improper use of resources. During interviews people said that certain others active in the neighbourhood do not use received subsidies for activities they got that money for in the first place and so do not truly help out their target group (e.g. to improve their personal situation). They find this even more annoying, as the target group of those people does not seem to mind.

*“The [target group] thinks it's just fine, because they just show up to those nights, whether or not something concrete happens. Yes, well we've got a room right? That is kind of self-evident. [So] their target group doesn't judge them for it” – I20*

Some people particularly say that things people do in order to keep on existing are a consequence of how the (local) government set up the system. However, not everyone agrees with this point of view, that some active people in the neighbourhood enrich themselves with public money while others get nothing. They call those ‘stories’ *“an urban myth” – I4.*

Next to money matters, people in this research also indicate that innovators have been stealing (their) ideas and used them as their own or to their own benefit. This means that they themselves are not able to use that idea anymore to become successful within their initiative. *“That [activity] I feel was mine. I presented for 5-6 council officials of the district. They said no, for one reason or another. Five-six years later, someone else took it up and now [the activity] exists” – I1.* Moreover, people feel like certain individuals in the neighbourhood can get away with this behaviour as they know how to navigate the system and have connections. *“There are all the people that have ideas and [person] listens to it all. [They] enrich themselves with it, know the roads... And [they] have something like that now, but not the people who had originally that idea” – I7.*

## The Ritualists

Ritualists have to compromise on their goal of owning or participating in a successful neighbourhood initiative, as accepted means are not enough in order to succeed and they have no wish to or feel like they cannot deviate from those means. These people are the second biggest group within this research. What we see is that a majority of these people are either not receiving subsidies (anymore) and/or are not able to ‘compete’ for funds. First of all, and expressed by people in all different typologies, a certain group of people is less likely to get subsidies from the council. Here I refer back to conformists, how it is easier for people to get funds and resources when able to speak the same language as local authorities. This, however, also works the other way around. People in this study reckon that *“the way you need to apply for subsidies, is way too ambitious for seven out of ten people”* – I20, because *“it is often a very wordily, voluble environment and the one that talks the best, gets most done”* – I9. Additionally, *“you need to be articulate and you need to be somewhat highly intelligent [to] get easier access to the rules [and] subsidy”* – I6. Some also reckon that it matters if the council holds you in regard (I7). A council official even adds *“I have colleagues that say ‘well sorry but we will only still work with professional parties’, [because] ‘if they want to apply for subsidy they should be able to do so’”* – G1. This is recognized by people active within initiatives:

*“A number of policy people really did not like it, those neighbourhood initiatives. [They] believe very much in official welfare work with certified people, and not those freethinkers. [I] heard someone say ‘yes we will get illiterate housewife’s, lost students and artists. You can’t make appointments with those at all’”* – I26.

However, they do add that this is not characteristic for all council officials and that there seems a division within the council about how neighbourhood initiatives are perceived. Furthermore, getting subsidies more easily does not always mean you deserve or need it more. *“If you can write better, you are more likely to get [subsidy] than someone else, but that does not mean that your need is bigger than that of someone else”* – I20. Besides, even if you do manage to get subsidies, they are usually granted late (I8) and only for a year. However, some say that it is also good that the council reviews subsidies yearly, *“I think it’s really good to look every year at who gets what, [because] is it still fair and is it still relevant? Because this way you also make space for new initiatives”* – I2. Yet, as some point out, it is a constant battle, also if you do get subsidies, to make

sure you have funds. “[People] continually need to fight for every little euro that is still to be got somewhere” – I9.

Next to having trouble getting subsidies and resources because of personal factors (e.g. skills) and systemic factors (e.g. yearly revision of grants), ritualists also find it difficult to get funds and resources based on the way their initiative is set up. They feel like they have to become a certain type of initiative in order to maintain the right to exist in the neighbourhood. “But if I were to be business smart, or I had a foundation and I had someone that did the finances, they would think: yes it goes well, we will [get] funds, we will do this, we will do that. [But] that is just not [my initiative]” – I7. Also, the council set up a monetary competition in which initiatives pitch their activity and compete for subsidies. Neighbourhood residents then vote for their favourite idea. While some see this competition as something positive, “It is, from a council perspective, a very good way to let the neighbourhood speak and to let the neighbourhood decide which themes are important, and also how much money should go to who” – I2, others find it unfair. They say that such a competition makes it impossible for them to win as their initiative does not hold activities for big groups of people, and so they personally do not know anyone who would vote for them. Moreover, their target group is also to be found outside of the neighbourhood, whereas only residents of the Indische buurt are allowed to vote.

*“When I’m [a big initiative] and 20 women or 30 women come around, and they all know someone they can call to action. Those will vote. You know, I am here for everyone, also people from outside of Amsterdam. I will never be able to assemble such a group. So I will never win this” – I7*

On top of that, some also feel such a competition is as if they have to convince others to like what they do. That whether or not it is valid and worthy suddenly depends on how many votes you get.

*“Yeah well it is just a game of favouritism. [I] am not participating in this competition to hold a campaign for my initiative in order to get support for example from a certain amount of people, to convince them about winning this price” – I1.*

A last aspect that could hold ritualists back in becoming (more) successful is the fear of losing already earned rights and resources. Some say people are afraid to try new things, because they could become less successful than they are now.

*“Everyone is a little afraid of [losing] their own achievements. ‘Why, I will get my subsidies anyway. If I join this, then maybe I’ll lose my subsidy some, or my initiative’. So, everyone is going to see which way the wind blows. You know, the urgency to do something different decreases” – I4*

### The Retreatists

Retreatists fail to get means and also fail to have a successful initiative or perhaps even an initiative at all. These are usually people that fall out of the system. Within this research I have not come across people who are all the way retreatists, but some do show traits. You see that those people for instance are already partly participating with their initiative outside of the neighbourhood, *“I am slowly outside of the Indische buurt. I still do things inside of the Indische buurt, but I now try to do it within the broader context of Amsterdam” – I1*. That they take breaks from being active *“I already told [them] I’ll just take [2 months] off” – I26*. Or that they join other initiatives in other areas of Amsterdam where they see opportunities, *“And well for someone like me, who has always been busy here with things in the neighbourhood, I am now particularly interested in [another area of Amsterdam]” – I4*. Some people even have to do so many other things to generate money to keep on existing, that they are unable to do their core business anymore. This eventually led to some people quitting *“Yes they spent more time on room rental than with their own content program. So they quit” – I26*.

Other people showing signs or retreatism do so by not wanting to work together anymore with specific people or initiatives. *“If you give me the impression that that platform you’ll profit from, but I won’t, well than I’m out” – I1*. Or they are very selective with subjects they still want to discuss. Through earlier experiences they are disappointed with reactions of others, in this research mainly the council, and respond by pulling out of communication.

*“To be honest, I don’t talk about it with other people. [It] is a waste of my time man. [I] rather sit in the sun and listen to the birds than that I’ll go chat with people who are not going to listen anyway” – I6*

Those earlier collaborative experiences also lead to being unable to bring up subjects that have been already discussed, but not necessarily resolved, in the past. *“Then you can’t bring up that discussion that you were unable to solve ten years ago” – I4*.

A last topic coming up during our research within retreatism is that sometimes people quit or do not show up not because they do not want to work together anymore, but because they do not work according to the chosen method. Some people within this research have told us that for a long time now there have been many meetings for active participants in the neighbourhood, “*man, there have been 50 thinktanks*” – I6, and that some people are just done talking.

*“A lot of neighbourhood initiatives are just... they are being carried by very practical people. And if those practical people can’t do things and can’t work with their hands, then, yeah if they can’t do it like that, then they’ll quit”* – I2

### Chapter 3: Consequences for the neighbourhood

In this study people in all different categories have been clear that the council plays a big role in deciding who gets access to what, which in turn has an effect on who is successful in the neighbourhood. While thus far I have described how people within different typologies act and react, this chapter will look deeper into what that actually means for the neighbourhood. Consequences will be discussed of people not getting funds anymore, not feeling recognized, experiencing competition and perceiving a discrepancy between council and neighbourhood.

Loss of subsidy, a loss of valued stimuli according to Agnew, is felt as a blow to people who experienced this. They feel unappreciated after so many years of being active. They experience disappointment in both the system and (some of) their fellow active participants. Furthermore, these people say that after so many years they are “*just tired of fighting*”- I7 . They compare this to the past in which they “*used to go to the neighbourhood whistling and went back whistling. [But now there is] grumbling and grumping [I] am for the first time just really tired*” – I26. Others recognize that people can burn out quickly if they “*constantly need to fight for every little euro*” – I9 and “*need to prove every time that they have value*” – I23. Some add that the council does not value active people in the neighbourhood enough and that they expect too much of people being active in their spare time.

*“The idea of volunteering is completely corrupted by the government, for years. Brilliant as well, that they get away with it. A volunteer is namely someone who does something voluntarily.*

*It's as simple as that. Because he gets something out of it, because he likes it, but not because he has to do it" – I22.*

A council official adds to this by saying that “[neighbourhood initiatives] don’t make currency. They make social impact, but [to value] that we have not thought of something yet” – G1. Yet, active people in the neighbourhood still feel like they are expected to do all and attend everything.

*“If I go to everything where you can, how do I say this, trainings or meetings or... How many hours do I need to work? See, for a council official it’s their job, but not for me. [So] if as a council you then say ‘you should actually become a social entrepreneur’ or ‘you should become self-employed with your activity’, I think, well that seems to be quite something that you tell me that, but it is doomed to fail. Because you just won’t make it, because you can’t make money with it. That’s why [the council] doesn’t want us anymore” – I7*

Participants also see a discrepancy between “the system world [and] the capillaries of [the] neighbourhood [and find it] poignant that it hardly gets acknowledged. And also not acknowledged by the council”- I20 and are angry that “there is less and less quality of council officials that really understand and really, you know, from experience and knowledge see what we do” – I22. A risk here is that those people that feel unacknowledged or unappreciated will become retreatists or even rebels, as they are thinking about quitting altogether. “We still have a lot to do [in the neighbourhood]. Yes, and is that still up to me? Do I still feel like it? Yeah, maybe not. That is what I’m often asking myself” – I7.

Lack of funding might also cause some people to become innovators. This risk seems bigger for people that feel their target group is dependent on them. They might feel forced to start using illicit means in order to continue their activities “Look, say I did not have the council, then I would go to the coffeeshops. But then I would be getting paid from a shady gang. You don’t want that right?” – I6. In reaction to people using illicit means, others start excluding them “I don’t or never invite certain organizations for our [activities]” – I20. Others at risk of becoming innovators might turn to drawing on personal resources in order to help the community, of which I have seen and heard examples on a smaller scale (e.g. buying groceries for people who cannot afford it or paying for activities – I5; I8; I25). This could lead to people getting into personal trouble, not (financially) being able to continue and losing pleasure or satisfaction in what they do. Although those people



say they will not quit, they do say: *“When I was doing [my previous job], then I just had a lot more fun. I was much happier”* – I9. Moreover, people could lose faith in authorities. In this study we already see that people do not feel the council sees and/or appreciates what they and others do for the neighbourhood (I20, I22), that the council does not listen (I6, I7), and that the council makes promises which they do not make good on or are not capable keeping (I9). Besides, someone says that stagnation within the community also means *“you lose faith in the rule of law”* – I4, which is a problem when less funding is available. Moreover, they add that over the past years they have only seen neighbourhood initiatives disappear.

In reaction to less available funding, competition for resources can ensue *“because there is only one: one subsidy pot and one absolute amount”* – I20. Among initiatives this leads to *“a sort of professional jealousy to just be able to continue to exist”* – I7. This jealousy seems even higher when initiatives have a similar goal and/or target group. As voluble, empowered and people speaking the councils language have easier access to resources (see Chapter 2), competition will direct itself towards getting seen. During our focus group this looking for attention was dubbed the ‘squeak-system’: *“the one that squeaks the loudest, yeah they get attention”* – I9. Although, they said, it does not happen too often, whenever it does occur it works way too well, especially with the council. The risk here is that when squeaking works, others will start doing the same, *“then you create a culture in which they learn that you get further with squeaking than with just doing the right things”* – I22. Moreover, when initiatives speak up like that, the council *“[does not] fact check how awesome they really are, if there is really a need”* – I22. Thus, when striving for either survival of your initiative or its success, people good at speaking up and showing themselves have an advantage. Furthermore, when this is also encouraged by the council itself, a division among those active in the neighbourhood can follow, *“we actually want it all together, but the people leading [in the community] are divided”* – I1. And while active people are trying their utmost to work together and new partnerships are frequently set up, some have become critical over the years. *“I have tried [working together] in 54 different forms. [...] A few times I have seen it work. One out of a hundred”* – I4. That can, first of all, be problematic, as *“[the council] needs society. You actually need a togetherness, a joint action to arrange something”* – I9. And, second of all, a division within the (active) community is the exact opposite of what the council is striving for within their social mix policy where social cohesion takes a central place.

# Conclusions and Discussion

This paper sought to answer the following research question: “*How do active residents and other participants active in the area shape the Indische buurt after the Empowered Neighbourhoods Program finished and less resources are available?*”. When looking through the lens of ST and GST, people in this study are either able or unable to reach the goal of having or participating in a successful neighbourhood initiative depending on what typology they mostly adhere to. Lack of resources, finances and recognition can push people towards either innovators (e.g. use of illicit means) or retreatism (e.g. quit being active in the neighbourhood). This risk seems even bigger when a discrepancy is perceived between (some of) the active participants and the council. A lot of participants find that the council does not see nor acknowledge what they do for the neighbourhood. This is in line with earlier research showing that people experience a lack of interest from the government (Hurrenkamp & Roodenburg, 2009) and deserted by decrease of finances (Van Hulst & Mateleski, 2021). Yet, this research shows recognition lies at the base of being active in the neighbourhood. This was also concluded by focus groups held by Hurrenkamp & Tonkens (2008), stating that support is a prerequisite for being active. Moreover, participants within this study find that the council is only encouraging and supporting one type of participants, namely conformists. While people can have traits of various typologies and also within groups there are differences visible, knowing your way around, having access and opportunities seems key. And while earlier research found that active resident participation in the neighbourhood leads to inclusion (Michels & De Graaf, 2017) and those residents are not afraid to stir things up when necessary (De Graaf et al., 2015), this study adds that this might only be the case for people being able to navigate the system. This might not only result in a loss of faith in authorities, but can also cause division among active participants. Especially when envy and competition ensue. Earlier research also acknowledges that rivalry between neighbourhood initiatives (Hoekstra & Pinkster, 2019), often fuelled by governmental subsidies (Hoekstra & Dahlvik, 2018), can result in feelings of exclusion and loss of faith in local leadership (Tonkens et al., 2012). Ensuing division contradicts the councils own policy of striving for social cohesion in the neighbourhood. Moreover, as the government, within the participation society, needs neighbourhood initiatives to carry out (part of) their policy, loss of faith in authorities seems counterproductive. Earlier research shows that people are key to the success of the neighbourhood (Van Hulst & Mateleski, 2021). As this study shows

that certain people do not feel supported or appreciated, experience less joy, are at risk of burn-out or even quitting, this therefore might have an effect on the success of the neighbourhood. This is relevant as there seems to be a discrepancy between how participants see the development of the neighbourhood and how they think the council perceives this.

*“Even when it goes better with a neighbourhood, it still needs maintenance. Well so that is kind of what the municipality said, yes there is a, what is that called again, those luxury chains are here, so the neighbourhood is done” – I26*

As perceptions about what development stage the neighbourhood is in seems to largely decide what resources are available, I therefore conclude that, while taking a backseat, the government plays a crucial role in shaping the active landscape of the neighbourhood, in which certain people thrive while others get excluded. The time post the Empowered Neighbourhoods Program is thus certainly not empowering for everyone. Hence, I suggest further research on the resilience of those ‘disempowered’ people or what happens when they actually do leave the neighbourhood.

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# Appendix I

<p><b>P.O. Box 80140, 3508 TC Utrecht</b></p> <p>The Board of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences Utrecht University P.O. Box 80.140 3508 TC Utrecht</p>	<p><b>Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences</b></p> <p>Faculty Support Office Ethics Committee</p> <p><b>Visiting Address</b></p> <p>Padualaan 14 3584 CH Utrecht</p>
<p><b>Our Description</b>                      22-0108</p> <p><b>Telephone</b>                              030 253 46 33</p> <p><b>E-mail</b>                                    FETC-fsw@uu.nl</p> <p><b>Date</b>                                        20 January 2022</p> <p><b>Subject</b>                                    Ethical approval</p>	

## ETHICAL APPROVAL

Study: The influence of neighbourhood initiatives on social cohesion in the ethnically diverse Indische neighbourhood in Amsterdam

Principal investigator: N. de Bakker

Supervisor: Roy Gigengack

The study is approved by the Ethical Review Board of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences of Utrecht University. The approval is based on the documents sent by the researchers as requested in the form of the Ethics committee and filed under number 22-0108. The approval is valid through 04 July 2022. The approval of the Ethical Review Board concerns ethical aspects, as well as data management and privacy issues (including the GDPR). It should be noticed that any changes in the research design oblige a renewed review by the Ethical Review Board.

Yours sincerely,

Peter van der Heijden, Ph.D.  
Chair

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## Appendix II – Interview Guideline

### Semigestructureerd Interview

#### Thema's

- ❖ Sociale Cohesie
  - Hoe omschrijven buurtbewoners hun wijk? Thuis voelen, veiligheid, contact met anderen, vernieuwingen, dingen die er te doen zijn, etc.
  - Voelen buurtbewoners zich verbonden met de wijk? Waarom wel of niet.
  - Wat betekent het verbonden voelen met de wijk voor de buurtbewoners?
- ❖ Buurtinitiatieven
  - Buurtbewoners die gebruik maken van een buurtinitiatief
    - Hoe is iemand erbij gekomen?
    - Hoe lang is iemand al aangesloten? Hoe vaak komt iemand er?
    - Wat haalt iemand eruit? Meerwaarde? Verandering over tijd?
  - Iemand die een buurtinitiatief heeft opgezet
    - Wat was de reden voor het opzetten?
    - Meerwaarde? Verandering over tijd?
    - Samenwerking met andere mensen of initiatieven uit de buurt?
  - Mogelijk ook spreken met mensen die geen gebruik maken van een buurtinitiatief
    - Hoe kijken zij aan tegen buurtinitiatieven?
    - Missen zij iets?
    - Hoe voelen zij zich in de wijk?

### Focusgroep

Groep van 3 tot 6 personen. Mix van buurtbewoners die gebruik maken van buurtinitiatieven, mensen die een buurtinitiatief hebben opgezet en verbindende mensen (bv. participatiemakelaar van de gemeente Amsterdam).

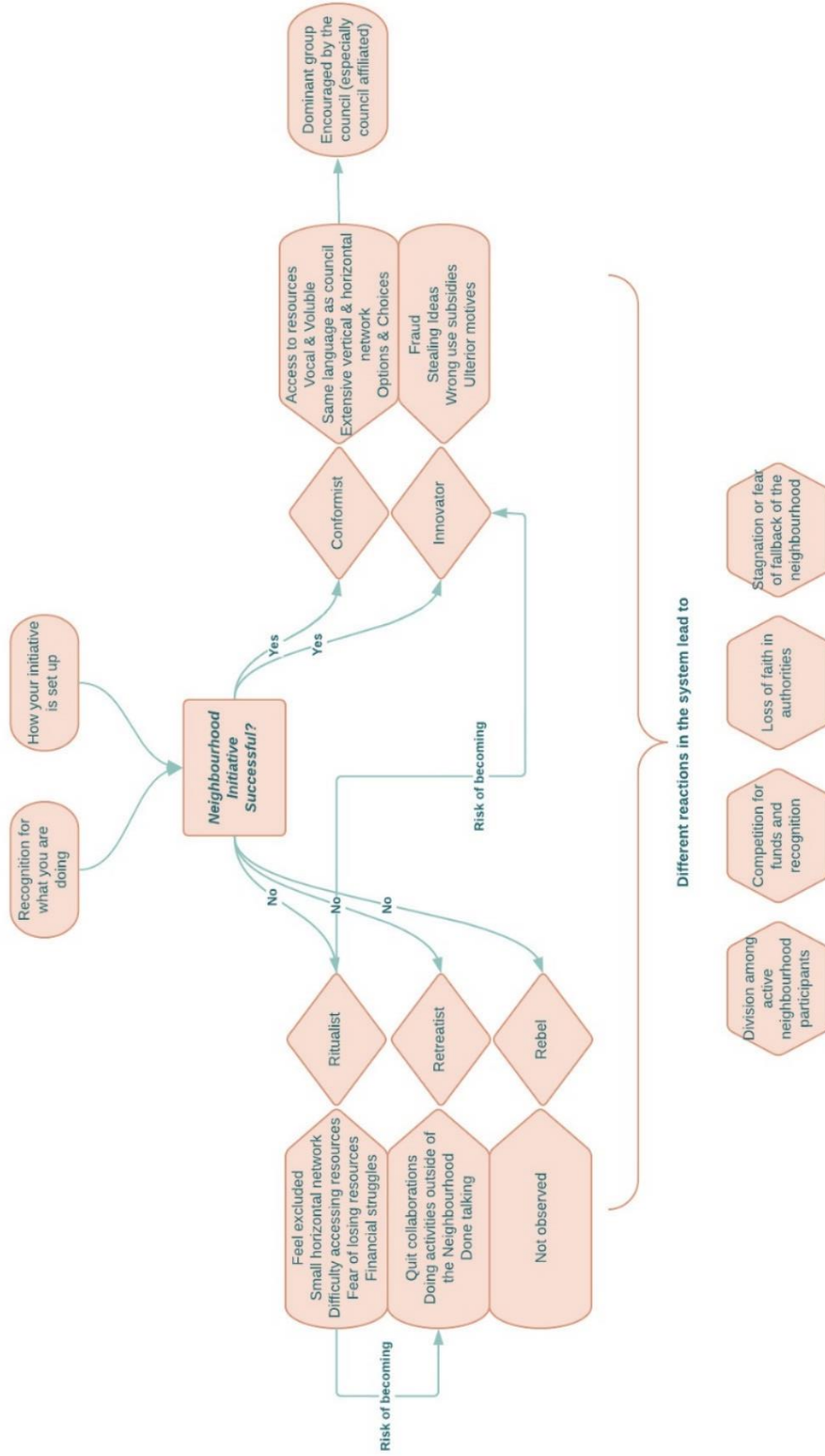
#### Thema's

- ❖ Sociale Cohesie
  - ❖ Buurtinitiatieven
- ➔ Zelfde thema's, maar in plaats van individuele vragen wat dit voor iemand betekent zullen er stellingen op deze thema's besproken worden. Een voorbeeld hiervan is:  
“Buurtinitiatieven zorgen ervoor dat buurtbewoners zich meer betrokken voelen bij wat er zich in hun wijk afspeelt”.

### Onderwerpen toegevoegd gedurende het onderzoek:

- ❖ Sociale netwerken, samenwerken en concurrentie
- ❖ Machtsverhoudingen in de buurt – wie heeft de meeste invloed
- ❖ Rol van de Gemeente
- ❖ Toekomst van de Indische buurt

# Appendix III – Code Tree





### Toestemmingsformulier Interview

Versie 18-01-2022

#### Onderzoek naar buurtinitiatieven in de Indische buurt van Amsterdam

Voor onze masterstudie Social Policy and Public Health aan de Universiteit Utrecht schrijven wij een scriptie over buurtinitiatieven in de Indische Buurt van Amsterdam. Wij willen kijken wat de betekenis is van de buurtinitiatieven voor de wijk.

- ❖ Meedoen aan dit onderzoek is vrijwillig en stoppen kan op elk moment zonder opgaaf van reden.
- ❖ De anonieme gegevens worden minimaal 10 jaar bewaard op een beveiligde dataschijf van de Universiteit Utrecht. De resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen gepubliceerd worden in een scriptie.
- ❖ Ik geef toestemming (aankruisen wat van toepassing is):
  - Dat het interview door audio wordt opgenomen.
  - Ik wil niet dat het gesprek door audio wordt opgenomen.

Ik geef toestemming tot deelname aan dit onderzoek:

Naam:

Datum:

Hantekening deelnemer:



## Toestemmingsformulier Groepsinterview

Versie 18-01-2022

### Onderzoek naar buurtinitiatieven in de Indische buurt van Amsterdam

Voor onze masterstudie Social Policy and Public Health aan de Universiteit Utrecht schrijven wij een scriptie over buurtinitiatieven in de Indische Buurt van Amsterdam. Wij willen kijken wat de betekenis is van de buurtinitiatieven voor de wijk.

- ❖ Meedoen aan dit onderzoek is vrijwillig en stoppen kan op elk moment zonder opgave van reden.
- ❖ De anonieme gegevens worden minimaal 10 jaar bewaard op een beveiligde dataschijf van de Universiteit Utrecht. De resultaten van dit onderzoek zullen gepubliceerd worden in een scriptie.
- ❖ Ik geef toestemming dat het groepsinterview door audio wordt opgenomen.

Ik geef toestemming tot deelname aan dit onderzoek:

Naam:

Datum:

Hantekening deelnemer: