User Participation and Involvement in the Governance and Delivery of Public Services

Richard Antony Simmons BSc, MA (Dist.)

Thesis submitted to The University of Stirling

for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

March 2017

ABSTRACT

Via six published papers, this thesis assembles a body of work by Simmons on user participation and involvement in the governance and delivery of public services in the UK. Collectively, the papers examine how users are able, and what makes them willing, to interact with public services in order to maintain or improve them. Cumulatively, the published papers contribute to a more detailed and nuanced understanding of user involvement and participation, enabling deeper understanding of users' motivations and experiences, the choices available to them and how these are constrained.

The published papers are contextualised in a linking narrative. This locates the papers within wider debates about the place and role of service user involvement and participation and how this has evolved over the last fifty years (Section 3). It then considers a range of broader literatures, selected to capture key elements of the conceptual and theoretical questions to which the papers are addressed (Section 4). A summary of each publication is provided, detailing its individual contribution to the participation literature (Section 5). The papers' cumulative contribution is then considered (Section 6).

Together, the six publications contribute to deeper understandings of both user involvement (establishing nuances in user attitudes and behaviour), and the possibilities that arise within different spaces for involvement (according to such factors as who the participants are, what they connect with (service, service providers, service context), and how these connections form distinctive 'fields' of relationships). This thesis suggests these things all matter when it comes to users finding their voice - and user knowledge being incorporated into the governance and delivery of public services. It concludes that users' 'projects' of involvement and participation (and the environments for those projects) are often complex, bringing together a range of different forces that must be balanced within the public service system.

Contents

List of Figures

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1.1

PUBLICATION 1

Simmons, R. & Birchall, J. (2005)
'A Joined-Up Approach to User Participation in Public
Services: Strengthening the Participation Chain',
Social Policy and Administration, 39 (3): 260-283

A Joined-up Approach to User Participation in Public Services: Strengthening the "Participation Chain"

Richard Simmons and Johnston Birchall

Abstract

Participation has emerged as a key theme for social policy and administration in the UK. Public service providers are often keen to consult users, and users themselves want to make their voices heard. Despite this, however, there is a perennial problem in getting people to participate, and participation is often better supported in principle than in practice. The motivations of key actors are crucial, but are often poorly understood. This article attempts to build a more detailed understanding of the motivations to participate of one key group: service users. Using Mutual Incentives Theory, it shows the extent to which users are motivated by individualistic or collectivistic concerns. These "demand side" factors are then combined with others on the "supply side" in a model we call the "participation chain". This model provides a systematic framework for understanding what makes public service users participate, and seeks to demonstrate that, while the question of participation requires a combination of answers, it is a combination that can be predicted, planned for and acted upon.

Keywords

Introduction

Participation has moved into the foreground of UK social policy and administration. A desire to enhance the performance of key public services, perceived needs for new forms of accountability, and concerns over the legitimation of public authorities have all combined to help promote participatory ideas and strategies to a more central position. Participation first gained prominence in the UK as far back as the 1960s. Following a decline in the 1980s at the height of the New Right agenda, the 1990s witnessed a revival of interest (Stoker 1997). Enhanced user participation was widely promoted as a feature of administrative reform strategies—at least in rhetoric (Pierre 1998; Peters and Savoie 1998). More recently, this agenda has been developed by the New

Address for correspondence: *Richard Simmons, Department of Applied Social Studies, University of Stirling, Stirling, Scotland. Email: r.a.simmons@stir.ac.uk*

Labour government in the UK, in a range of initiatives that has seen participation emerge as a significant policy theme (Newman 2001; Bochel and Bochel 2004).

In recent years, policy-makers and consumer groups have therefore called for the more intensive participation of service users in the governance and delivery of a range of public services (e.g. Cabinet Office 1999; DETR 1998, 1999; DoH 1998, 2001; DTI 2001; NCC 2001, 2004). In response, service agencies have engaged in evaluating their own policy and practice, and there has been a move towards creating a range of alternative forms of user participation (such as consumer councils, panels and forums, and/or participation in agencies' governing structures) to supplement more traditional methods (Stewart 1997; Lowndes *et al.* 2001a, 2001b). Together, these developments lead Beresford (2001: 267) to assert that "there has never been so much political and policy interest expressed in participation, across so many fields".

As a result, service users are being asked to participate more and more in the planning, provision and evaluation of services. Service providers are often keen to consult users, particularly given their duty to do so under Best Value (Cook 2002). Meanwhile, users themselves often want to make their voices heard (e.g. Martin and Boaz 2000). Yet there is a perennial problem in getting people to participate. Despite previous research looking at the institutional barriers to participation and extensive guidance on how to promote participatory initiatives, there is a substantial degree of confusion and disagreement as to what works and why. This article begins by assessing how the context in two local public services (housing and community care) has resulted in pressures for greater service user participation. It then presents a theoretical model of what motivates public service users to participate, which was tested and elaborated in a recent ESRC-funded study. The model examines service users' motivations alongside a range of other factors that might make their participation more or less likely: "resources", "mobilization" and "dynamics". In doing so, it provides a systematic framework for understanding why some people get involved while others do not, and contributes to ongoing debates about how participation can be strengthened.

The Context for User Participation in Public Services

Participation has been put forward as a way of using dialogue to support new forms of responsiveness and accountability in which users' views can be "taken into account" (Linder 2001; Roberts 2002). There is a technical rationale for this approach. As Pierre (1998: 137) observes, this form of service user input can provide policy-makers with "a wider variety of ideas, perspectives and suggestions than traditional policy advice can offer". Participation is therefore claimed to have practical value for the performance of key public services by shaping better-informed decisions and ensuring that limited resources are used to meet service users' priorities. However, there is also a relational rationale. Where participation is successful in improving communication and building trust, it is claimed to help reduce conflict and discord, and smooth the process of policy implementation (e.g. DETR 1998; Seargeant

and Steele 1998). Beyond this, it has been argued that participatory initiatives play a role in legitimizing a public sector in which trust in government is low. This may be particularly important in the context of an increasing number of devolved service agencies and partnerships, whose indirect relationships with local government have led to accusations of a "democratic deficit" (e.g. Pollitt *et al.* 1998). Here, participation may be seen as a way to help draw a balance between the desire of devolved agencies for autonomy and the need for them to maintain their credibility and legitimacy with the public for managing public services.

Underpinning these factors has been the development of consumerism in public services. Transitions in the "production" of UK public services have seen a progressive movement away from the hierarchical arrangements associated with the postwar welfare consensus. Yet the assumption of the 1980s and early 1990s that users' interests would be more adequately represented by market-type mechanisms such as customer service, complaint and redress (Deakin and Wright 1990) has also come under increasing scrutiny. As Perri 6 (1998) argues, neither of these sets of arrangements has proved satisfactory, each failing in different ways to solve problems of trust amongst consumers. In particular, it has been argued that these methods have rarely been enough to turn service users into partners actively involved in shaping services, or to effect a radical shift in the distribution of power away from producer interests (Potter 1994). For Hood *et al.* (1996), the result has been a strain of "producerist consumerism" in UK public services, whereby producers set and monitor consumer-friendly service standards, and participation is primarily instrumental. Nevertheless, it has increasingly been argued that "public services may only be understood through the accounts of users and their experience of those services" (Rowe 1999: 101). In the search for an alternative, participatory initiatives have gained ground, and an emerging view is that there should be a collaborative relationship between service users and social administrators.

More and more, public service providers have begun to abandon their previous attempts to "bolt" user participation on to existing administrative practices, and to adopt a more collaborative approach (Vigoda 2002, 2003). As they have done so, key barriers to facilitating conditions for user participation have been exposed. Previous research in this journal and elsewhere has helped to highlight some of these factors (e.g. Cook 2002; Lowndes *et al.* 2001a, 2001b; Barnes *et al.* 2003; Seargeant and Steele 1999). However, despite (1) the production of extensive guidance on how to "do" participation, and (2) numerous evaluations of participatory initiatives at the micro level, an important question often remains: will service users actually come forward to participate? For Clary and Snyder (2002: 583), a key problem for those seeking to promote participation is "the problem of inaction", namely the oft-demonstrated fact that many more people endorse the values of participating than actually participate. Lack of awareness of the opportunities to participate provides one explanation for this "participation gap" (Wilcox 1996; Lowndes *et al.* 2001b). Yet the problem of inaction is not restricted to those who lack awareness. Many other people who endorse the values of participation also tend to remain inactive. Hence, for Lowndes *et al.* (2001b:

450), a "latent" participation potential exists in many citizens, which organizers seek to tap in participatory initiatives. Surprisingly, however, very few researchers have asked public service users what makes them participate. The research on which this paper is based was designed to provide detailed insights into this question. Our main objectives were:

1. to build an understanding of variations in the motivations of participants and non-participants using Mutual Incentives Theory;
2. to combine this with other explanations of user participation to provide a systematic framework for understanding what makes public service users participate;
3. to furnish lessons for policy and practice about what motivates participants, about how opportunities might best be created and promoted to attract potential participants, and about whether the demands being made of participants are realistic.

Approach and Methodology

Our research focused on the participation of service users in two public services in which participatory mechanisms are relatively well developed and users have shown themselves willing to take part: housing and community care. The following was used as an operational definition: "voluntary participation in groups which aim to have some influence over the way in which services are planned and delivered". Such groups included both user-led organizations (e.g. tenants' associations, older people's forums, disability groups) and structures set up at the "interface" between service users and providers (e.g. strategic review groups, area committees). However, in addition to our main focus on the individual participants in such groups ($N = 392$), a comparison group of "non-participants" was also interviewed, defined as service users who were aware of the opportunity to participate but had never been known to do so ($N = 106$).

A survey, conducted through face-to-face interviews, collected data on individual respondents' characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity, education, income, status, caring responsibilities) and participation history (duration, intensity, types of participation). The rest of the schedule was divided in accordance with the predictions of the theoretical model, including a newly devised, 30-point "scale of collectivistic motivations". This scale was found to be internally reliable (Alpha = .7649). At the end of the schedule, open-ended questions were used to allow respondents to briefly tell their own story and help eliminate any gaps or ambiguities in their answers. A reduced version of the same instrument was used for non-participants. This work was supplemented with a more in-depth study of the conditions for user participation in the two services in each of three locations, giving six service settings.

For logistical reasons the process used to identify participants resembled multi-level cluster sampling. Three local authorities were selected at random (2 in Scotland, 1 in England). Contact was then made in each local authority area with known tenants' associations and community care service user

263

12

groups. Following an extended period in each location, building trust and support for the project (which involved the researchers in attending meetings with either the full group or their key representatives), the cooperation of 86 per cent of these groups ($N = 113$) was secured. This allowed for the compilation of a list of all known participants in these groups, from which 80 per cent were randomly selected. Face-to-face interviews were then undertaken at the respondents' convenience, and a response rate of 83 per cent achieved. The non-participant sample was a convenience sample, consisting of individuals who were known to service user groups or who frequented day centres, community facilities and so on. The main survey was supplemented by semi-structured interviews with key informants in each of the three locations ($N = 63$). These informants included elected members, senior officers, frontline staff, voluntary organization workers and service users.

What Makes Public Service Users Participate?

First, factors relating to the service's "importance" to service users need to be considered (see figure 1). In theory we can generalize that, other things being equal, the greater the intensity, continuity, and duration of need in a particular service sector, the more likely people will be to participate. Second, users' perceptions of the quality of the service may be influential. Here we can generalize that if users are happy with the service they receive, they will be less likely to participate than if they are unhappy. However, for those who are unhappy we can also generalize that the greater the degree of consumer competence to assess service quality, and the lower the availability of alternatives (or "exit"), the more likely will people be to participate (or use "voice") (Hirschman 1970).

The two services considered in this research (housing and community care) had a similar profile on all of the above factors. In both services, the intensity, continuity and duration of need and the ability to assess service quality were generally fairly high, and the availability of alternatives (at least, affordable ones) generally low or non-existent. By controlling for differences in these service-sector-related characteristics in our research design, we were

Figure 1

Characteristics of the service–participation relationship
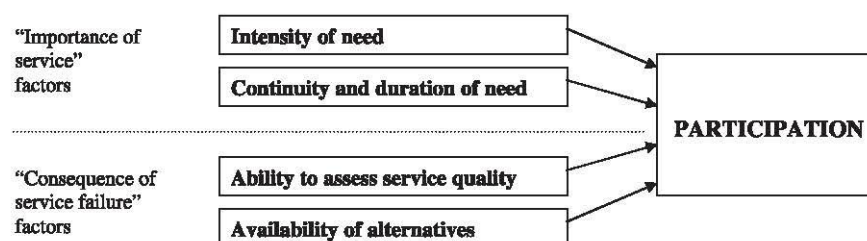
able to focus on the particular interest of this project: factors making participation more or less likely at the level of the individual.

There have been a number of attempts to establish why particular individuals participate. This has resulted in important bodies of research on participation in mainstream politics, interest groups, social movements, and voluntary work, as well as social administration. The prior resources and capacities of participants are thought to provide one important set of explanations (e.g. Verba and Nie 1972; Verba *et al.* 1978, 1995, 2000; Parry *et al.* 1992). As Verba *et al.* (2000: 265/254) observe, "participatory activities vary in their resource requirements and individuals vary in their resource endowments . . . Resource constraints are an important factor in determining who becomes active in what way." Previous research has also focused on the mobilization of participants. First, "issues" such as relative deprivation and dissatisfaction with authorities have been proposed as important catalysts of participation (e.g. Lowndes *et al.* 1998, 2001a). Second, the creation and promotion of opportunities, or "facilitating conditions" (McAdam 1996), has been identified as an important factor (e.g. Lowndes and Wilson 1999; Maloney *et al.* 2000). Finally, previous research has pointed to the importance of recruitment efforts in mobilizing participation (e.g. Klandermans and Oegema 1987, 1994; Jordan and Maloney 1996). While some individuals seek out participation opportunities themselves, "being asked" tends to be reported by participants as important in their mobilization. This is particularly the case where the "recruitment agent" is known to them through their existing social networks (e.g. Klandermans 1984; Rosenstone and Hansen 1993; Brady *et al.* 1999).

The main interest of our research was in what motivates public service users to participate in terms of incentives and attitudes. Incentives and attitudes are considered to be the "internal" psychological mechanisms that explain why some potential participants make the decision to take part, while others do not. Much of the recent literature on incentives has focused on rational choice models, which propose that rational actors will not participate in collective action to achieve common goals (Olson 1965; Whiteley 1995). They will instead "free-ride" on the efforts of others, unless there are private payoffs ("selective incentives") that they calculate to exceed the costs of participation. As the private payoffs from participation are usually considered to be low, a paradox lies in explaining the fact that some people do participate.

For Finkel *et al.* (1989), narrow rational choice explanations predict excessive abstention, and are better in explaining why individuals do not participate rather than why they do. Similarly, Whiteley and Seyd (1992: 59–61) argue that there is a need to "consider a wider array of incentives . . . where the individual 'thinks' collectively rather than individually". There have been various attempts to do this (e.g. Muller and Opp 1986, 1987; Finkel *et al.* 1989; Finkel and Muller 1998). In perhaps the most sophisticated model to date, Whiteley and Seyd (1992, 1996, 1998; Whiteley *et al.* 1993) combine social-psychological and rational choice explanations in their General Incentives Model, which, alongside selective incentives, features such factors as collective incentives, expressive incentives, altruism and social norms. These

models still work within a rational choice framework. However, for some commentators, stretching the theory to accommodate such additional concepts is controversial.

These controversies have informed our work in developing a "Mutual Incentives Theory" (MIT) of motivations to participate. MIT looks beyond the above theories, combining two more general social-psychological theories of motivation (one individualistic, the other collectivistic) that are both broad in scope and detailed in their predictions. The first, developed from social exchange theory (Homans 1961, 1974; Blau 1964; Ekeh 1974; Molm 2000, 2003; Alford 2002), assumes that people are motivated by individual rewards and punishments, and provides a set of generalizations about how these interact (see the Appendix, below). The second, developed from social co-operation theory (Sorokin 1954; Argyle 1991; Axelrod 1984; Vugt *et al.* 2000), interprets human behaviour very differently, assuming that participation can be motivated by three variables:

1. shared goals: people express mutual needs that translate into common goals
2. shared values: people feel a duty to participate as an expression of common values
3. sense of community: people identify with and care about other people who either live in the same area or are like them in some respect

This theory generalizes that the more each of these three variables is present, the more likely people will be to participate. In our research the two theories were initially kept separate and tested alongside one another, allowing a final interpretative framework to emerge from the data.

Mutual Incentives Theory and User Participation

Mutual Incentives Theory takes in both individualistic and collectivistic incentives. Individualistic incentives are shown in figure 2. This is an enhanced model of costs versus benefits, considering also the positive effects

Figure 2

Individualistic incentives

Figure 3

Costs of participation
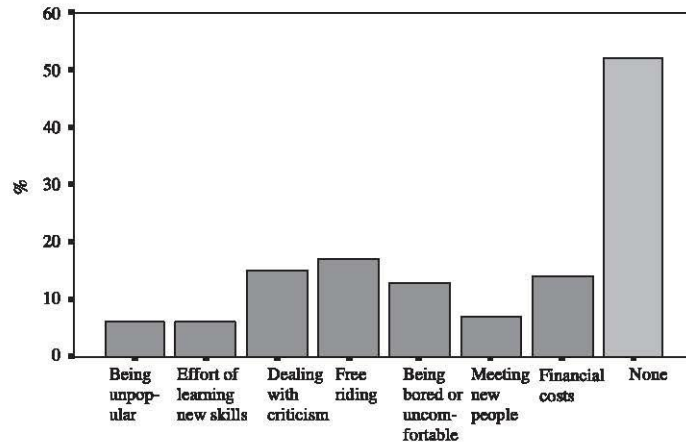
of habit and the negative effects of opportunity costs (whereby the individual calculates the costs of opportunities forgone) and satiation (whereby the over-supply of benefits reduces their subjectively perceived value).

Taking the negative factors to start with, we found that few respondents considered direct costs (as shown in figure 3) to affect them. Indeed, around 50 per cent said that none of these costs applied. In most cases, direct costs do not therefore appear to provide a significant barrier to participation. The story appears to be much the same for opportunity costs. Just 11 per cent of participants and 22 per cent of non-participants report that these costs put them off participating. Neither does "satiation" appear to have significant effects. Only 15 per cent believed that any benefits had become less valuable to them. However, the benefit most widely reported as becoming less valu-able was "getting my own problems solved". This backs up a key qualitative finding that some participants move from a narrow focus on their own prob-lems to a wider focus once they become more involved.

The positive factors in figure 2 are benefits and "habit". The effects of habit are largely confined to a single participant type (identified via cluster analysis—see below). Benefits can be subdivided into "external" (material/ tangible) and "internal" (affective/expressive) (see figure 4). External benefits were not widely reported to be influential. Over 40 per cent said "none" were important to them. By comparison, more respondents considered internal benefits to be valuable. Our findings therefore tend to confirm those of Verba *et al.* (2000), that "taking part makes activists feel good about themselves".

Participants' motivations to participate appear—from these findings—to be clear-cut: the benefits outweigh the costs, and this makes participation more likely. However, such a conclusion would be premature. The influence

16

Figure 4

Benefits of participation

Figure 5

Collectivistic incentives
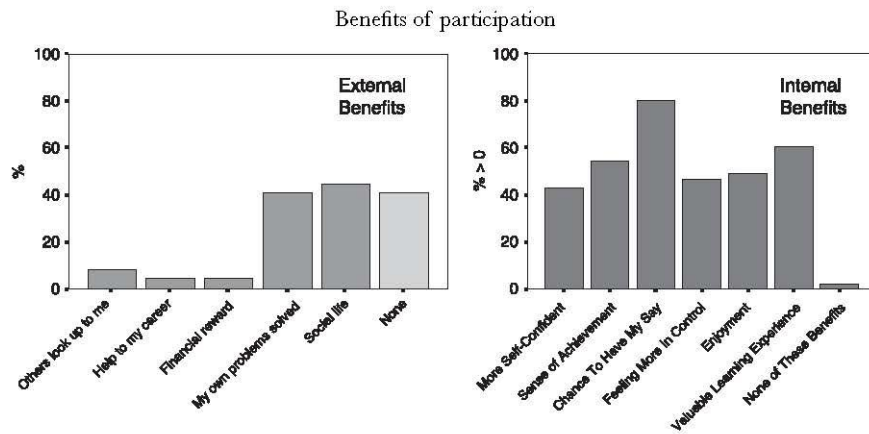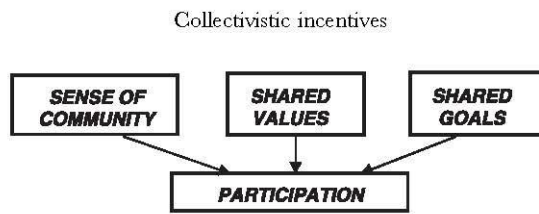
of individualistic incentives is called into question by a key finding from our research, which was that around 80 per cent of participants said they would still participate without any of the above benefits. While this seems contradictory, it implies they might have collectivistic incentives that outweigh the individualistic ones. Indeed, when asked, participants overwhelmingly stated that they wanted to get benefits for the group as a whole (79 per cent) rather than just for themselves as individuals (2 per cent). Some 19 per cent said they wanted both. This indicates that the pursuit of individual benefits is often secondary to a wider set of concerns, which Mutual Incentives Theory terms collectivistic incentives (figure 5).

We found that participants have a strong sense of community, shared goals and, to a slightly lesser extent, shared values (see table 1). Non-participants scored significantly less highly on each of these three measures ($p < 0.01$). These findings indicate that collectivistic motivations are the primary mechanism in the motivation of service users to participate. However, we still needed to check whether the differences between participants and non-participants were a cause or an effect of participation. Significantly, when we

Table 1

Collectivistic incentive scores

	Sense of community	Shared values	Shared goals	Overall
Participants	2.15	2.52	2.29	2.32
Non-participants	2.53	2.82	2.74	2.70

Items scored on a Likert scale from 1–5; lower scores = stronger collectivistic motivations.

Table 2

Collectivistic incentive scores over time

Length of participation (yrs)	>10	5–10	2–5	1–2	<1
Collectivistic incentive score	2.15	2.28	2.36	2.40	2.54

Items scored on a Likert scale from 1–5; lower scores = stronger collectivistic motivations.

analysed the collectivistic incentive scores of service users who had been participating for different lengths of time, we found that these motivations strengthened progressively (see table 2). This effect was expected. With participation, people's collectivistic motivations are reinforced and their commitment to the group develops (cf. Klandermans 1997; Passy and Giugni 2000). Yet, comparing first-year participants with non-participants still revealed a significant difference in their collectivistic incentive scores ($p < 0.05$). This provides evidence of cause as well as effect.

As stated earlier, our study used a 30-point attitude scale to measure collectivistic incentives. Cluster analysis was performed on these data to help us identify different types of participant and non-participant. Five clusters of participants and three of non-participants emerged. Cluster membership was then cross-tabulated with participants' other responses to generate a more detailed picture of their characteristics. Among participants, we were able to characterize four different types of activist, and one less active participant type.

- First, there were the "campaigners" (19 per cent). These participants were very active and confident in their participation. They tended to be office-bearers in their groups, regularly taking part in committees and taking responsibility for communicating on behalf of the group. As "doers", they tended to seek change rather than defend the status quo. They also tended to be more interested in politics, and to have a negative view of the role of authorities. Campaigners exhibited very strong mutualistic motivations, being more likely to "strongly agree" with all but four of the items on the 30-point scale.

269

- Second, were the "foot soldiers" (8 per cent). These were also quite committed and active, but were happier to contribute in a different way. Foot soldiers were more likely to undertake some of the group's support functions, such as fundraising and delivering leaflets, rather than strategic functions such as office-bearer and committee work. They were much more likely to have no educational qualifications. They scored highly on sense of duty items and community identity, but low on social trust. Trust tended instead to be invested in the group, which was considered to know best how to improve services.
- In contrast with the first two types, the third type (23 per cent) tended to be thinkers rather than doers. We have termed these participants "scrutineers". They were more likely to have educational qualifications, and to be interested in participation as a learning experience. However, they were not as active as either of the above clusters of participants, attending meetings very regularly but avoiding taking on wider responsibilities in the group. Scrutineers scored quite low on sense of duty items—they were clearly there on their own terms. As thinkers, they may also have tended to see the "shades of grey". They were therefore more likely to consider that the group was trying to take on too many problems or problems which were too difficult to solve. This could prevent them from becoming more active themselves, yet they were generally supportive of the group and its more active members.
- Fourth, were the "habitual participants" (37 per cent). These were guided particularly by internalized norms. Participation had become part of their regular programme of activities and was mature and stable, but they were not generally heavily involved in the core functions of the group.
- Finally, there was one cluster of "marginal participants" (13 per cent) who were less active and usually of short standing with the group. These users were relatively uncommitted and inactive. They either perceived themselves to be more marginalized, or else their participation was more of a peripheral interest. Participants in this cluster were much less motivated, perceiving the costs to be higher and benefits lower. Their collectivistic motivations were almost at non-participant levels, which suggests that it would not take much for them to decide to stop.

There were also three groups of non-participants.

- First, there were those who were on the margins but had not yet chosen to participate (40 per cent). These users were generally positive about participation. While they did not perceive the costs of participation to be particularly high, they lacked strong enough motivations (benefits and collectivistic motivations) to come forward and get more involved. However, with the right encouragement they might be persuaded.
- Second, there were those who felt alienated (40 per cent). These were likely to be more negative about participation, and to feel quite unconfident about coming forward to participate.
- Third, there was a minority who were simply apathetic (20 per cent). They did not have an opinion one way or another on participation—it was simply "off their radar".

To summarize, in our analysis of individualistic "cost-and-benefit" incentives, only "internal" benefits show up as important in motivating participation. However, even here most participants said they would still participate without these benefits, which points to collectivistic incentives being more important. This is supported by the data, which show participants to be significantly more motivated by collectivistic incentives than non-participants. In a "straight fight" between our individualistic and collectivistic explanations of service users' motivations to participate, the collectivistic explanation appears to win conclusively.

Yet it might be argued that people are simply more comfortable, or at ease with themselves, with the discourse of collectivistic incentives. So, when people say they would still participate without individualistic benefits, should we take them at their word? While collectivistic thinking and discourse are ostensibly dominant among participants, there is nevertheless some evidence that individualistic incentives are important for some participants at the outset of their participation. If individuals later re-open their decision to participate, it seems they may also start to calculate the costs and benefits afresh, trading the results against their stocks of commitment. However, unless participation is very young or has become problematic in a particular context, the influence of individualistic incentives still appears to be secondary. For the large majority of participants, who say they never calculate what they are getting out of it, collectivistic incentives remain the most powerful stated motivations for service user participation.

A Joined-up Approach: The Participation Chain

The insights of Mutual Incentives Theory are important. On their own, however, they are not enough to explain what makes people participate. Verba *et al.* (1995) suggest there are three main reasons why people participate: because they can, because they were asked, or because they want to. MIT therefore needs to be linked to other potential explanations if we are to provide a more rounded interpretation of why people take part. Whiteley and Seyd (1996) talk of incentive-based explanations as demand-side models, whereby incentives create a demand for activism. By contrast, other considerations—such as personal resources and mobilization factors—provide "supply-side" explanations for levels of participation. Whiteley and Seyd (1996: 225) go on to suggest that "a general model would incorporate both demand and supply side variables". This leads us to propose just such a general model of motivations to participate, which we have termed the "participation chain" (see figure 6).

This non-sequential model has a number of levels, or "links in the chain". In addition to "motivations" (as discussed in Mutual Incentives Theory, above), we first expand our analysis to consider the prior resources and capacities of public service users. Important resources are usually thought to include time, money, skills and confidence. We examined the effects of service users' personal resources in relation to their participation. Money did not show up as being important in our results. Participation did not correlate with income levels, either in the quantity or the range of activities undertaken

20

Figure 6

The participation chain
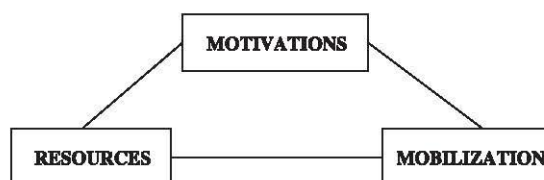
by participants. This finding conflicts with those of earlier studies, and the low correlation is perhaps best explained by the homogeneity of our sample, which was heavily skewed towards low incomes. Time was influential in whether participants got started or not, but once people were involved had little further effect. On our proxy measures, non-participants showed up as tending to have less spare time than participants. However, among participants, there was little difference in the activity of those who had more or less of this resource. For participants, time appears to be a resource barrier that can be overcome. Skills (indicated by educational qualifications, previous experience and training) appear to be very important for service users both in getting started and in supporting higher levels of participation. Participants were more likely to have educational qualifications, previous experience and training than non-participants. Participants with these skills also participated for more hours and in a wider range of activities than those without. Similar effects were found for confidence. Participants reported much higher levels of confidence than non-participants. Among participants, confidence also had a strong correlation with the extent to which service users participate. However, the relationship between skills and confidence was not straightforward. Participants with qualifications reported feeling very confident about their ability to participate, but the correlation with another measure (regarding their confidence in personally making a difference to getting things done) was not significant. Previous experience did not correlate significantly with either indicator of confidence. However, participants who had received training were significantly more likely to report feeling more confident on both levels.

In summary, we found resources to vary in their effect on service user participation. Money did not show up as having a significant effect. Time influenced whether service users started to participate or not, but had little further effect once they were involved. Skills and confidence were very important in both getting started and supporting higher levels of participation. Some studies have found income to be more important, but in general these findings are in line with previous research.

To complete the chain, we expand our analysis to include the mobilization of participants. In common with Lowndes *et al.* (1998, 2001b), we found participants to be more strongly engaged by certain "catalysing issues" than were non-participants. In relation to public services, these issues include

negative relationships with authorities ("authorities are not listening to people like me"; "authorities cannot be trusted to make decisions on behalf of people like me"), a sense of relative deprivation ("my community is worse off than other similar communities"), and a desire for change ("change is not happening quickly enough"). Our qualitative analysis also shows that opportunities to participate were evaluated positively by around 80 per cent of participants when they first became aware of them. Conversely, around 70 per cent of non-participants were more neutral or negative in their comments. To be fair, the majority of non-participants did not have more than a vague conception of what participation might involve, though a small number did express low expectations of how effective their participation was likely to be, in response to the question: "why have you chosen not to participate?" Positive evaluations of opportunities to participate, particularly in terms of their attractiveness, timeliness, relevance and expected effectiveness, therefore look to be important for mobilization. Finally, we found that "active" recruitment (or being asked), as opposed to "passive" recruitment (after reading written notices or making enquiries for themselves), was reported by around 80 per cent of participants. Non-participants were significantly less likely to have been subjects of active recruitment ($p < 0.05$). Furthermore, qualitative analysis suggests that the connectedness of individuals to recruitment agents in their own social networks can influence the likelihood of recruitment. In short, it does not only matter that people get asked to participate; it matters who does the asking.

A Fourth Link in the Chain? The Dynamics of Participation

In completing our work we were often struck by the impact of cultural and institutional factors on attempts to foster and sustain (or sometimes block and frustrate) users' political participation. This has led us to suggest a fourth set of factors, involving the dynamics of participation. The literature here is also relatively well established. One line of research has focused on the styles and strategies employed by participants, for example as "defenders" or "protesters" (Piette 1990), or as "insiders"/"outsiders" (e.g. Maloney *et al.* 1994). Beyond this, studies have looked at "feedback effects" from participation (e.g. Parry *et al.* 1992; Finkel and Muller 1998). As DETR (1998) observe, people often hold a positive view of their experience of participation. This may lead to the affirmation of participants' key motivations (e.g. Snow *et al.* 1986; Snow and Oliver 1993; Smith 1994), and to the development over time of a commitment to participate (e.g. Cress *et al.* 1997; Passy and Giugni 2000; Andrews 1991). Finally, the role of the group must be acknowledged in so far as it has a mediating role in structuring individuals' ongoing motivations and behaviour (e.g. Baron *et al.* 1992) (see figure 7).

For public services, the role and attitudes of service providers are also recognized as a key part of the dynamics (e.g. Barnes *et al.* 2003; Klijn and Koppenjan 2000). "Service provider participation" interacts with that of users in complex and important ways, which underlines the importance of cultural and institutional factors (see figure 8). Tarrow (1998) examines this kind of interplay along five dimensions: increasing access, shifting alignments,

Figure 7

The dynamics of user participation
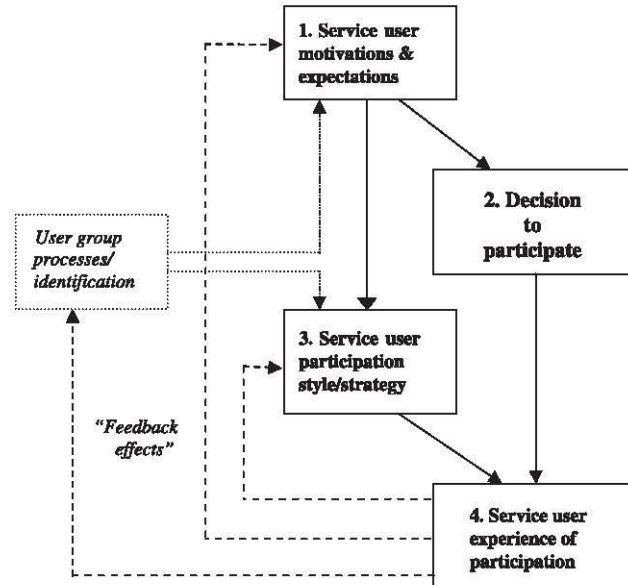
Figure 8

Bringing service providers into the dynamics of participation
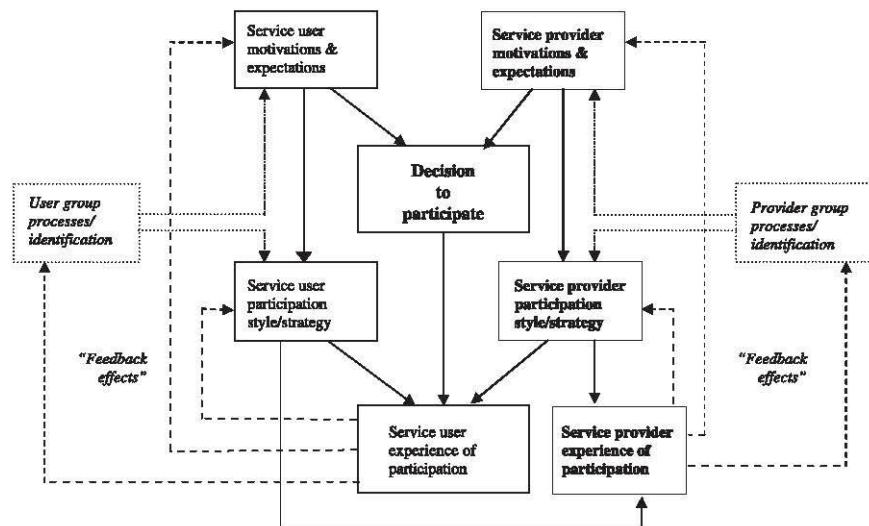
divided elites, influential allies and repression/facilitation. This framework emphasizes the need for providers to understand their own motivations to get involved in user participation initiatives, and to think about the styles and strategies they employ. Indeed, as a starting point, providers must decide whether or not they actually want greater participation (Hoggett 1995). Linder (2001) points out that arguments favouring specialized expertise and direction from above (and disparaging "empty talk") are commonly made against participation. In practice, certainly, the commitment to participatory initiatives can be variable (Pratchett 1999; Harrison and Mort 1998).

In common with DETR (1998), our qualitative findings showed that the majority of service users held a positive view of their participation experience: hence the development over time of a commitment to participate. Service users' perceptions of how difficult it would be to stop participating correlated significantly with both the level of their activity and the strength of their collectivistic motivations.

The group constitutes another important aspect of the dynamics of participation. At the point where the initial decision to participate is made, users' knowledge of and relationships with the group tend to be quite abstract. Yet once they start to participate, the group can play an important role in the transformation of individuals' motivations over time. This may involve the promotion of collectivistic motivations to a primary position in people's "motivational hierarchy". If the experience of participation is positive (which may depend in part on positive perceptions of the structure, size, status and success of the group), the group may also help to develop greater commitment to participation. For example, participants may increasingly align their aims with those of the group ("shared goals"), or internalize group norms ("shared values"). Again, there is evidence for this in our results. Nevertheless, the extent to which users' motivations are substantively modified by group processes (e.g. "forming, storming, norming, conforming"; Tuckman and Jensen 1977), or by individual processes (e.g. "self-interaction"; Passy and Giugni 2000; Archer 2003) remains an open question.

Rarely were participants consciously aware of adopting a general participation "style". Indeed, observations during the course of the project confirm individuals' reports that they tended to adapt their style to the context and goals of their participation. At meetings, however, there were sometimes discussions about the stance the group would take with service providers over particular issues ("we'll give them this one, because we've got something bigger coming up soon"; "if we don't fight them on this, it'll be the thin end of the wedge"). For their part, providers commonly reported the approach of service users to be too "oppositional". They admitted that this could sometimes feed back negatively on their own motivations to participate, which anyway tended to be more vague and instrumental. Moreover, one provider representative argued that users "choose the wrong battles to fight—things they can't influence". This observation emphasizes both the power differential between providers and users and providers' commonplace failure to manage users' expectations successfully.

A key issue for participants was their sense that authorities were not listening to them. On closer examination, it became clear that "not listening"

had two meanings. At one level, participants meant that the authorities were physically not listening to them, i.e. that decision-makers were not attending meetings and hearing for themselves what service users had to say. For example, in one of our research locations, service users felt they had to lobby hard to get decision-makers to meetings, often with little success. Junior staff—described by one participant as "stooges"—were often sent instead, which had led to a general sense of frustration and resentment:

> *"Many of us have got very disillusioned with the professionals not taking it seriously. It's not even as if you see the same faces for very long. As soon as you think you're getting somewhere with one of them, they get moved into something else and you're back to square one with some new, fresh-faced kid."*

At another level, participants also meant that, while decision-makers might attend meetings and hear the views of service users, they showed no inclination to take what users said into account—in the words of one respondent, they were

> *"hearing but not listening—you feel like they're just giving lip service, then they just go and do what they want."*

Other respondents agreed:

> *"Nothing that they've promised us is getting done—it's bloody hot air."*

> *"We're always getting promises but no action. We never seem to get anywhere."*

> *"They lie to you—they say what you want to hear then that's the last of it."*

In these instances, getting decision-makers to meetings was felt to be less of an issue than getting them to respond tangibly to users' views. For their part, providers in these locations often talked such perceptions down, quoting a number of examples where users' views had had a direct effect on policies and services. Taken at face value, this suggests two things: that service users' expectations are not being matched by their experience (which suggests again that expectations are not being managed effectively by service providers); and/or that providers are poor at providing users with adequate feedback and recognition for the inputs they make by their participation. The authorities in all three of our research locations acknowledged weaknesses on both of these counts. Of course, we have to bear in mind that the aims of users and their groups may conflict with those of providers—as well as with those of other groups of citizens and taxpayers. As one of the functions of councillors and managers is to ration scarce resources, not all demands can be met. Yet our respondents were generally realistic about this. There was rarely an expectation that they would get everything they wanted. A major desire was simply for "procedural and interactional justice" (Folger *et al.* 1996; Cropanzano *et al.* 2001): in other words, a fair hearing and an appropriate response. As one tenant put it:

"All we want is an equal scenario. We are not here to talk down to the Council, so they shouldn't be here to talk down to us."

Conclusion: Involving Consumers—Strengthening the Participation Chain

As Linder (2001: 672) asserts, "arguments favouring public participation in various policy-making processes . . . are becoming more and more prevalent". An emerging recognition that government can no longer act alone in relation to public services has led to pressures in policy and practice for a more collaborative relationship between service users and social administrators. Such issues have raised questions about the need for more direct and intensive processes of involvement and representation. However, policymakers are getting worried about users' willingness to come forward and participate. In the UK, many public service agencies have therefore examined their own practices with regard to service-user participation, and attempted to "unblock" it by minimizing or eliminating the perceived institutional barriers to participation. These attempts have been a less than complete success.

This article suggests that, if institutional structures supposed to be participatory and to foster participation are to work, then it is important to look more creatively at a range of other interrelated factors. If user participation is to become a wider reality, the first question that needs to be asked is: "do service providers really want participation?" If the answer is yes, the question that follows is: "will service users participate?"

Using Mutual Incentives Theory we have shown that individualistic benefits such as catharsis, learning, enjoyment, self-confidence and control are valued by participants. However, as motivators, these are secondary to collectivistic incentives such as a strong sense of community, a sense of shared goals and shared values. These "demand-side" factors are important. However, to provide a more rounded, general model, we have integrated three further sets of explanations with those of Mutual Incentives Theory in the "participation chain". Hence, to motivations we add resources, mobilization factors and the dynamics of participation (see figure 9).

The chain metaphor is used for two reasons. First, it represents the fact that each link needs to be made as strong as possible if participation itself is to be strengthened. Our findings point to a role for community development, training and advocacy schemes in building potential participants' skills and confidence, and thereby strengthening the resources link. Strengthening the mobilization link depends on the more honest engagement of users and consumers over key issues, the provision of opportunities that are relevant, timely and attractive, and the importance of making sure that people are asked—in the right way—to take part. Hence, it is important that people get asked directly to participate by people they trust; that it is not left to chance by simply putting up posters, etc., and expecting people to respond. Strengthening the motivations link in the chain involves appealing to people's dominant motivations in the promotion of participation, and ensuring that the participation process works with the grain, rather than against it, in relation to these factors. Finally, for the dynamics link to be strengthened,

Figure 9

Expanded participation chain
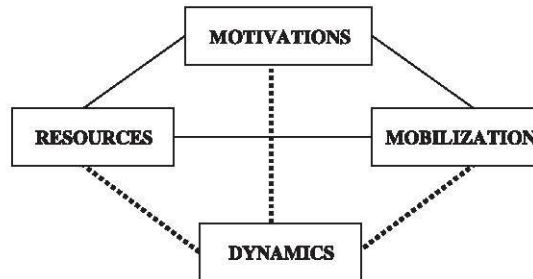
there is a need for providers to understand and communicate their own motivations, to manage the expectations of participants by delimiting the scope of initiatives and opportunities (e.g. Beresford and Croft 1993; Lowndes *et al.* 2001a), to provide appropriate feedback to participants, and to recognize the effects of power and other resource imbalances (e.g. Barnes 1997; Skelcher 1993).

Second, the chain metaphor emphasizes the importance of the links being connected up effectively. For instance, it is insufficient to say that we simply need to train people in civic skills, unless appropriate opportunities are going to be provided to use those skills. Similarly, it is insufficient to say that we should appeal to people's "collectivistic incentives" in participation initiatives, but then fail to engage in active recruitment. The links in the chain need to be joined together, in a coordinated way, if participation is to be effectively strengthened.

In sum, different factors working at different levels of the "participation chain" have a role to play in whether or not public service users participate. While our main interest has been at the level of incentives, we have taken a wide-angle lens to capture some of the other factors at work. From this vantage point it is clear that participation can be fragile. There are many ways in which it can falter and lose its footing. Using the framework provided by the participation chain, we have sought to demonstrate that while the question of participation requires a combination of answers, it is a combination that can be predicted, planned for, and acted upon.

Appendix: Propositions from Social Exchange Theory

1. The more often a person's participation is rewarded, the more likely the person is to continue to participate.
2. If in the past a certain kind of activity has been found rewarding, then the more similar the current activity is to the past one, the more likely people are to participate.

3. The more valuable participation is to a person, the more often he or she will be encouraged to participate.
4. The more often a person has received a reward from participation, the less valuable any more of the same kind of reward becomes, and the less he or she will participate.
5. The more unequally a person sees the rewards being distributed, the more likely he or she is to be angry, and so to experience participation as unrewarding.
6. When a person's participation does not receive the reward expected, the result is anger. He/she is more likely then to perform aggressive behaviour, and the results of such behaviour become more valuable.
7. In choosing between alternative actions, a person will choose that one for which, as perceived by him/her at the time, the value of the result multiplied by the probability of getting the result, is greater.

In operationalizing these propositions, we change "reward" to "benefit" as a less emotive word. We identify these independent variables acting on participation:

- type of benefits received by the participant
- value of benefits received by the participant
- degree of regularity of receipt of benefits
- extent of routinization/habituation to participation
- extent of fall-off in benefits over time, owing to satiety
- degree of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the distribution of benefits
- opportunity costs of participation

Acknowledgements

References

Alford, J. (2002), Defining the client in the public sector: a social-exchange perspective, *Public Administration Review*, 62, 3: 337–46.
Andrews, M. (1991), *Lifetimes of Commitment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Archer, M. (2003), *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Argyle, M. (1991), *Cooperation: The Basis of Sociability*, London: Routledge.
Axelrod, R. (1984), *The Evolution of Cooperation*, New York: Basic Books.
Barnes, M. (1997), *Care, Communities and Citizens*, Harlow: Longman.
Barnes, M. (1999), Users as citizens: collective action and the local governance of welfare, *Social Policy & Administration*, 33, 1: 73–90.
Barnes, M., Newman, J., Knops, A. and Sullivan, H. (2003), Constituting the "public" in public participation, *Public Administration*, 81, 2: 379–99.

Baron, R., Kerr, N. and Miller, N. (1992), *Group Process, Group Decision, Group Action*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Beresford, P. (2001), Participation and social policy: transformation, liberation or regulation? *Social Policy Review*, 14: 265–90.

Beresford, P. and Croft, S. (1993), *Citizen Involvement: A Practical Guide for Change*, London: Macmillan.

Birchall, J. and Simmons, R. (2004), What motivates members to participate? In S. Karafolas, R. Spear and Y. Stryjan (eds), *Local Society and Global Economy*, Athens: Editions ION.

Blau, P. (1964), *Exchange and Power in Social Life*, New York: Wiley.

Bochel, C. and Bochel, H. (2004), *The UK Social Policy Process*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Brady, H., Schlozman, K. and Verba, S. (1999), Prospecting for participants: rational expectations and the recruitment of political activists, *American Political Science Review*, 93: 153–68.

Cabinet Office (1999), *Involving Users: Improving the Delivery of Local Public Services*, London: Service First Unit.

Clary, E. and Snyder, M. (2002), Community involvement: opportunities and challenges in socializing adults to participate in society, *Journal of Social Issues*, 58, 3: 581–91.

Cook, D. (2002), Consultation for a change? Engaging users and communities in the policy process, *Social Policy & Administration*, 36, 5: 516–31.

Cress, D., McPherson, J. and Rotolo, T. (1997), Competition and commitment in voluntary memberships, *Sociological Perspectives*, 40, 1: 61–79.

Cropanzano, R., Byrne, Z., Bobocel, D. and Rupp, D. (2001), Moral virtues, fairness heuristics, social entities, and other denizens of organizational justice, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 58: 164–209.

Deakin, N. and Wright, A. (eds) (1990), *Consuming Public Services*, London: Heinemann.

DETR (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions) (1998), *Guidance on Enhancing Public Participation in Local Government*, London: DETR.

DETR (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions) (1999), *Developing Good Practice in Tenant Participation*, London: DETR.

DoH (Department of Health) (1998), *Moving in to the Mainstream*, London: DoH/SSI.

DoH (Department of Health) (2001), *The Essence of Care*, London: DoH.

DTI (Department of Trade and Industry) (2001), *Modern Markets: Confident Consumers*, London: DTI.

Dwyer, P. (2002), Making sense of social citizenship: some user views on welfare rights and responsibilities, *Critical Social Policy*, 22, 2: 273–99.

Ekeh, P. (1974), *Social Exchange Theory: The Two Traditions*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Finkel, S. and Muller, E. (1998), Rational choice and the dynamics of collective political action: evaluating alternative models with panel data, *American Political Science Review*, 92, 1: 37–49.

Finkel, S., Muller, E. and Opp, K. (1989), Personal influence, collective rationality, and mass political action, *American Political Science Review*, 83, 3: 885–903.

Folger, R., Cropanzano, R., Timmerman, T., Howes, J. and Mitchell, D. (1996), Elaborating procedural fairness: justice becomes both simpler and more complex, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22: 435–41.

Harrison, S. and Mort, M. (1998), Which champions? Which people? Public and user involvement in health care as a technology of legitimation, *Social Policy & Administration*, 32, 1: 60–70.

Hirschman, A. (1970), *Exit, Voice and Loyalty*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hoggett, P. (1995), Does local government want local democracy? *Town and Country Planning* (April): 107–9.

Homans, G. (1961), *Social Behaviour: Its Elementary Forms*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

Homans, G. (1974), *Social Behaviour: Its Elementary Forms*, 2nd edn, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Hood, C., Peters, B. and Wollman, H. (1996), Sixteen ways to consumerize public services, *Public Money and Management* (October).

Jordan, G. and Maloney, W. (1996), How bumble bees fly: accounting for public interest participation, *Political Studies*, 44: 668–85.

Klandermans, B. (1984), Mobilization and participation: social-psychological expansions of resource mobilization theory, *American Sociological Review*, 49: 583–600.

Klandermans, B. (1997), *The Social Psychology of Protest*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Klandermans, B. and Oegema, D. (1987), Potentials, networks, motivations and barriers: steps towards participation in social movements, *American Sociological Review*, 52: 519–31.

Klandermans, B. and Oegema, D. (1994), Why social movement sympathizers don't participate: erosion and nonconversion of support, *American Sociological Review*, 59: 703–22.

Klijn, E. and Koppenjan, J. (2000), Politicians and interactive decision making: institutional spoilsports or playmakers? *Public Administration*, 78, 2: 365–87.

Linder, S. (2001), An inquiry into dialogue, its challenges and justification, *International Journal of Public Administration*, 24, 7/8: 651–78.

Lowndes, V. and Wilson, D. (1999), Social capital and local governance: exploring the institutional design variable. Paper to *Associational Engagement and Democracy in Cities* Workshop, ECPR Joint Sessions, Copenhagen, 14–19 April.

Lowndes, V., Pratchett, L. and Stoker, G. (2001a), Trends in public participation: Part 1—Local government perspectives, *Public Administration*, 79, 1: 205–22.

Lowndes, V., Pratchett, L. and Stoker, G. (2001b), Trends in public participation: Part 2—Citizens' perspectives, *Public Administration*, 79, 2: 445–55.

Lowndes, V., Stoker, G., Pratchett, L., Wilson, D., Leach, S. and Wingfield, M. (1998), *Enhancing Public Participation in Local Government*, London: DETR.

Lupton, C., Peckham, S. and Taylor, P. (1998), *Managing Public Involvement in Healthcare Planning*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

McAdam, D. (1996), Conceptual origins, current problems, future directions. In D. McAdam, J. McCarthy and M. Zald (eds), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maloney, W., Jordan, G. and McLaughlin, A. (1994), Interest groups and public policy: the insider/outsider model revisited, *Journal of Public Policy*, 14: 17–38.

Maloney, W., Smith, G. and Stoker, G. (2000), Social capital and urban governance: adding a more contextualised "top-down" perspective, *Political Studies*, 48, 4: 823–41.

Martin, S. and Boaz, A. (2000), Public participation and citizen-centred local government: lessons from the Best Value and Better Government for Older People pilot programmes, *Public Money and Management*, 20, 2: 47–54.

Molm, L. (2000), Theories of social exchange and exchange networks. In G. Ritzer and B. Smart (eds), *The Handbook of Social Theory*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Molm, L. (2003), Theoretical comparisons of forms of exchange, *Sociological Theory*, 21, 1: 1–17.

Muller, E. and Opp, K. (1986), Rational choice and rebellious collective action, *American Political Science Review*, 80, 2: 471–87.

Muller, E. and Opp, K. (1987), Rebellious collective action revisited, *American Political Science Review*, 81, 2: 557–64.

30

NCC (National Consumer Council) (2001), *Involving Patients and the Public in Healthcare*, London: NCC.

NCC (National Consumer Council) (2004), *Making Public Services Personal*, London: NCC.

Newman, J. (2001), *Modernising Governance*, London: Sage.

Olson, M. (1965), *The Logic of Collective Action*, New York: Schocken Books.

Parry, G., Moyser, G. and Day, N. (1992), *Political Participation and Democracy in Britain*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Passy, F. and Giugni, M. (2000), Life-spheres, networks and sustained participation in social movements: a phenomenological approach to political commitment, *Sociological Forum*, 15, 1: 117–44.

Peters, B. and Savoie, D. (1998), Introduction. In B. Peters and D. Savoie (eds), *Taking Stock*, London: McGill-Queens University Press.

Pierre, J. (1998), Public consultation and citizen participation. In B. Peters and D. Savoie (eds), *Taking Stock*, London: McGill-Queens University Press.

Piette, D. (1990), Community participation in formal decision-making mechanisms, *Health Promotion International*, 5, 3: 187–97.

Pollitt, C., Birchall, J. and Putman, K. (1998), *Decentralising Public Management*, London: Macmillan.

Potter, J. (1994), Consumerism and the public sector: how well does the coat fit? In D. McKevitt and A. Lawson (eds), *Public Sector Management: Theory, Critique and Practice*, London: Sage.

Pratchett, L. (1999), New fashions in public participation: towards greater democracy? *Parliamentary Affairs*, 52, 4: 616–33.

Roberts, N. (2002), Keeping public officials accountable through dialogue: resolving the accountability paradox, *Public Administration Review*, 62, 6: 658–69.

Rosenstone, S. and Hansen, J. (1993), *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*, New York: Macmillan.

Rowe, M. (1999), Joined up accountability: bringing the citizen back in, *Public Policy and Administration*, 14, 2: 91–102.

Seargeant, J. and Steele, J. (1998), *Consulting the Public*, London: Policy Studies Institute.

Seargeant, J. and Steele, J. (1999), *Who Asked You? The Citizen's Perspective on Participation*, London: Improvement and Development Agency.

6, Perri (1998), Ownership and the new politics of the public interest services, *Political Quarterly*, 69, 4: 404–14.

Skelcher, C. (1993), Involvement and empowerment in local public services, *Public Money and Management* (July–September).

Smith, D. H. (1994), Determinants of voluntary association participation and volunteering, *Non-profit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 23, 3: 243–63.

Snow, D. and Oliver, P. (1993), Social movements and collective behaviour: social psychological dimensions and considerations. In K. Cook, G. Fine and J. House (eds), *Sociological Perspectives on Social Psychology*, New York: Allyn and Bacon.

Snow, D., Rochford, E., Worden, S. and Benford, R. (1986), Frame alignment processes, micromobilization, and movement participation, *American Sociological Review*, 51: 464–81.

Sorokin, P. (1954), *The Ways and Power of Love*, Boston: Beacon Press.

Stewart, J. (1997), Innovation in democratic practice in local government, *Policy and Politics*, 24, 1: 29–41.

Stoker, G. (1997), Local political participation. In R. Hambleton (ed.), *New Perspectives on Local Governance*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

Tarrow, S. (1998), *Power in Movement*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tuckman, B. and Jensen, M. (1977), Stages of small group development revisited, *Group and Organizational Studies*, 2: 419–27.

Verba, S. and Nie, N. (1972), *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*, New York: Harper and Row.

Verba, S., Nie, N. and Kim, J. (1978), *Participation and Political Equality: A Seven Nation Comparison*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Verba, S., Schlozman, K. and Brady, H. (1995), *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Verba, S., Schlozman, K. and Brady, H. (2000), Rational action and political activity, *Journal of Theoretical Politics*, 12, 3: 243–68.

Vigoda, E. (2002), From responsiveness to collaboration: governance, citizens, and the next generation of public administration, *Public Administration Review*, 62, 5: 527–40.

Vigoda, E. (2003), Performance and democracy in the public sector: exploring some missing links in the study of administration and society, *International Journal of Public Administration*, 26, 8/9: 883–90.

Vugt, M. van, Snyder, M., Tyler, T. R. and Biel, A. (eds) (2000), *Cooperation in Modern Society*, London: Routledge.

Whiteley, P. (1995), Rational choice and political participation: evaluating the debate, *Political Research Quarterly*, 48: 211–34.

Whiteley, P. and Seyd, P. (1992), *Labour's Grass Roots*, Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Whiteley, P. and Seyd, P. (1996), Rationality and party activism: encompassing tests of alternative models of political participation, *European Journal of Political Research*, 29: 215–34.

Whiteley, P. and Seyd, P. (1998), New Labour—New Party? Paper given at Conference of American Political Science Association, Boston, 2–9 September.

Whiteley, P., Seyd, P., Richardson, J. and Bissell, P. (1993), Explaining party activism: the case of the British Conservative Party, *British Journal of Political Science*, 24: 79–94.

Wilcox, D. (1996), *The A–Z of Effective Participation*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

1.2

PUBLICATION 2

Simmons, R., Powell, M., Birchall, J. & Doheny, S. (2007)
''Citizen Governance': Opportunities for Inclusivity in Policy and Policy-Making?'
Policy and Politics, 35 (3): 455-475

'Citizen governance': opportunities for inclusivity in policy and policy making?

Richard Simmons, Johnston Birchall, Shane Doheny and Martin Powell

English

The term 'citizen governance' (CG) is currently attracting attention in policy circles. Yet there is no universally agreed definition, and the term is used in different ways. This article identifies key tensions between citizen governors' 'representation' and 'steering' roles, and presents a framework that attempts to make these tensions more explicit. Case study evidence suggests that the effectiveness of CG structures is contextual rather than universalistic, and that different sets of assumptions are often conflated in governance. We argue that if inclusivity in policy making is a genuine goal, these assumptions need to be made more explicit and accommodated in structures that work.

Français

A l'heure actuelle, le terme "citizen governance" (CG) attire l'attention dans les milieux politiques. Cependant, il n'existe pas de définition qui fasse l'unanimité et le terme est utilisé de différentes façons. Cet article identifie les tensions clé entre les rôles de représentation et de gouvernance des citoyens gouverneurs et présente une structure qui rend ces tensions plus explicites. Des preuves issues d'études de cas suggèrent que l'efficacité des structures CG est contextuelle plutôt qu'universaliste, et que les différents groupes d'hypothèses sont souvent regroupés en gouvernance. Nous soutenons que si l'inclusivité dans l'élaboration de politiques est un vrai but, ces hypothèses doivent être plus explicites et organisées selon des structures qui marchent.

Español

El término 'forma de gobierno del ciudadano' (CG) está actualmente atrayendo atención en los círculos políticos. Sin embargo, no existe un universal acuerdo de la definición y la terminología se utiliza de varias formas. Este artículo identifica tensiones claves entre los papeles de los gobernadores de 'representación y 'dirección', y presenta un marco que intenta hacer estas tensiones más explícitas. La evidencia de un caso de estudio sugiere que la eficacia de las estructuras de la CG es contextual en vez de universalista, y que diferentes tipos de suposiciones se combinan con frecuencia en la forma de gobierno. Discutimos que si la inclusión en la elaboración política es un objetivo genuino, estas suposiciones tienen que ser más explícitas y se tienen que acomodar a estructuras que funcionen.

Introduction

What is citizen governance?

The term 'citizen governance' (CG) is currently attracting attention in policy circles (IPPR, 2004; Home Office, 2005; ODPM, 2005a). This links up with current debates around the role of 'choice and voice' in public service reform, or the ways in which users are able to 'shape the service from below' (Cabinet Office, 2006).

> Choice and voice allow users to become more assertive customers.... But assertive customers can become active participants or citizens by taking greater responsibility for delivering services or increasing the chances of services producing positive outcomes. (Cabinet Office, 2006: 65)

Debates around issues of choice and voice in public services have been ongoing for as long as the modern welfare state itself. However, the context in which they exist is constantly changing. Although it is clear that government supports the introduction of greater choice and personalisation in public services, voice and 'localism' are also being supported as part of the government's approach to reform. The current position is made more explicit in the Select Committee report *Choice, voice and public services* (PASC, 2005), and the government's response (OPSR, 2005). Here, CG is explicitly identified with voice.

> Voice mechanisms are the way in which people's opinions and preferences are heard ... this could be through ... participation in the governance of public bodies.... The Government recognises the importance of voice mechanisms and is committed to strengthening them. (OPSR, 2005: 1)

> The Prime Minister has defined [voice] to mean 'direct user engagement whether in school governing bodies, Foundation Trust Boards, tenants forums'.... This is not an attempt to supplant local government, but to enhance it: 'voting is a blunt tool for the expression of complex opinions and detailed preferences'. (PASC, 2005: 2)

Despite the growing use of the term 'citizen governance', there is no universally agreed definition, and the brief existing literature uses the term in very different ways. A Web of Knowledge Search (title, keyword, abstract) found only four articles. Farrell (2000) discusses school governing bodies. Irvin and Stansbury (2004) link citizen governance to participatory decision-making processes. Sullivan (2001) and, later, Davis and Daly (2004) differentiate 'community governance' into community government (eg Stewart and Clarke, 1995), local governance (eg Stoker, 1996) and citizen governance (eg Atkinson, 1994; Box, 1998). Here, the CG perspective takes the view that elected local government can be damaging to community governance, something that can be rectified by applying communitarian principles to enhance the power of citizens and correspondingly limit the power of elected local government. In short, then, there is a problem of competing and unclear definitions of CG in the brief existing literature. At a very broad level, it is concerned with the involvement of citizens in decision-making and scrutiny roles in public services. It suggests more

inclusive decision making, allowing citizen governors to have more of a say and make more of a difference (Home Office, 2005). However, beyond these points, it appears to lack a clearly agreed meaning.

A useful way to cut through this impasse is through the recent Langlands Commission on Good Governance in Public Services, which aims to develop a common code and set of principles for good governance across public services. Although it does not explicitly use the CG term, the Commission defines a 'governor' as an appointed or elected member of a governing body, which has overall responsibility for directing and controlling an organisation. It is estimated that more than 450,000 people contribute in this way as governors to a wide range of public service organisations and partnerships (Langlands, 2004). Citizen governance is 'citizen', because it concerns non-executive directors or lay members as opposed to executive directors. It is 'governance' in the sense of the private sector corporate governance model (see Farrell, 2005). This is a clear but narrow definition. If we are to accept it, we have first to consider the links between citizen governance, wider processes of participation and processes of strategic 'management'.

Citizen governance, participation and management

As Skelcher et al (2005: 574) identify, there is a tension in governance between two public policy principles:

- effective democratic guidance and control to assure the public interest is served;
- effective programme delivery to increase community welfare.

Citizen governance is often related to notions of participation. However, while CG is always participation/active citizenship, participation/active citizenship is not always CG. The two are clearly related but, to the potential detriment of both, these relationships are not always made clear. Similarly, citizen governance can be related to notions of strategic management, whereby citizens exercise control or influence over public service organisations. The Langlands Report is not fully clear on the question of what citizen governors are 'for'. Based on the above, we argue that the answer lies in two sets of processes: representation and steering.

Citizen governors' first purpose is to *represent*. Supporters argue that they are a vital link between those who provide the services and those who receive them. Without people on the board representing citizens in general, and service users in particular, it is claimed that providers will tend to 'capture' the organisation and run it in their own interests. Even if, through a strong professional commitment to service, they avoid this kind of deformation, they will lose touch with the people they serve and provide the wrong kind of service. Who do governors speak for? This question is easier to answer in the private for-profit sector, where non-executive directors speak for shareholders, and in the mutual sector where they speak for members. In CG, there is a distinction between citizens in general and service users; both have in some way to be represented. Many citizen governors do represent the public in general, but others represent distinct geographical communities or types of public service user. This is a fine distinction, but it is a clear one. For example,

in community-based housing associations members of the board may represent the local community in general, or tenants in particular. As only the tenants pay rent and rely on the association for their home, there is a potential difference of interests that has to be recognised in the structure of governance. Similarly, parent governors in schools are distinguished from local authority representatives who represent a wider public interest. Beyond this, there is the problem of representing hard-to-reach categories; minority ethnic communites, the socially excluded, those who are in need but not currently receiving a service and so on. The answer to the question 'Who do they speak for?' is therefore unavoidably political, in the sense that it involves judgements about whose voice should be heard, who manages to speak loudest and who is most listened to.

The narrow definition of CG derived from the Langlands Report carries the danger of a sole focus on the 'board', the top-level decision-making body, rather than on wider and more participatory processes by which decisions get made. In the for-profit private sector, this is appropriate, as companies tend to have one board of directors and nothing much between them and the main body of shareholders. However, in most public service organisations there are many more people involved on other bodies that provide decentralised input into decision making at regional or local levels, or that provide advice to, or scrutiny of, the board. For example, the Tenant Participation Advisory Service has an executive board of six tenant and six landlord members, but it also has five regional boards and a National Consultative Forum that acts as a sounding board on policy matters. A broader definition of citizen governance could therefore include these kinds of contributory bodies. In the way representative governance structures are designed, then, we can expect complexity.

Citizen governance's second purpose is to *steer*. This comprises two important roles: setting the organisation's strategic direction and holding the executive to account. Citizen governors are therefore able to give leadership to the executive over the strategic direction of the organisation, with the aim of improving the quality of the service. In this, citizen governors provide key competencies to help identify how resources can be levered, relationships built, costs lowered, benefits maximised and so on. These competencies may arise from knowledge and experience gained in other contexts external to the public service organisation. However, citizen governors typically also bring experiential knowledge of how the service provided by the organisation impacts on the citizen or service user. In this respect, they may employ both a direct knowledge of the service and an ability to empathise with people in similar circumstances. These competencies also help ensure that citizen governors are able to hold the executive to account. It is a key part of their role to force those with executive responsibilities to give an account of what they are doing and why. In turn, within their own stakeholder constituencies they may also have to provide an account.

From the above perspective, CG, defined as citizen involvement on the governing bodies of public service organisations, provides a potential bridge between the organisation's wider stakeholder constituencies and its executive management function. However, the boundaries between participation and governance and between governance and management are not always clearly delineated, overlapping to greater or lesser extent (see Figure 1). If the narrow definition is to be accepted,

Figure 1: Overlaps between participation, governance and executive management
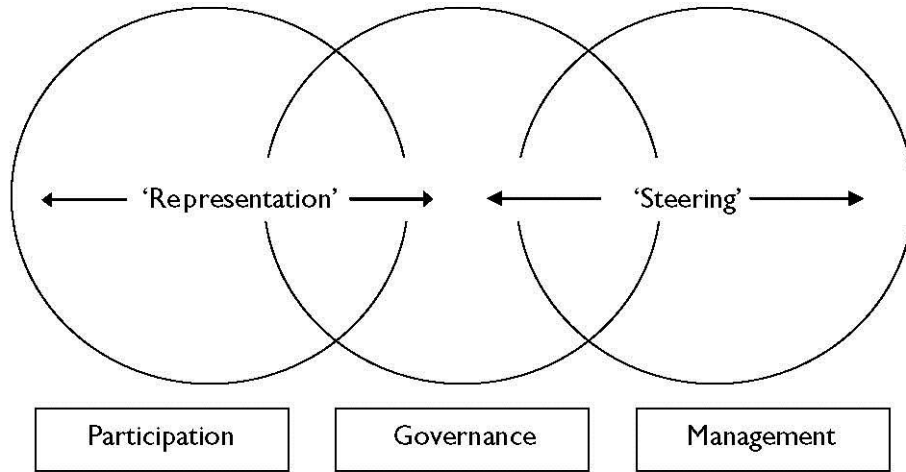
CG should therefore not be considered in isolation from more inclusive processes of participation, nor from the operational life of the organisation.

However, the extent to which these processes are considered to be important to the role of citizen governors varies in different service areas and different organisational contexts. We need to gain a better understanding of how these different contexts can affect the development of structures and processes for citizen governance.

Citizen governance in context

The growth of citizen governance has taken place in a public sector reform context where agencies have been subject to a loosening of centrally prescribed procedural rules (Dunleavy and Hood, 1994), but increased performance monitoring and responsibility for service outputs (Pollitt et al, 1999). This provides one set of pressures with which citizen governors must engage. However, processes of agencification have also resulted in accusations of a 'democratic deficit' (eg Stewart, 1994). Amid a growing consensus that representative democracy without participative democracy is insufficient (eg Burns et al 1994; Pratchett, 2000), citizen involvement in governance is based on the view that 'ordinary people' should have more of a say in shaping the public services that play a major role in their lives. Moreover, as the fragmentation of provision has been matched by a 'fragmentation of the public' (Corrigan and Joyce, 1997), there has been greater recognition of a need to accommodate a wide range of stakeholder perspectives within governance.

A typology of citizen governance

It is possible to differentiate between different types of governing bodies on the basis of a range of factors (Sullivan and Skelcher, 2002). These include:

- purpose (strategic, sectoral or neighbourhood);
- scale (from single estates to large populations);
- legal form (eg statutory body, joint authority, joint committee, unincorporated association, company issuing share capital, company limited by guarantee, industrial and provident society, trust, charity);
- accountability (some bodies' main lines of accountability may be upwards (eg the regional health authorities of the late 1990s) while others are downwards (eg membership organisations);
- composition (representation of citizen governors on governing bodies may sometimes comprise the whole of the body, sometimes about half of the membership, and sometimes just the token representation of a single individual).

All of these dimensions are important and have some bearing on the development of structures and processes for CG. However, the balance between the democratic pressures for representation and functional pressures for steering tend to be implicit rather than explicit within these dimensions. Attempts to unpick this, taking all these dimensions into account, would lead to an unnecessarily complex and unwieldy categorisation. Instead, we present here a simple typology containing two dimensions that make the balance between the above pressures more explicit: the governance arrangements (simple/complex) and basis of appointment of citizen governors (election/nomination/appointment).

First, CG structures may be classified as either 'simple' or 'complex'. 'Simple' structures involve a unitary governing body, while 'complex' structures involve at least one further tier. Examples of the former are more common in UK public services (eg school governing bodies). Examples of the latter occur where additional tiers either provide decentralised input into decision making at regional/local levels (eg the Tenant Participation Advisory Service), or advice to or scrutiny of the board (eg NHS foundation trusts). Second, CG structures may be classified by how citizen governors come to be involved. They may be directly elected by a legitimate constituency. Alternatively, they may emerge from existing groups invited to nominate (or 'indirectly elect') a representative. Such groups are generally invited to participate in governance on the basis of their association with a particular interest or demographic group. Finally, they may be appointed, either by existing board members, or by a specially convened appointments panel or commission. The criteria for such appointments tend to be individual merit, or possessing the 'right kind of skills'.

The resulting typology is presented in Figure 2. The balance of responsibilities attached to the citizen governor role might differ in the different governance 'spaces' that are created. Each of the above models is based on different assumptions. For example, within complex structures there appears to be an assumption that a simple, unitary structure would provide insufficient space for all the work of governance. However, the basis for the division of work within complex structures is not always made explicit. In particular, we ask whether tasks of representation and steering are replicated within each of the different bodies in complex governance structures, or somehow separated.

Figure 2: A typology of 'spaces' for citizen governance

	'Simple'	'Complex'
'Directly elected'	A eg school governing bodies	D eg NHS foundation trusts
'Nominated'	B eg new leisure trusts	E eg Local Strategic Partnerships
'Appointed'	C eg probation boards	F eg Network Rail

Similarly, different assumptions underpin the different ways in which citizen governors come to be involved in governance structures. Although all three types may be in some sense representative, they differ in other key aspects. For example, Skelcher et al's (2005) empirical work on democratic practices in partnerships shows how issues of legitimacy and accountability are important. When we map the question of *legitimacy* on to the 'elected/nominated/appointed' element of the typology it takes the appearance of a ladder, with the elected being the most legitimate, followed by nominated and appointed. *Accountability* can be imagined to follow in the same order. Directly elected citizen governors must face periodic re-election at which point they can be held accountable. Those who are nominated from other organisations are only *directly* accountable to the members of that organisation. Accountability to the organisation on which they are nominated as citizen governors is generally more indirect, as there is no mechanism to vote them off. Appointed citizen governors face no democratic practice of accountability. However, for some commentators such issues are unimportant. As former Conservative minister William Waldegrave expresses it:

> There is no guarantee ... that by periodically expressing his or her democratic decision at the ballot box the citizen ... will necessarily obtain ... efficient, properly accountable, responsive public services. Services are not necessarily made responsive to the public simply by giving citizens a democratic voice, and a distant one at that, in their make up. (in Powell, 1997: 79–80).

From this perspective, democratic issues are bypassed by presenting the running of public services as a non-political, managerial issue, where efficiency is offered as an adequate substitute for accountability (Cooper et al, 1995: 11).

Tensions within the model

At this point, it is clear that an important tension has emerged. Is CG 'unavoidably political', as was claimed earlier? Is it 'non-political'? Or can it be both? We believe these tensions between democracy/accountability and functional efficiency/competence are made more evident in our typology. Hence, in a *simple, appointed* board the assumption is that governance is a technical matter, demanding specialised skills and knowledge rather than the gathering together of stakeholder viewpoints. Indeed, the addition of a range of competing viewpoints may be regarded as

unnecessary and counterproductive 'noise', distracting board members from important technical tasks. The risk is that the governing body does not draw widely enough on such stakeholder perspectives in its work, thereby excluding the claims of groups and interests left unrepresented.

In a *simple, directly elected* board the assumption is that legitimacy and accountability are paramount. Consequently, it is assumed that those interests that command the greatest support from the electorate will win a place on the board. Open elections mitigate against the narrow dominance of governance by technical 'experts'. However, the risks are that elections result in dominance of the board by majority interests (with implications for diversity) or gaps being left in the governing body's 'skills mix', or both.

In a *simple, nominated* board these assumptions may be less clear cut, reflecting one or other of the above models or a mix of both. For example, where there is no constituency from which to elect representatives, nominees may be sought from a range of stakeholder organisations as a proxy for direct election. Alternatively, nominees may be sought as a way to ensure that the necessary range of specialist skills is brought together in the governing body.

In sum, each of the *simple* models in our typology reflects a constant tension between a board that is competent and one that is representative. One of the ways these tensions may be avoided is to make the governance arrangements more *complex*. Here, one tier of governance may focus on the more 'technical' aspects, requiring skills and specialised knowledge. The second tier may then focus on gathering together the views of a wide range of stakeholders, where legitimacy to speak as a representative is important. In this scenario, complexity in the environment (eg between strategic/operational levels, or national/regional/local levels of scale) is therefore met with complexity in governance arrangements (Turnbull, 2001, 2002). It is easier to find examples of complex governance arrangements in 'directly elected' and 'nominated' than in 'appointed' bodies. In the case of appointed bodies, having one group of experts checking on or advising another may seem an unnecessary precaution. In elected and (some) nominated bodies complexity in governance allows both a forum for 'politics' and a forum for technical steering.

In the following case studies we seek to establish how the relationships that have been built implicitly into the different spaces for citizen governance work out in practice. One case is presented for each of the categories in Figure 2.

Case studies from the typology of spaces for citizen governance

Case A: simple/elected

School governing bodies

School governing bodies tend to take a simple, elected form. Although their history extends from the 19th century, the 1986 and 1988 Education Acts increased the powers of these boards (Creese and Bradley, 1997; Ranson et al, 2005a). Schools have a unitary board comprised of between 10 and 22 members (depending on numbers on the school roll), employing a multi-stakeholder approach involving parents, teachers, local education authority (LEA) nominees, co-opted members and

the headteacher (unless the head decides not to be a governor) (Farrell, 2005). Both parent and teacher representatives are elected. However, while these arrangements are meant to ensure that sufficient diversity of views and experience are represented, governors of a particular category do not formally 'represent' that group on the governing body. For example, 'parent governors do not act as a representative of the parents at the school and do not report back to them' (www.governornet.co.uk).

LEA governors are appointed by the local authority and are usually, but not always, local councillors. They are intended to 'consist of persons representing or reflecting the main interests concerned with the work of the school' (1986 Education Act, para 221). Co-opted governors are appointed by at least two-thirds of other governors; co-option is aimed at involving people with skills that are of particular use to the board. School governing bodies are 'advised to include at least one representative from business or industry' (Thody and Punter, 2000: 185). The involvement of business people is intended to support school governing bodies' key objective, 'to carry out their functions with the aim of taking a largely strategic role in the running of the school' (DfEE, 2000: 1). Nevertheless, only a small percentage of business professionals and few senior managers become involved (Thody and Punter, 2000).

Leadership and management are largely constructed through the relationship between the headteacher and the chair of the board (Earley, 2003; Ranson et al, 2005a), with the headteacher expected to implement the decisions made by the board. Hofman et al (2002) argue that where there is coherence between governors, the headteacher, staff and parents, a sense of community emerges that benefits the whole school (see also Creese and Bradley, 1997). Ranson et al (2005b) are more circumspect, saying that while school governors matter, it is unclear whether good governance improves schools or governance is improved by improving schools.

Case B: simple/nominated

New leisure trusts

New leisure trusts (NLTs) have been established in over 100 different local authority locations during the last decade. Here, management responsibility for leisure facilities previously managed directly by the local authority such as sports centres, swimming pools, theatres and country parks is transferred to newly created independent organisations (Simmons, 2003, 2004). The governance arrangements within NLTs vary. A common variant sees a simple, unitary board structure populated by individuals nominated from three sources: private and voluntary sector managers nominated by their own organisation; local councillors nominated by their local party group; and elected or nominated individuals from the local community or user groups. One clear intention is to ensure that the relevant stakeholder constituencies are represented in governance. NLTs are aware of accusations of a 'democratic deficit' as they become independent from the Council (Simmons, 2003). However, NLTs are often constituted as 'companies limited by guarantee', meaning that citizen governors are mandated to put the best interests of the company first, restricting the extent to which nominees are able to represent their 'home' constituency's interest.

Alongside this, citizen governors are often prized in NLTs for the skills they can bring to the organisation, particularly human resource management and finance/accounting; NLTs' independence means that they can no longer rely on the council

for these functions. In practice, 'hybrid' arrangements are therefore fairly common, combining nomination with election (eg of user representatives) and appointment (eg of business representatives). This may be a genuine attempt to reconcile different interests, skills and knowledge in a single structure. However, in some cases citizen governors (particularly community/user representatives) seem to have been included as a 'concession' to representativeness, raising the question of tokenism.

Evaluating the efficacy of CG in NLTs is difficult. However, Simmons (2003, 2004) found that the inclusion of a wider range of stakeholders in governance was often acknowledged to have enhanced the level and quality of debate about leisure services, even by councillors who had previously enjoyed direct, authoritative control.

Case C: simple/appointed

Probation boards

Prior to the 2000 Criminal Justice and Courts Services Act, the probation service was governed by '54 chiefs loosely accountable to 54 separate committees and to the Secretary of State' (Wargent, 2002: 184). The Act reorganised the committee structure into governance through boards. The reorganised boards were designed to be smaller than the previous committees, which were composed mostly of magistrates. While these changes have meant that the service is becoming more closely controlled by central government, space for the citizen governor has been tentatively created (Nellis, 1999; Smith and Vanstone, 2002; Smith, 2005).

Probation boards vary from 7 to 15 members, including a chair, a chief officer who is a civil servant appointed by the Home Secretary, and an appointee of the Lord Chancellor who is either a high court judge, a circuit judge or a recorder. The other members consist of magistrates, elected members of local authorities within the area, and members drawn from the public living or working in the locality (www.probationboards.co.uk). New appointments are made through open competition by the Secretary of State. Their work encompasses involving and representing the interests of the local community, forming partnerships and links with other sectors and agencies, raising public awareness, monitoring and assessing the area's performance against the annual plan (with the aim of continually improving performance) and reviewing financial management and probity. However, it has been asserted that these boards were set up so the Home Office would retain a large degree of authority over the workings of the service (Nellis, 1999: 308), particularly since the chief officers, although members of the probation board, are appointed by the Home Secretary (Wargent, 2002: 186).

As yet, there is no discussion of the effectiveness of CG in probation boards. Although a relatively new creation, it is still surprising that these issues have not been addressed. However, a potential reason may lie in the Chief Executive of the Probation Boards Association's commentary on the development of probation boards:

> Lip service was paid by the Home Office in all the various discussions to the importance of the local dimension but there was a dearth of thinking about how it might be made to work in practice if central control was going to be so strong. (Wargent, 2002: 186)

Case D: complex/elected

NHS foundation trusts

NHS foundation trusts (FTs) were established in the 2003 Health and Social Care Act as a new type of NHS hospital, set up as independent public interest organisations 'modelled on co-operative societies and mutual organisations' (DH, 2003). At the time of writing there are 58 FTs, with more expected to be created in further 'waves' of reform. They are controlled and run locally, and it is intended that local public accountability will replace central state control. They have increased freedoms to retain operating surpluses and access a wider range of capital funding to invest in delivery of new services.

FTs have multi-stakeholder governance structures, in which members of the public, patients and employees are eligible to become members (Lea and Mayo, 2002). Residents and patients can register as members, along with the trust's staff. These members elect a top-tier board of governors. This board then appoints the chair and non-executive directors to a board of directors who are responsible for day-to-day management. The potential advantage of having two tiers is that members can elect the top level to be representative, while the management board have the skills needed to run the business.

FTs have not been around long enough for the efficacy of this form of CG to be demonstrated. However, a survey of FT chief executives found that the inclusion of a wider range of interests in governance has been widely welcomed (Carvel, 2004). FTs like the legitimacy of having a governing council elected by local people, and this is perceived to have led to a greater sense of ownership by the community. The first two waves of elections for citizen governors have also been reasonably successful in democratic terms. FTs have signed up nearly 298,000 people as members since 2003. Of these, half of the public members and 37% of all members voted in the first elections. There was also plenty of competition, with 1,824 nominations for 578 places. There is more work to be done building on the membership base to make it representative of minority ethnic groups and hard-to-reach groups. However, the Homerton Trust, in the diverse area of Hackney, already reports a balanced ethnic original profile among its members.

Case E: complex/nominated

Local Strategic Partnerships

Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are another relatively new policy instrument (Johnson and Osborne, 2003); the majority set up following government guidance in 2001 (ODPM, 2003: 7). According to the ODPM (2006: 19), 'an LSP is a non-statutory, non-executive organisation which:

1. Brings together at a local level the different parts of the public sector as well as the private, business, community and voluntary sectors so that different initiatives and services support each other and work together.
2. Operates at a level which enables strategic decisions to be taken yet is close enough to the grassroots to allow direct community engagement'.

Membership is supposed to reflect local priorities and circumstances (DETR, 2001), bringing together various public, voluntary, private, business and community organisations in a single non-statutory and non-executive organisation. The aim is to act together, taking both a supportive role and a strategic perspective in the local area. Member organisations nominate an individual to represent that organisation on the LSP. Complexity in the governance structure is reflected in the use most LSPs make of a 'core' and 'non-core' membership: '[t]he mean number of core members is 20, while the mean number of non-core members is 80' (ODPM, 2003: 8). To make things even more complex, thematic subgroups are often formed to deal with the specific issues faced by the partnership (ODPM, 2003: 14). Beyond this, working or task groups enable the involvement of members of the voluntary and community sectors without involving them in the work of the executive or board, while forums enable partnerships to involve a much broader membership.

LSPs represent an interesting and potentially fruitful policy instrument for CG. Use of a multi-stakeholder framework and a range of involvement mechanisms with both core and peripheral members mean that LSPs make available a variety of channels for citizen involvement. Furthermore, because LSPs bring strategic and local interests together and seek to form and build on a cross-community consensus, it would appear that citizen governors are not only involved, but are also listened to and their views taken into account. However, there is often a tension between managing an effective partnership and involving all relevant voices. Evaluations of LSPs have yet to provide any definitive comment on their effectiveness, although survey evidence suggests that 'linkages between the LSP Board and the various 'sub-local' bodies are not considered to be as effective as they should be in practice' (ODPM, 2005b: 5, 6).

Case F: complex/appointed
Network Rail

Network Rail is the non-profit successor to Railtrack, a conventional investor-owned business set up by the Conservative government in the early 1990s as part of its privatisation of British Rail. Railtrack performed badly, partly because of a failure of governance; its board of directors was heavily skewed towards financial rather than engineering skills; and its policy of contracting out maintenance rather than keeping it in-house led to escalating costs and a series of major accidents.

It was replaced by a public interest company, Network Rail. This is an example of a complex governance structure whose members are largely appointed. However, the governance structure that was agreed on was an uneasy compromise between the two principles of democratic accountability and business effectiveness. The rail regulator demanded that the board look like that of a shareholding company, although it had to have a majority of non-executives and had to make sure that most of them were engineers and railway experts. On top of this business-like board was grafted a membership council, with between 100 and 120 'members'. Twenty-eight were commercial members (mainly train operating companies), leaving room for 70 or so public members. Not surprisingly, given the vast sums that were needed in grant aid, a special membership was reserved for the Strategic Rail Authority, which can sack all the other members if the company gets into trouble. The membership council is

unusual, because its members are appointed not by independent stakeholder groups such as rail passengers but by the board of directors. The members are vetted first by a semi-independent committee, but the board can veto anyone they do not like. Also, in joining the council, members are asked to put their own interests aside and consider first the interests of the company; the members' council is not expected to act as a deliberative democracy, in which different interests are expressed and reconciled.

At the time of its setting up, this structure was heavily criticised in a New Economics Foundation report (Birchall, 2002). Ed Mayo, the foundation's then director, said in a press release:

> There is a closed loop of accountability. The directors are accountable to members who are effectively chosen by the directors. What we've got here is a kind of crazy hybrid. There should be a clear, delineated process and procedure for governance.

In their defence, a Network Rail spokesperson said that members were appointed by an independent selection panel, and that directors only had the power to veto members because of a legal technicality and that they did not intend to use it.

Citizen governance as 'good governance'

'What works' in citizen governance?

We have argued that there are good conceptual reasons to justify different spaces for CG. However, there is relatively little definitive evidence from our case studies of 'what works' in terms of process (such as how well the partners work together in addressing joint aims) and particularly outcomes (such as changes in service delivery, and subsequent effects on the health or well-being of service users) (eg Dowling et al, 2004). This is partly because of inherent problems in evaluating 'what works'; direct attributions are often difficult. However, it is also partly because the criteria of success have often remained unclear or implicit. On the one hand, there is a need to assess the contribution of CG to the drive for quality (in terms of the impacts of the service and the incidence of these impacts) and efficiency (ie the value of service impacts versus the costs of achieving them). On the other, there is a need to consider the contribution of CG to democratic enhancement. Making these criteria more explicit might aid understanding of whether democratic guidance and control or a more 'technical' approach to governance better serves the public interest – for example, providing answers to such questions as:

- Does democratic guidance and control enhance or reduce the social value of the service impacts or the efficiency of their delivery?
- Does a more technical approach to governance result in deleterious effects that might be minimised or eliminated by greater democratic input?

The answers to such questions are contextual and cannot be assumed. Yet the evidence presented is often sketchy on these matters. Our case study material shows that there is relatively little rigorous evidence of 'what works' in terms of the efficacy

of citizen governance models (see Figure 3). This is generally the case in similar fields: for example, Sullivan and Skelcher (2002: 181) claim that relatively little is known about the impact of citizen participation in collaboration and its outcomes. However, there is more material suggesting the advantages and disadvantages in the different cases. While we do not claim that the case studies are representative of their wider type of CG model, they do provide some interesting material about each model.

What does the evidence in Figure 3 tell us about how the assumptions in our typology work out in practice? First we can examine the simple/complex dimension. In our simple models, there appear to be significant tensions between the dual roles of representation and steering that are not being resolved at the level of the organisation. The lack of space for doing so can often leave individual citizen governors to attempt to resolve these tensions for themselves. In our complex models, there is scope for the representation and steering roles to be accommodated within different tiers of governance, but the success of this depends on how the structures operate. In FTs the board of directors is accountable to the board of governors, who elect them. Democratic practices and steering responsibilities appear to be located appropriately in this arrangement. This does not appear to be the situation in Network Rail, where both tiers of governance have a technical focus on steering, and the board of directors appoint (or veto the appointment) of members of the overseeing Membership Council. Arguably, LSPs fall somewhere in between these positions; their claims to inclusiveness and representativeness are mediated by the weak accountability relationships between the powerful 'core' members and less influential 'non-core' members. There is evidence that complex governance structures are better able to resolve the tensions between representation and steering than simple ones, but they will only do this if they are set up to do so. If the roles of representation and steering are conflated, these tensions may not be addressed explicitly.

What about the appointed/nominated/elected dimension? Again, there is some evidence to support the underpinning assumptions. In the appointed models, both probation boards and Network Rail appear to be quite tentative about notions of representativeness. A 'technical' rather than more 'political' agenda comes to the fore. In the 'nominated' models, there appears to be greater commitment to a wider range of stakeholder views, although both NLTs and LSPs have less 'democratic anchorage' (Skelcher et al, 2005) than it may outwardly seem. The nomination of individuals from key stakeholder constituencies does not guarantee connection back to those constituencies. Finally, in the 'elected' models, the importance of democracy varies with the context. For example, there appears to be more institutional commitment to democratic processes in FTs than in school governing bodies. This may be due to the requirement for FTs to build and sustain a representative local membership base, but it is also dependent to some extent on the way that governing bodies are operationalised (Ranson et al, 2005a – see Figure 4). Some operational models are more receptive to notions of 'participatory democracy' (eg 4), while a more technical and 'managerialist' agenda is more dominant in others (eg 1, 2).

Figure 3: Evidence of 'what works' in different 'spaces' for citizen governance

Model	Advantages	Disadvantages	Unclear
A. Directly elected/simple eg school governing bodies	Diversity of views taken into account. LEA appointees and co-optees from business/industry provide necessary skills	No attempt to be representative – even 'elected' parent governors/ teacher governors	Impact of CG on service outcomes/ efficiency
B. Nominated/simple eg new leisure trusts	Relevant stakeholder constituencies reflected in governance. Acquisition of a base of key skills on the board. Wider stakeholder input 'enhances the level and quality of debate'	Representation role restricted by mandate given to citizen governors. Risk of tokenism, especially with user representatives	Impact of CG on service outcomes/ efficiency
C. Appointed/simple eg probation boards	Able to appoint citizen governors with desired skills/ backgrounds	Closely controlled by central government. 'Dearth of thinking' about local representation	Impact of CG on service outcomes/ efficiency
D. Directly elected/complex eg NHS foundation trusts	Interest high in terms of members. Board of governors representative, board of directors has necessary skills. Legitimacy of governors. Greater sense of ownership by the community	Interest low in terms of local citizens – more work needed to build membership. Some FTs do better than others in terms of local demographic representativeness	Impact of CG on service outcomes/ efficiency

Figure 3: Evidence of 'what works' in different 'spaces' for citizen governance

Model	Advantages	Disadvantages	Unclear
E. Nominated/complex eg LSPs	Membership reflects local priorities and circumstances. Brings strategic and local interests together. A wide variety of channels for citizen involvement	Linkages between the Board and sub-local bodies 'not as effective as they should be in practice'	Impact of CG on service outcomes/ efficiency
F. Appointed/complex eg Network Rail	Ability to call on a wide body of expertise and experience	'Closed loop of accountability' – board appoints members to its overseeing membership council. Representative role of membership council representatives limited by mandate given. Not expected that different interests expressed and reconciled	Impact of CG on service outcomes/ efficiency

Figure 4: Modes of school governance (Ranson et al, 2005a: 362, 363)

Models of school governance	Role of citizen governors
1. Governance as 'deliberative forum'	Discussion is led by the headteacher as professional leader. Head as authority figure who citizen governors are slow to question.
2. Governance as 'consultative sounding board'	Citizen governor as a sounding board for strategies and policies provided by the headteacher.
3. Governance as an 'executive board'	Citizen governors take responsibility and call the school to account. Focus is on scrutinising school rules and policies.
4. Governance as a 'governing body'	Citizen governors take overarching responsibility for the school. Focus is on the conduct and direction of the school.

The last point is an important one. In practice, the processes that take place within different governance spaces are 'messy' (Lowndes, 1997). Representation and steering functions can come into conflict with one another, causing confusion and inertia. In this situation, some citizen governors will accuse the governing body of being a 'talking shop', while others will criticise it for 'making decisions on the hoof' or 'riding roughshod over proper debate'. Arguably, this situation is more likely where the representation and steering roles are conflated in governance structures (as in most simple and some complex models). A possible exception is the National Health Service FT model, where representative debate at the top tier of governance (supported by member participation) is carried forward into the steering role performed by the non-executive directors it elects to the management board, and vice versa.

It is also possible for one of the roles to be neglected in governance. This reflects the extent to which the organisation is committed to particular sets of principles. However, we argue that good governance is best served by a balance between principle and pragmatism. Governing bodies may aspire to the values, systems and practices associated with the principles to which their organisation is committed, but environmental contingencies make it necessary to borrow from other approaches, often to the neglect of principle. For example, for appointed boards, where the 'principle' is one of rational management, pragmatism involves more institutional effort being devoted to democratic processes. For elected boards, where the principle is one of participatory democracy, pragmatism involves more institutional effort on steering. Where one or other of the representation or steering roles is neglected, the danger is of entrenchment and ossification.

Some organisations may, on an ongoing basis, need more steering than representation, and vice versa. Furthermore, in the life of an organisation there will also be times when the external context demands greater attention be given to one or other of the representation or steering roles. However, it is rare for public service organisations to need exclusively one or the other. As we have emphasised, key questions remain about the trade-offs that must generally be made between 'technical' and 'democratic' inputs to CG. The key question, at different times and

in different places, is how to strike the balance so as to maximise their positive 'net impact' in CG.

The importance of context

Our analysis indicates that CG is contextual rather than universalistic. In the relatively simple world of private sector corporate governance, the Higgs Report (2003: 13) concluded: 'I do not presume that a 'one size fits all' approach to governance is appropriate'. This is even more so for the complex world of the public sector. A wide variety of factors suggest that governance arrangements for one organisation may not be appropriate for another. These include the contextual factors of scale, purpose, legal form, accountability and composition that we touched on earlier. Nevertheless, each situation is not completely unique: there are commonalities between them (eg Parker, 2000). In particular, they all have to try and resolve the above tensions between representation and steering.

Governance structures are part of a wider organisational 'architecture', and it is sensible to design them in the most appropriate way (Goodin, 1996). We believe that the two dimensions within our typology force people to think more clearly about what is important in citizen governance, particularly with regard to the balance between representation and steering. However, as our case studies demonstrate, the way that structures for citizen governance are set up provides just one side of the equation in the resolution of such tensions. Once the architecture is in place, organisations need to find ways to ensure that key values (eg managerial/technocratic, democratic) are both institutionalised in the organisation and internalised in individuals. In other words, ongoing 'institutional effort' is required to make the structures work. Moreover, organisations can benefit from linking governance structures back to wider processes of participation and strategic management. Support for the representation role requires linkages to wider participation processes, so that there is a ready flow of information from different stakeholder constituencies to citizen governors and vice versa. Support for the steering role requires dedicated staff support, the provision of high-quality information and access to relevant training. As well as making citizen governors feel more confident in their role, such support should help them get a more accurate picture and feel more embedded in organisational life.

Conclusions

While the term 'citizen governance' has recently attracted attention in policy circles, there is no universally agreed definition, and it is used in very different ways. There is also a degree of confusion about who citizen governors are, what they do, and the effectiveness of their roles. We argue that there is an important tension in the role of citizen governors between processes of representation and steering. Combining classifications of both governance structures ('simple' or 'complex') and processes of appointment ('directly elected', 'nominated' or 'appointed') to form a relatively straightforward typology, we have examined six very different examples of CG to see how these tensions tend to work out in practice. The assumptions that underpin each of the categories in our typology are largely supported, but are mediated by

a range of contextual factors. This suggests that the effectiveness of CG structures is contextual rather than universalistic. However, no situation is completely unique – particularly when it comes to resolving tensions between citizen governors' representation and steering roles.

Our typology is offered as a way to develop greater understanding of the assumptions that underlie different approaches. If inclusivity in policy making is a genuine goal, there is a need for the twin aims of competence and representativeness to be made more explicit and consciously designed into the structures and processes of citizen governance. Beyond this, the current lack of specificity in understanding the contribution of CG to either (1) the production of service impacts or (2) democratic enhancement prevents many service organisations from understanding how best to maximise the positive 'net impact' in their own situation. There is a need to develop a contingency theory relating features of the context to the contribution that alternative CG arrangements make to 'what works'. In other words, future research could focus more particularly on 'what works' in terms of how different models of CG have different effects on the above aspects in different contexts. This would support the further important aim of greater flexibility in striking the balance between 'technical' and 'democratic' inputs in citizen governance.

References

Atkinson, D. (1994) *The common sense of community*, London: Demos.

Birchall, J. (2002) *A mutual trend: How to run rail and water in the public interest*, London: New Economics Foundation.

Box, R. (1998) *Citizen governance: Leading American communities into the 21st century*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Burns, D., Hambleton, R. and Hoggett, P. (1994) The politics of decentralisation, Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Cabinet Office (Strategy Unit) (2006) *The UK government's approach to public service reform: A discussion paper*, London: Cabinet Office.

Carvel, J. (2004) 'NHS ties are cut – but the red tape remains', *The Guardian*, 13 December.

Cooper, L., Coote, A., Davies, A. and Jackson, C. (1995) *Voices off: Tackling the democratic deficit in health*, London: IPPR.

Corrigan, P. and Joyce, P. (1997) 'Reconstructing public management', *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, vol 10, no 5: 417–32.

Creese, M. and Bradley, H. (1997) 'Ways in which governing bodies contribute to school improvement: findings from a pilot project', *School Leadership and Management*, vol 17, no 1: 107–15.

Davis, H. and Daly, G. (2004) 'From community government to communitarian partnership? Approaches to devolution in Birmingham', *Local Government Studies*, vol 30, no 2: 182–95.

DETR (Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions) (2001) *Local Strategic Partnerships: Government guidance*, London: DETR.

DfEE (Department for Education and Employment) (2000) *Roles of governing bodies and head teachers*, London: DfEE.

DH (Department of Health) (2003) *NHS foundation trusts*, London: DH.

Dowling, B., Powell, M. and Glendinning, C. (2004) 'Conceptualising successful partnerships', *Health and Social Care in the Community*, vol 12, no 4: 309–17.

Dunleavy, P. and Hood, C. (1994) 'From old public administration to new public management', *Public Money and Management*, vol 14, no 3: 9–16.

Earley, P. (2003) 'Monitoring, managing or meddling? Governing Bodies and the evaluation of school performance', *Educational Management and Administration*, vol 28, no 2: 199–210.

Farrell, C. (2000) 'Citizen participation in governance', *Public Money and Management*, vol 20, issue 1: 31–7.

Farrell, C.M. (2005) 'Governance in the UK public sector: the involvement of the Governing Board', *Public Administration*, vol 83, no 1: 89–110.

Goodin, R. (ed) (1996) *The theory of institutional design*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Higgs, D. (2003) *Review of the role and effectiveness of non-executive directors*, London: DTI.

Hofman, R.H., Hofman, W.H.A. and Guldemond, H. (2002) 'School governance, culture, and student achievement', *International Journal of Leadership in Education*, vol 5, no 3: 249–72.

Home Office (2005) *Together we can: A government action plan led by the Home Office*, London: Home Office.

IPPR (Institute for Public Policy Research) (2004) *Lonely citizens: Report of the Working Party on Active Citizenship*, London: IPPR.

Irvin, R. and Stansbury, J. (2004) 'Citizen participation in decision making: is it worth the effort?', *Public Administration Review*, vol 64, no 1: 55–65.

Johnson, C. and Osborne, S.P. (2003) 'Local Strategic Partnerships, neighbourhood renewal, and the limits to co-governance', *Public Money and Management*, vol 23, issue 3: 147–54.

Langlands, Sir A. (2004) *The good governance standard for public services*, London: ODPM and CIPFA.

Lea, R. and Mayo, E. (2002) *The mutual health service*, London: NEF.

Lowndes, V. (1997) '"We are learning to accommodate mess": four propositions about management change in local governance', *Public Policy and Administration*, vol 12, no 2: 80–94.

Nellis, M. (1999) 'Towards 'the field of corrections': modernising the probation service in the late 1990s', *Social Policy and Administration*, vol 33, no 3: 302–23.

ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) (2003) *Evaluation of Local Strategic Partnerships: Report of a survey of all English LSPs*, London: The Stationery Office.

ODPM (2005a) *Vibrant local leadership*, London: ODPM.

ODPM (2005b) *National evaluation of Local Strategic Partnerships issues paper: Below the Local Strategic Partnership*, London: The Stationery Office.

ODPM (2006) *National evaluation of Local Strategic Partnerships: Formative evaluation and action research programme 2002–2005: Final report*, London: The Stationery Office.

OPSR (2005) 'Choice in public services is a means to promote improvement and fairness', Cabinet Office news release CAB 032/05, 18 July, downloaded 06/06/06 from www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/newsroom/news_releases/2005/050718_choice.asp?ID=158

Parker, M. (2000) *Organizational culture and identity*, London: Sage Publications.

PASC (Public Administration Select Committee) (2005) *Choice, voice and public services: An issues and questions paper*, London: PASC.

Pollitt, C., Packwood, T., Hanney, S., Rothwell, S. and Roberts, S. (1999) *Trajectories and options*, Helsinki: Ministry of Finance.

Powell, M. (1997) *Evaluating the NHS*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Pratchett, L. (ed) (2000) *Renewing local democracy*, London: Frank Cass.

Ranson, S., Arnott, M., McKeown, P., Martin, J. and Smith, P. (2005a) 'The participation of volunteer citizens in school governance', *Educational Review*, vol 57, no 3: 357–71.

Ranson, S., Farrell, C., Peim, N. and Smith, P. (2005b) 'Does governance matter for school improvement?', *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, vol 16, no 3: 305–25.

Simmons, R. (2003) *New leisure trusts*, Lower Basildon: Institute for Leisure and Amenity Management.

Simmons, R. (2004) 'A trend to trust? The rise of new leisure trusts in the UK', *Managing Leisure: An International Journal*, vol 9, no 3: 159–77.

Skelcher, C., Mathur, N. and Smith, M. (2005) 'The public governance of collaborative spaces: discourse, design, and democracy', *Public Administration*, vol 83, no 3: 573–96.

Smith, D. (2005) 'Probation and social justice', *British Journal of Social Work*, vol 35: 612–37.

Smith, D. and Vanstone, M. (2002) 'Probation and social justice', *British Journal of Social Work*, vol 32, no 6: 815–30.

Stewart, J. (1994) 'The rebuilding of public accountability', in N. Flynn (ed) *Reader: Change in the Civil Service*, London: Public Finance Foundation.

Stewart, J. and Clarke, M. (1995) 'A future for local authorities as community government', in J. Stewart and G. Stoker (eds) *Local government in the 1990s*, London: Macmillan.

Stoker, G. (1996) 'Redefining local democracy', in L. Pratchett and D. Wilson (eds) *Democracy and local government*, London: Macmillan.

Sullivan, H. (2001) 'Modernisation, democratisation and community governance', *Local Government Studies*, vol 27, no 3: 1–24.

Sullivan, H. and Skelcher, C. (2002) *Working across boundaries*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Thody, A. and Punter, A. (2000) 'A valuable role? School governors from the business sector', *Educational Management and Administration*, vol 28, no 2: 185–98.

Turnbull, S. (2001) 'The competitive advantages of stakeholder mutuals', in J. Birchall (ed) *The new mutualism in public policy*, London: Routledge.

Turnbull, S. (2002) *A new way to govern*, London: New Economics Foundation.

Wargent, M. (2002) 'The new governance of probation', *The Howard Journal*, vol 41, no 2: 182–200.

www.governornet.co.uk (date accessed 19 January 2006) 'Categories and roles of school governors – overview' (www.governornet.co.uk/publishArticle.cfm? topicAreaId=1&contentId=748)

Richard Simmons and **Johnston Birchall**, Department of Applied Social Science, University of Stirling, UK
Shane Doheny, National Centre for Public Policy, University of Wales Swansea, UK
Martin Powell, Health Services Management Centre, University of Birmingham, UK

1.3

PUBLICATION 3

Simmons, R. (2009)
'Understanding the Differentiated Consumer in
Public Services',
in Simmons, R., Powell, M. & Greener, I. (eds.)
*The Consumer in Public Services: Choice, Values and
Difference*, Bristol: Policy Press

Understanding the 'differentiated consumer' in public services

Richard Simmons

[–] Abstract and Keywords

'Choice' and 'voice' have become watchwords of current policy and provision in public services. Evidence points to choice serving as an important incentive for promoting quality, efficiency, and equity in public services, and in many cases more effectively than relying solely or largely upon alternative mechanisms such as 'voice'. This chapter argues that both choice and voice have their merits, based on the need which users identify for ensuring that providers listen to what they have to say. While notions of choice invite images of public service users 'shopping around' for the best provider, the best appointment time, the best housing, and so on, there are different elements to people's relationships with the public services they use, which mean that it is 'not like shopping'.

Keywords: public service consumers, choice, voice, consumer choice

Understanding the 'differentiated consumer' in public services

Richard Simmons

Introduction

As we have seen, 'choice' and 'voice' have become watchwords of current policy and provision in the public services. Current debates often focus on notions of 'choice'. Alongside these debates, 'voice' is often acknowledged as being related and of certain value, although it has been claimed to be a less influential driver of change:

> Evidence points to choice serving as an important incentive for promoting quality, efficiency and equity in public services – and in many cases more effectively than relying solely or largely upon alternative mechanisms such as 'voice'. (Cabinet Office, 2005, p 3)

We argue here and elsewhere that both choice and voice have their merits (Simmons et al, 2006a), based on the need that users identify for ensuring that providers listen to what they have to say. While notions of choice invite images of public service users 'shopping around' for the best provider, the best appointment time, the best housing and so on, there are different elements to people's relationships with the public services they use, which mean that it is 'not like shopping' (Clarke, 2005; this volume, Chapter Nine). Recognising this, Hoggett (2003, p 2) argues that the public sector has two unique characteristics:

> It is the site for the continuous contestation of public purposes and it is an essential means of containing social anxieties. Such characteristics serve to remind us that the public sector is primarily a site for the enactment of particular kinds of social relations rather than a site for the delivery of goods and services. To reduce it to the latter is to

commodify such relationships, to strip them of their moral and ethical meaning and potential.

Given these conditions of 'contestability', in addition to the relative unavailability of 'exit' that is widely recognised in public services, voice may also be seen as important if people's interests are to be adequately taken into account. Voice provides a mechanism through which users can *negotiate* – either as individuals or collectively. This is particularly important for public services, where the extent to which collective as well as individual benefits are provided is generally acknowledged to be high.

For some, voice could be used in an attempt to extend the menu of choices available to service users, or to argue for choice where it is not currently available (what we might call 'voice about choice'). Yet, as we argue below, voice often goes beyond the confines of choice altogether, allowing people to express things such as the depth of feeling on an issue, or a sense of 'membership'/solidarity/support. These differences reflect a variety of perspectives on the kinds of 'public purposes' and 'social anxieties' that people may emphasise at different times. In short, different kinds of users have different things to say, and wish to say them in different ways. If we are to better understand the ways in which choice and voice are valuable, we therefore argue that there is a need to find ways to understand the 'differentiated consumer' in today's public services. Using empirical data gathered as part of the £5m ESRC/AHRC 'Cultures of Consumption' Programme,[1] we devise a typology of users, suggest how each perceives the opportunities and barriers to their expression of choice and voice, and suggest the kinds of prescriptions that might follow on from this for public services.

Current approaches to public service users

It used to be thought that users of public services had relatively universal needs that could be met by 'one-size-fits-all' public services. Nowadays it has been recognised that people's needs and expectations of public services are diverse, and that this kind of one-size-fits-all approach is no longer appropriate. A number of reasons have been offered for this, from a growth in individualism and social pluralism, to greater affluence for some that sharpens social divisions, a breakdown in traditional structures and centres of authority, and a greater willingness on the part of service users to challenge professionals (Policy Commission on Public Services, 2004). Yet, as ideas of a 'universal public' recede, those who run public services have not always found it easy to understand the ways in which

58

people differ, or how these affect their expectations and experiences of modern public services. This has often made it harder for them to understand how to respond appropriately to 'what users want'.

Many contemporary attempts to differentiate between people on this basis compare models of citizenship with those of consumption. Hence, ideals of 'citizens' (as universalised members of a political community with rights accrued under the social contract) and 'consumers' (as individualistic, utility-maximising, rational actors) are offered as opposing models for understanding the modern public service user. However, we suggest that neither of these models is sufficiently robust. In one sense the public is seen as *impossibly universal*, with similar needs that can be served by a standardised approach. If this was ever true, it certainly is not true today. Taking a 'universalist' viewpoint may be conducive to overall service planning and coordination, but it carries the risk of inflexibility and insensitivity to individual service users, even where mechanisms are put in place for them to raise their 'voice'. In the second sense, however, the public is seen as *impossibly particular* – everybody is seen as having their own specific and personal needs that lead to demands for their own individualised service packages. In this view, public services must respond, tailoring the service from a range of choices on a menu.

While both of the above scenarios have some basis in empirical evidence, we suggest that it is inappropriate to characterise public service users according to simplistic stereotypes (such as those of the citizen or the consumer). Almost certainly, people take on characteristics commonly associated with each of these stereotypes at different times and in different contexts. Other stereotypical caricatures (such as the largely passive 'client', solidaristic 'member of the community' and so on) also capture only elements of service users and their relationships with the services they use. If today's public service users can be stereotyped in these different ways, the question arises as to 'who' it is that presents themself when they use a public service. The question of 'Who chooses?' has possibly received more attention in the recent literature (eg Greener, 2003; Le Grand, 2006) than that of 'Who speaks?'. In this chapter we therefore focus particularly (although not exclusively) on the latter question.

The research upon which this chapter is based examined the level of involvement users have with different public services; how service users want to be consulted and to have their voices heard; and whether the 'culture' of different public services helps or hinders user voice. Three public services were studied: day care services in health/social care, tenant management organisations in housing, and local leisure services.

In a first phase of data collection, in-depth interviews were undertaken with 80 service users, and with 30 service providers: members of staff, managers, local authority officers and elected representatives. Key documents such as policy statements, information for the public and the minutes of public meetings were also analysed. This analysis included the 'complaints files' in each organisation (including both communications from users and the providers' replies). Material gathered in these ways was then used to inform a second phase of data collection across our three services, in a face-to-face survey. The survey was used to measure the distribution of consumer attitudes and behaviour about 'voice', and sampled 543 users.

In our in-depth interviews we were consistently told by service providers that a lack of user voice simply meant that service users must be happy with the service. Yet we did not have to press them far before they accepted that there might be other alternatives:

> 'We tend not to get many complaints, and perhaps because of that you get a bit complacent and think "Oh well, everything must be alright". But I think its … maybe we do need to stand back from time to time and just think about it a bit more carefully.'
>
> *(Senior housing manager, M, 40s)*

Our results indicate a need to move beyond ideas of the 'universal' public service user and the moribund notions of 'consensus' around service provision that this suggests. Our research supports that of the previous chapter, showing that public service users are more differentiated in their views about public services than ideas of a universal public allow, making one-size-fits-all solutions untenable. However, there is also a need to move beyond simplistic notions of individualised public service users with their personal 'axe to grind', creating a cacophony of 'noise' from their numerous demands. This was another common fallacy among service providers. Our findings again support those of other recent studies, showing very clearly that users often see beyond their own needs, having a desire to share with others in decent public services (eg Leadbeater, 2004; Policy Commission on Public Services, 2004).

So, how do we draw a balance between these 'universalistic' and 'individualistic' positions? Herein lies a difficulty for modern public services. For while there are problems in thinking of the public as either a single mass or a constituency of individuals all seeking to maximise

60

their own advantage, it is perhaps even more problematic to think of them as falling between these two positions. Yet this is the reality. What is needed is better ways to understand the complexity of today's constituency of public service users, so that we may better meet their needs and expectations.

The 'differentiated consumer' in public services

Public service users differ in a number of important ways. As discussed at length in our previous work, one important factor concerns people's resources. Some users have greater levels of personal resources such as time, money, education, skills and confidence. These generally support the exercise of voice (and, presumably, choice) (Simmons and Birchall, 2005). However, two further sets of factors emerge from our current findings as important, which we have termed 'subjective' and 'objective' factors. Subjective factors concern how people see themselves as public service users. Objective factors concern how 'connected' people feel to the service itself.

'Subjective' factors: how people see themselves

Subjective factors concern people's identities and identifications as public service users. Some of these identifications are more personal and individual, others are more social and collective. The relationship people have with public services will depend to some extent on which part of them dominates at a given moment. This makes it difficult to pigeonhole people according to many of the terms that are often applied to service users: citizens, consumers, customers, clients, members of the public, members of the community and so on. Indeed, for some users, such terms are seen as abstract and superfluous:

> I: (*Showing respondent list of terms*) 'How do you think the service providers see you?'
>
> R: 'They just call me John.'
>
> (*Day care service user, M, 30s*)

Of those users who did identify with the various terms we asked them about, a large proportion held a mix of both individual and collective

identifications (eg customer and member of the community; service user and member of the public). This serves to confirm that users have complex identities that are unsuited to simplistic 'either–or' notions of universalism or individualism. We believe attempts to pigeonhole public service users as citizens, consumers, clients (or whatever term) are likely to prove unreliable and unrewarding. In any case, public service users seem relatively unmoved by such debates. More important than the terms themselves are the positive or negative associations that people hold of them. This is usually related to people's perceptions of their ability to have their say and make a difference. Hence, in what follows we examine two sets of issues that our research suggested to be of particular relevance, but that sometimes get hidden behind the above 'labels':

1. The balance between individual and collective identifications.
2. The sense of control that is associated with different identifications.

Balancing collective and individual identifications

The balance between individual and collective identifications is important. First, this balance is reflected in the different values, norms, beliefs and attitudes that people hold. People's backgrounds and socialisation have important effects on how they interpret the world. For example, some people will tend to value their personal independence most highly, while others will tend to place greater value on their solidarity with a particular group or community. Second, the balance between individual and collective identifications is important in defining people's motivations for action. In our previous work we have shown how people's individualistic motivations to participate in collective action are often outweighed by collectivistic motivations such as a sense of community, shared values and shared goals (Simmons and Birchall, 2005).

People's individual and collective identifications often interact when they give their views. A prominent 'default assumption' of many service provider representatives was that service users raised their voices when they wanted something; that they were making additional claims on resources, based on their own personal preferences. Sometimes user communications are indeed about the expression of preferences, for example arguing for the extension of choice:

62

'When I started, what you did in the morning or afternoon, that was you. Day in, week out, month out, year out. And I thought about it, and I said "No, this is wrong – people are bored doing the same thing every day"… Over the years they began to realise that wasn't what people wanted, they wanted a service that was geared to providing something that would challenge service users, give them an interest. So now we have, like, shopping trips, we have trips to museums, there's fishing groups during the summer (they're quite popular), there's the chess group that I run, there's woodwork… So there's usually something for a service user to do although, as I say, you'll get the odd one that won't … but that's their choice too.'

(Day centre user, M, 40s)

Yet our findings show that it would be inaccurate to see voice as exclusively (or even predominantly) about extending choice. We found that voice is used at least as regularly to express things other than preferences, such as the depth of feeling on an issue, or a sense of 'membership'/solidarity/support. In the following quotation, for example, it is difficult to reconcile the ideas of 'obligation' and speaking for others with notions of 'choice':

I: 'When you first attended a user meeting, what made you think, "Yes, I would like to be part of that meeting"?'

R: 'I support the pool and I thought this would be a good way of expressing my support … I also felt that I could communicate the views of the other people I know who didn't have time to go. So I did use an opportunity to say, "I don't happen to feel this but a lot of people do feel that".'

(Leisure services user, M, 60s)

Balancing both individual and collective identifications, the above respondent wanted to make a public expression of his personal support for the pool at a user meeting, where he spoke explicitly about not only what he thought but what others thought as well. The latter point is important. Our findings show a clear and significant body of feeling among service users that they do not want their own preferences to take priority over those of others if this is going to lead to an 'unfair' outcome:

63

'I was swimming for seven years and I loved it. And then suddenly they started to play music in the pool. I really blew my stack – I couldn't bear it. So I went to one of the lifeguards and said "I really don't like this". And then he went and turned it off. And I felt terrible because I thought, you know, "What about everybody else .... how does he know [what they think]?". So there I was, I felt really embarrassed. And then I asked a couple of people, you know, in the pool, and said did they mind the music? And they said "No". So I felt I had exercised disproportionate influence.'

(Leisure services user, F, 50s)

A sense of control – having a say and making a difference?

We also found that more important than the use of terms such as citizen, consumer, customer, client, member of the public, member of the community and so on are the meanings that people attach to them. Of particular importance, we found, was the sense of control users associated with each of these labels – whether or not they felt able to have a say and make a difference. These associations were dependent on people's experiences of how they were treated, and could not be read off simply from the terms themselves. For example, some people saw the term 'client' very positively, as someone who issued instructions for others to carry out:

'Being a client ... it's like when you go to the hairdresser's: you tell them what you want and they do it for you. They treat you properly, you get respect.'

(Leisure services user, F, teenager)

Others, however, saw the same term as objectifying them; as someone who was simply 'administered to':

'[It means] taking what's offered, and there's not much choice in what you're offered.'

(Tenant, M, 50s)

64

'[It means] they think they're better than you.'

(Tenant, F, 30s)

Similarly, being treated as a 'consumer' was seen as a double-edged sword. Some saw it as being able to make demands, with expectations that these demands would be met, while others thought that as a consumer you would be treated as 'just a number'. As one tenant put it, being treated as a consumer means 'it's your money they're after – once they've got it they don't want to know'. In fact, each of the terms and categories we explored with service users was seen by some as having positive associations, and by others as having negative associations. Positive associations tended to reflect users' ability to have their say and make a difference, and negative associations vice versa.

We found a common tendency for service providers to stereotype users, with some stereotypes held more positively than others. For example, leisure service providers were often disparaging about 'early-morning swimmers' as being somehow radical and subversive. Because these swimmers typically share the facilities together on a regular basis, they tend to get talking to one another about matters of common interest. This can lead to requests being made to managers for changes and improvements to the pool from what might be seen as a fairly legitimate group. However, this is often regarded by service managers as challenging, which tends to make them wary and unresponsive. They therefore prefer to treat early-morning swimmers as separate individuals rather than as a collective entity, even where the swimmers have deliberately organised collectively.

Patterns of stereotyping are rarely accurate or benign in the context of public service delivery. Stereotypes are usually inaccurate because, as we have already identified, service users tend to stand simultaneously in a number of different relationships with public service organisations (see Hirschmann, 1999; Alford, 2002). They are usually malign, because stereotypical terminology tends to signify particular attitudes from public service providers towards those who are stereotyped:

I: 'When you first moved in and reported the situation with the toilet, what kind of response did you feel you got?'

R: 'Oh the response was as if I was an idiot: "Well, it has been inspected and the inspector said it was alright."'

(Tenant, F, 50s)

65

'Because they can't see you face to face and you are at the other end of the phone they must think we are stupid, that's the impression I get.'

(Tenant, F, 30s)

'I'm not a village idiot by any means, at least I don't think so [laughs] but, you know, they're treating me like one.'

(Tenant, M, 50s)

In sum, our research shows that producers routinely construct users according to their own perspectives and interests. For their part, users may accept these constructions, negotiate, or contest them.

Colleagues on the ESRC/AHRC 'Cultures of Consumption' programme have suggested that people's sense of connection with public services is based on the relationships they build with service providers (Clarke, 2005). We agree. However, despite the fact that many users see these relationships as relatively positive and are willing to share their views with providers in the best interests of the service, there are mixed views about the extent to which providers are interested in making available genuine opportunities for this. Our research indicates a relationship between the positivity of these relationships and whether or not there are considered to be good opportunities to express one's views (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Nature of user–provider relationships vs 'good opportunities' to express views

	Day care (N=116)		Leisure (N=318)		Housing (N=109)	
Good opportunities? / Relationship?	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
Very positive	88.5	11.5	79.2	20.8	77.8	22.2
Quite positive	78.1	21.9	43.8	56.2	58.3	41.7
Neither positive/ negative	42.9	57.1	18.8	81.3	40.6	59.4
Quite negative	0	100.0	7.7	92.3	9.1	90.9
Very negative	0	100.0	0	0	0	100.0

Overall, then, our findings support those of other recent research, that 'the way in which individuals negotiate the role of consumer

66

is clearly relevant to their propensity to get involved' (Lupton et al, 1998, p 114). However, the different identifications and associations held by public service users represent the 'subjective' components of their relationship with the service. Our research showed that this was important, but that there is another 'objective' component that also needs to be considered.

Objective factors: a sense of connection?

Not all users 'connect' with public services. Some are happy to simply take what they are given, good or bad, engaging uncritically with the service and its providers. Others are so disconnected that they barely engage with the service at any level; it is something to be tolerated, endured or shut out completely. The sense of alienation and/or detachment in this latter group is associated with notions of 'withdrawal' that we have discussed at length elsewhere (Simmons et al, 2006b).

However, there is good evidence that large numbers of users do have a sense of connection with the public services they use. In our research, over 70% of survey respondents reported that they had expressed their views at some point in time about the service in question. Voice is therefore extremely commonplace, reflecting people's sense of attachment to public services. Why do people feel this way? In short, it is because they often see public services as being important and care about them being done well. Evidence for people caring about their public services was widespread in our interviews with both users and providers:

> 'I look after my premises. Can't you see? I'd like the council office up the road to realise: "Oh, there is a tenant in that premises ... someone who does care for the premises, who does care for the area and not just anybody who's paying rent."'
>
> *(Tenant, M, 40s)*

> 'There will always be a certain amount of people that will complain because of personal circumstances or how they are feeling that day. But there are genuine people that will say: "Look, that is not good. I like coming here, I want to keep coming here. Can you do something about it?" And I think it is because they care. I know that sounds quite deep but I think generally they do, otherwise they wouldn't bother.'
>
> *(Leisure services manager, M, 20s)*

This was backed up in our survey, where 96.5% of day care users, 89.8% of leisure service users and 66.1% of tenants said they care either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' about the service. For the many people who do connect with the service, there are different levels at which this happens. This reflects the kinds of relationships people have with the services they use, and the kinds of concerns they develop. It also reflects the importance people attach to the service. In practice, this can be quite a complex set of conditions to pull apart. We have represented some of the key aspects in Table 4.2, where we divide users' connection with public services into 'higher' and 'lower' levels.

Table 4.2: What 'caring about' public services involves for users

Level at which people 'connect'	What is involved?	Level of interaction	Relationship with service	Nature of user concerns	Judgements made over
'Lower' level	Service attributes and their consequences for the user experience	Personal and temporal characteristics of service situation	Specific user roles/ behaviours temporal in nature	Technical (*although may become political*)	Service attributes
'Higher' level	Service-related values and their consequences for the user experience	Personal versus service-related values	Stakeholder/ co-contributor/ 'partner' ongoing in nature	*Both* technical *and* political	*Both* service attributes *and* service-related values

When users connect at a lower level, it does not mean that their concerns are insignificant. It simply means that their concerns tend to address issues of a 'lower order' than do the concerns of those who connect at a higher level. Users' concerns here focus on the *attributes* of the service and their consequences for how they experience using the service. At this lower level, people's relationship with the service tends to be limited in time and space to a particular 'processing situation' (Laaksonen, 1994). It is also limited to the specific roles and behaviours directly associated with their use of the service. This leads them to focus on 'technical' concerns -- for example, whether something is 'working' or not:

> 'It was just, you know, when you do something that's slightly silly and you do it every day and it slowly annoys you. And you say "Well, why don't we do it that way?" ... That's what happened with this particular system.'
>
> *(Leisure services user, M, 20s)*

68

Connecting at a higher level introduces an extra dimension. Here, users' concerns also focus on the *values* that underpin the provision of the service, how these compare with their own personal values, and the consequences for how they experience using the service. In practice, we found that many users felt a sense of 'ownership' in relation to public services; of having a stake. This led them to see their relationship with the service as one of 'co-contributor' or even 'partner'. In addition to technical concerns, at a higher level people also focus on the more 'political' (with a small 'p') concerns of what the service *should* be doing.

Amid a growing perception of the disconnection of service users from the means of public service 'production', alternative methods for the inclusion of user voice at this higher level have been widely promoted – for example in notions of 'citizen governance' (Home Office, 2005; ODPM, 2005; Simmons et al, 2007b). Implicitly, this suggests a rejection of previous assumptions that people are only interested in 'lower-level' involvement. Our evidence suggests that this is entirely appropriate. However, there is a difference in people's sense of 'caring about' the service (which they generally see as a shared responsibility) and notions of responsibility for 'caring for' the service (which is generally seen as being that of service providers). In this way, there is a sense that people want providers to take the lead – but crucially *not before* they have listened appropriately to what users have to say. Hence, while in general service users tend to trust providers to take the lead in running public services, this trust is limited and conditional, not absolute. Users often feel a need to keep their eye on the ball and to make sure that important matters do not go unchallenged. The need to strike a balance between 'leadership and listening' has recently been recognised in the public sector (eg Needham, 2001; Simmons, 2008), and this is a matter to which we shall return.

Differentiating public service consumers: combining 'subjective' and 'objective' factors

People have different ways of relating to the public services they use. To categorise these different relationships, we believe it is useful to combine the 'subjective' aspects of user identity with the 'objective' aspects of users' relationship with the service itself. In Figures 4.1a and 4.1b we have therefore taken our 'individual–collective' dimension and put it against our 'connected–disconnected' dimension to produce a 2 x 2 matrix.

69

Figure 4.1a: Combining positive 'subjective' and 'objective' aspects of user involvement

Disconnected

A 'Auto-exclusion'	**B** 'Delegation'
C 'Rational action'	**D** 'Co-production'

Individual
+ve

Collective
+ve
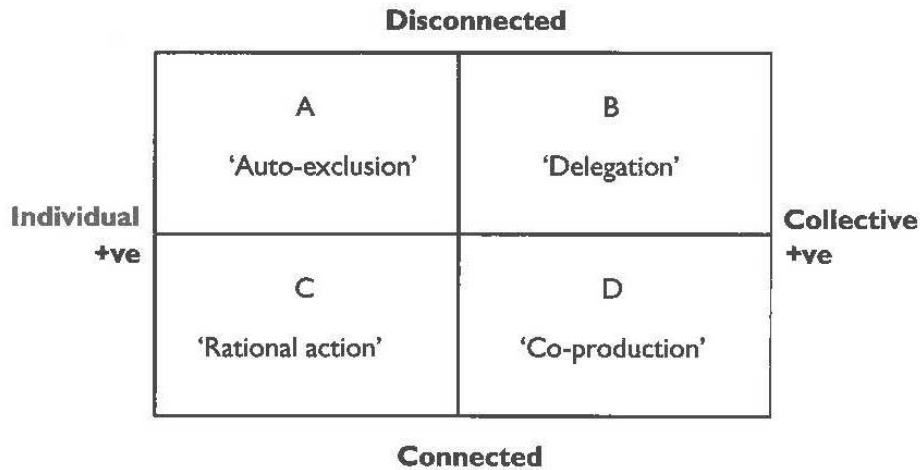
Connected

Figure 4.1a shows how 'positive' user identifications (ie where users feel able to have a say and make a difference) combine with a sense of connection or disconnection with the service itself. Users' identifications may be individual or collective.

In cell A, users identify themselves as individuals and able to 'have a say and make a difference'. However, they feel disconnected from the goals and aims of the service itself. These users could be seen as 'apathetic', not caring enough about the service to engage with it further. However, they may also lack understanding about the significance of the choices that are available to them. This amounts to a kind of 'auto-exclusion', or 'refusal of agency'. Here the prescription for public services might be a programme of 'public engagement'; drawing in individual members of the public, building more substantial relationships with them and creating the more connected consumers found in cell C.

In cell B, users see themselves as members of a collectivity. This identification is seen positively, as one that is able to have a say and make a difference. However, they do not feel a strong sense of connection to the service itself. The users' role here is limited to 'delegation': giving their allegiance (and deference) to political representatives in arbitrating between different demands on collective resources in the 'public interest' and periodically voting for different political representatives if they perceive the incumbents to be failing in this task. Users' influence is one step removed from the actual provision of services – hence the prime minister's assessment of voting as a 'blunt tool' (PASC, 2004). Where users have an issue, the leading expectation is that redress will be sought via politicians representing the collectivity – anything more being regarded as undue influence. In this environment, trust in

70

politicians and senior administrators to effectively coordinate public services is a key commodity.

In cell C, users are directly connected to the service as individuals. The users' role here is to make service choices so as to support their private needs and wants and then negotiate the best package of services for themselves in terms of cost and quality. Again, their expectation is of organisational responsiveness to their demands – this time as individuals – with a system of complaint and personal redress if things go wrong. At 'higher' levels of discourse, users may argue for modes of coordination that promote individualistic values such as personalisation and autonomy.

In cell D, users are connected collectively to the coordination and 'co-production' of the service. The users' role here is to involve themselves in deliberative and participative processes that are specific to the service or service issues. Collective action therefore takes in a range of processes that include user groups, peer advocacy and campaigns. Users have an expectation of responsiveness to their demands, which are derived through collective processes ('collective choice') and/or expressed through collective channels to demonstrate solidarity. At 'higher' levels of discourse, users may argue for services to be organised in ways that promote mutualistic values such as equality, solidarity and association.

By contrast, Figure 4.1b shows how 'negative' user identifications (ie where they do not feel able to have a say and make a difference) combine with a sense of connection or disconnection with the service itself. Again, users' identifications may be individual or collective.

Figure 4.1b: Combining negative 'subjective' and 'objective' aspects of user involvement

Disconnected

E 'Subjection'	F 'Marginalisation'
G 'Alienation'	H 'Repression'

Individual −ve   **Collective −ve**

Connected

71
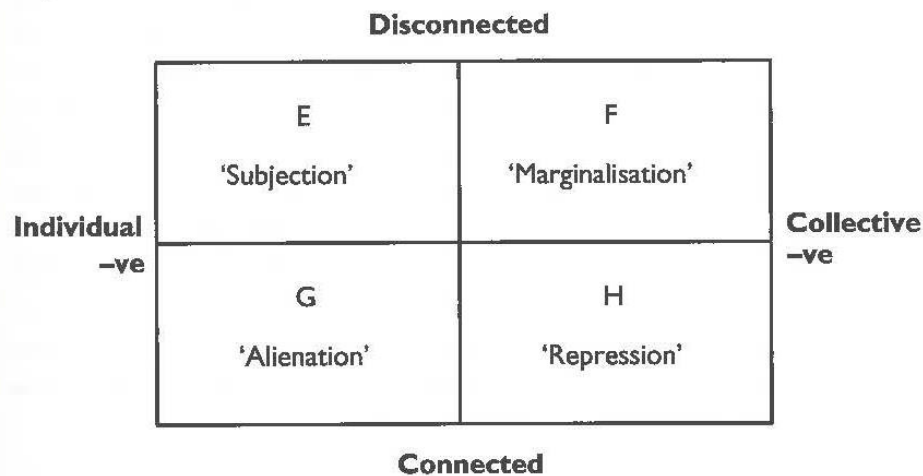
In cell E, users feel both disconnected from the coordination of service provision and unable to have a say and make a difference. As isolated individuals, their role is to chart the best course they can through their use of public services – not an easy task since they feel they have little control. In this way, they tend to feel that they are simply 'subjected' to whatever the service provides.

In cell F, users identify themselves as members of a collectivity. These, however, are 'marginalised communities'. They feel their group to be at the bottom of the pile, both disconnected from the goals and aims of the service and powerless to have a say and make a difference. Their solidarity with other group members is their only resource, which they may (or may not) use for mutual support. Engagement with these groups/communities must both reiterate the importance of the service in their lives and persuade them that viable opportunities are available to express their views as group members.

In cell G, users identify themselves as individuals. This time, however, they are 'connected'; they do care. The problem here is that they do not feel able to have a say and make a difference. These users could be described as 'alienated'. Their sense of personal agency is denied. The prescription here differs: it is more about providing greater opportunities for individuals to participate. Voice is important here: 'empowerment begins by finding that voice which provides the truth to one's experience' (Hoggett, 2001, p 46). However, as Le Grand (2006, p 2) also argues, 'choice gives power to voice'. At this individualistic level, adding choice to voice is an appropriate means of empowering users.

Finally, in cell H users again identify themselves as members of a collectivity. They feel connected with the goals and aims of the service, but powerless to have a say and make a difference. Collectively, they form a 'mobilisation potential' within their communities. However, collective action here may be focused as much on the injustice of being excluded as a group as it is on service-related issues. Again, the prescription is about providing greater opportunities for people to participate in ways that acknowledge their collective identity. Giving power to collective voice requires a different approach, as it is based on a different aspect of power – 'power to' rather than 'power over'. The aim is to increase the capacity of providers and users to work together to improve the service, creating the sense of 'engaged partnership' found in cell D above. As we have argued elsewhere, this means connecting inclusive governance structures with wider structures for collective participation (Simmons et al, 2007b).

For service providers, as we suggested earlier, meeting this challenge means that it is necessary to demonstrate the extent to which they are 'listening' as well as 'leading'. However, we recognise the importance of context; elsewhere we have argued that some contexts demand that the balance falls more towards leadership, while others demand it falls more towards listening (Simmons et al, 2006c). In terms of the listening component, we reiterate here that both choice and voice are important. However, the differentiated nature of public service consumers means that different types of choice (individual choice, interactive choice, collective choice) and voice (hierarchical, individualistic, group based) will be required (Simmons et al, 2006c). In other words, no one of these different models of choice or voice provides a panacea in today's public service environment. We found strong demand among users for being listened to in each of these different ways.

Meeting people's increasingly diverse expectations as to how they should be treated provides a key challenge for public service providers. Other evidence collected in the course of our research shows that the majority of people want services to move in a direction that makes them feel (1) more positive about their identifications as service users (both individually *and* collectively) and (2) more 'connected' to the service itself (Simmons et al, 2007a). In particular, this has implications for how they want to be treated, in terms of:

- courtesy and respect
- how knowledge is valued
- how fairness and equity issues are resolved
- how rules are set and policed.

Failure to recognise value pluralism and to 'welcome rather than fear conflict' (Hoggett, 2003) is likely to result in increasing levels of negativity and disconnection.

Importantly, providers can themselves become disconnected in a number of ways. First, they can fail to understand the service attributes and consequences that are important to service users. Second, they can differ in their judgements of the service's performance in relation to these key attributes and consequences. Third, they can differ in the values, beliefs and attitudes they hold. This can be a key site of 'contestation' between users and providers. However, a fourth way concerns the exercise of choice and voice. Different types of choice and voice provide different ways for messages to be communicated and accommodations to be reached. Where different types of choice and voice are stifled, problems can eventually be expected – even if there

73

appear to be short-term gains. The need to balance leadership and listening has therefore never been clearer – but more work is needed to create the kind of listening culture that users want.

People know a listening culture when they see it. Generally it reflects greater congruence between users' perceptions of how they *actually are* treated by the service, and their expectations of how they *should be* treated (Simmons et al, 2007a). Two things are necessary in order to achieve greater levels of congruence:

- institutional design that recognises value pluralism and promotes the provision of a range of 'spaces' for users to exercise choice and voice;
- the investment of institutional effort to make these spaces work, providing listening as well as leadership.

The first provides the 'organisational architecture' to ensure that effective means are provided for organising the inputs people (whether users or providers) want to put into an organisation – and the outputs that they want to get out. The second provides the commitment necessary to 'reconnect' and strengthen the ties between public service organisations and their 'differentiated' public.

Note

[1] This is based on research conducted for the ESRC/AHRC 'Cultures of Consumption' Programme between 2003 and 2006 (Grant no: RES 143250040). Three public services were studied: housing, social care and leisure services.

References

Alford, J. (2002) 'Defining the client in the public sector: a social exchange perspective', *Public Administration Review*, vol 62, no 3, pp 337–46.

Cabinet Office (2005) *Choice and voice in the reform of public services: Government response to the PASC report – choice, voice and public services*, London: Cabinet Office.

Clarke, J. (2005) 'Competitive choice or relational reasoning?', Paper to Cultures of Consumption Seminar, *Choice and Voice in Public Services*, HM Treasury, London, 24 June.

Greener, I. (2003) 'Who choosing what? The evolution of the word "choice" in the NHS and its implications for New Labour', *Social Policy Review 15*, Bristol: The Policy Press, pp 49–67.

Hirschmann, D. (1999) '"Customer service" in the United States Agency for International Development', *Administration & Society*, vol 31, no 1, pp 95–119.

Hoggett, P. (2001) 'Agency, rationality and social policy', *Journal of Social Policy*, vol 30, no 1, pp 37–56.

Hoggett, P. (2003) 'Why public is not the same as private', Paper to International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations Symposium, *Power and Politics*, Boston, June 19–21.

Home Office (2005) *Together we can: A government action plan led by the Home Office*, London: Home Office.

Laaksonen, P. (1994) *Consumer involvement*, London: Routledge.

Leadbeater, C. (2004) *Personalisation through participation: A new script for public services*, London: Demos.

Le Grand, J. (2006) 'Choice and competition in public services', *Research in public policy*, Summer 2006, p 2.

Lupton, C., Peckham, S. and Taylor, P. (1998) *Managing public involvement in healthcare planning*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Needham, C. (2001) *Listen and lead – the challenge from the women of Worcester* (www.opendemocracy.net/people-worcesterwomen/article_329.jsp).

ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) (2005) *Vibrant local leadership*, London: ODPM.

PASC (Public Administration Select Committee) (2004) *Choice, voice and public services: An issues and questions paper*, London: PASC.

Policy Commission on Public Services (2004) *Making public services personal*, London: National Consumer Council.

Simmons, R. (2008) 'Leadership and listening: striking the balance in today's public services', Paper to Social Policy Association Conference, Edinburgh, June.

Simmons, R. and Birchall, J. (2005) 'A joined-up approach to user participation in public services: strengthening the "participation chain"', *Social Policy and Administration*, vol 39, no 3, pp 260–83.

Simmons, R., Birchall, J. and Prout, A. (2006a) *Cultural tensions in public service delivery: Implications for producer-consumer relationships*, Working Paper 026, ESRC/AHRC 'Cultures of Consumption' Programme.

Simmons, R., Birchall, J. and Prout, A. (2006b) 'Choice about voice', Paper to Social Policy Association Conference, Birmingham, July.

Simmons, R., Birchall, J. and Prout, A. (2006c) 'Facilitation of constraint?', Paper to Public Administration Committee Conference, Durham, September.

Simmons, R., Birchall, J. and Prout, A. (2007a) 'Hearing voices? User involvement and public service cultures', *Consumer Policy Review*, vol 17, no 5, pp 234–40.

Simmons, R., Birchall, J., Doheny, S. and Powell, M. (2007b) '"Citizen governance": opportunities for inclusivity in policy and policy making?', *Policy & Politics*, vol 35, no 3, pp 455–75.

1.4

PUBLICATION 4

Simmons, R. (2011)
'Leadership and Listening in Public Services',
Social Policy and Administration, 45 (5): 539–568

Leadership and Listening: The Reception of User Voice in Today's Public Services

Richard Simmons

Abstract

Over the last decade leadership has become a watchword in public service provision, especially in its association with the seemingly ubiquitous 'delivery' agenda. As leadership styles change in response to developments in the contemporary public service environment, it has become imperative for service providers to find ways to listen to service users. However, listening is itself widely recognized as an underdeveloped public sector competency. This article addresses the relationship between leadership and listening. Using findings from recent research, it identifies a 'listening gap' in public services, before pointing to ways in which this gap might be better understood and subsequently narrowed. In doing so, it seeks to present new ideas about the essential balance between 'leadership' and 'listening', and how this can be struck in today's public service environment.

First, the nature of the user voice is examined. By talking to service users who have communicated their views in different ways in each of three different services (housing, social care and leisure), the article seeks to understand the nature of users' 'projects' in the expression of their views. These projects are compared with those of public service leaders. Second, the congruence (or incongruence) of these projects is considered through a comparison of the world views of both users and leaders. Finally, aspects of the context are considered in the discussion of the way public service organizations might go about defining the relationship between leadership and listening.

Leadership and Listening – Incompatibilities or Complementarities?

'*Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.*' (John F. Kennedy)

He who answers before listening – that is his folly and his shame. (Prov. 18:13)

Address for correspondence: *Richard Simmons, Department of Applied Social Science, Colin Bell Building, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4LA, UK. Email: r.a.simmons@stir.ac.uk*

'The day soldiers stop bringing you their problems is the day you have stopped leading them. They have either lost confidence that you can help them or concluded that you do not care. Either case is a failure of leadership.' (Colin Powell)

Leadership and listening are terms that have increasingly been heard together in the public service environment (e.g. Needham 2001; IDeA 2005; Johnson 2007), particularly in relation to the previous Labour government's 'delivery' agenda (Peck and 6 2006; Barber 2008). For some the relationship between the two is one of incompatibilities. The following quotation from a local government official is typical of this perception:

'Issue has to be taken with the Inspectors' conclusions on the two conflicting roles *of leadership and listening. The Department is criticised for failing to take a leadership role, or provide "a strategic vision that will enable it to stay focused on what matters to local people . . ." However, the Council is also criticised for "holding meetings on (its) agenda", and "not listening to its stakeholders" . . . It is said that users – and not the Council – should set the agenda. There is a considerable degree of incongruity here'* (Response by Committee Chairman, Christchurch Borough Council, to a District Audit report, 2003, emphasis added)

In this sense, it seems the official is saying 'What do they want us to do – listen or lead?' We would argue that this is quite a polarized position to take, and that it neglects another possibility – that leadership and listening are in fact complementary. In this article we consider the tensions between the two public service tasks of leadership and listening, but point to complementarities as well as incompatibilities between them. First, the relationship between leadership and user voice is examined. Research with service users in three different public services is presented as the article seeks to understand the key drivers of user voice. This suggests that users engage in 'projectivity' in the expression of their views. A framework is then presented to help to understand the nature of users' 'projects', and to compare these with those of public service leaders. This framework helps to establish the ground on which complementarities and incompatibilities might be found. The congruence (or incongruence) of service users' and service leaders' projects is then considered through a comparison of their respective world views. This analysis suggests there are a number of leadership and listening styles, each with its own merit, and that 'closed' system approaches may be too limited for effective leadership in today's public services. Finally, aspects of the context are considered in a discussion of the way public service organizations might go about (re-)defining the relationship between leadership and listening.

Leadership in Public Services

There has been an increasing emphasis on leadership in public services (PIU 2001; Alimo-Metcalfe and Alban-Metcalfe 2004). As former Prime Minister, Tony Blair, put it:

Leadership is a key factor in any large organisation. This is especially true in the public sector – where leaders are being asked to deliver more modern, efficient and dynamic services at a time of great social and technological change. I value the tremendous job being done by leaders in our hospitals and schools, local authorities and elsewhere. But I want to see more being done to develop and support effective leadership across the public sector as a whole. (Cabinet Office 2001)

This emphasis on leadership has been supported by the development of 'infrastructure' for leadership training in the public sector, exemplified by the Public Services Leadership Consortium, which was formed in 2005. This consortium has brought together a number of the key leadership academies across the public sector to drive cross-service collaboration and coherence on leadership. The Consortium's focus is on achieving 'smarter working and efficiency', and developing flexible, customer focused leaders able to work effectively across the traditional boundaries between public services (Cabinet Office 2006). Its membership includes:

- National School of Government;
- Leadership Centre for Local Government;
- Improvement and Development Agency;
- National College for School Leadership;
- NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement;
- Centrex – the Policing Leadership Academy;
- Social Care Institute for Excellence;
- Fire Service College;
- Leadership Foundation for Higher Education;
- Centre for Excellence in Leadership.

There has also been a strong recent policy emphasis on 'listening' to citizens and service users, through both 'choice and voice' (e.g. PASC 2005). A number of factors have driven this – from the recognition that traditional structures and centres of authority do not have all the answers, to a greater willingness from service users to challenge professionals (Policy Commission on Public Services 2004). PASC (2005: 5) defines choice as 'giving individuals the opportunity to choose from among alternative suppliers, whether or not entirely within the public sector'. Voice is defined as 'giving users a more effective say in the direction of services, by means of representative bodies, complaints mechanisms and surveys of individual preferences and views'. Current arguments suggest both choice and voice are necessary. For example, as David Miliband has put it:

Choice and voice are strengthened by the presence of each other: the threat of exit makes [service providers] listen; the ability to make your voice heard provides a tool to the consumer who does not want to change [provider] every time they are unhappy. (Miliband 2004)

541

Choice has received considerable attention in the recent literature (e.g. Greener 2003; Le Grand 2006). As expressed through 'exit' (Hirschman 1970), choice can certainly send useful signals to providers so long as individuals do indeed have opportunities to choose from among viable alternatives. However, in many public services such opportunities are often absent or highly constrained. As PASC (2005: 3) recognizes, 'we found that the rhetoric about choice can exceed its reality . . . For choice to be effective it is necessary to ensure additional capacity in the appropriate places'. Moreover, while notions of choice invite images of public service users 'shopping around' for the best provider, the best appointment time, the best housing and so on, there are different elements to people's relationships with the public services they use that mean it is 'not like shopping' (Clarke 2009: 161).

Our own recent research focused predominantly on 'voice' (Hirschman 1970).[1] For some, voice might represent an attempt to extend the menu of choices available to service users, or to argue for choice where it is not currently available (what we might call 'voice about choice'). However, as Simmons (2009: 58) argues, voice often goes beyond the confines of choice altogether, allowing people to express things such as the depth of feeling on an issue, or a sense of 'membership'/solidarity/support. These differences reflect a variety of perspectives on the kinds of 'public purposes' and 'social anxieties' that people may emphasize at different times (cf. Hoggett 2003: 2).

Voice is therefore important. It provides a way of tapping into a range of important inputs for public services: knowledges, ideas and individual/collective sentiment. In our research, we examined different mechanisms for listening to user voice in three public services: housing, social care and leisure services.[2]

It is certainly the case that a wide range of 'listening devices' have been employed in the public sector for hearing the voices of service users (Clarke *et al.* 2007: 112). However, many doubts remain over the extent to which service providers actually listen to users:

> Harnessing the voice of users to shape public services is increasingly recognised as a force for better services. But people feel divorced from the process. An overwhelming majority of the public – 80 per cent – don't feel part of the current debate on the future of public services. Almost as many think politicians don't understand what people want (Mayo 2004)

The figures quoted in this National Consumer Council research are astounding – 80 per cent do not feel part of the debate or that their needs are understood. We can stand these figures against the findings from our own research. In our survey, over 80 per cent of users said that they cared 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' about the public service they used, and more than 70 per cent of users had actually acted on this by communicating their views in one way or another, at some time or another. Taken together, these figures suggest a potentially considerable problem. 'Listening', as a process requiring the listener to understand, interpret, and evaluate what they hear, has long been recognized as a key part of 'leader effectiveness' (Gordon,1977). However,

where 80 per cent of users care about public services and are prepared to use their voice but a similar number feel excluded from key debates, there would seem to be a significant 'listening gap'.

To some extent, this is recognized by senior figures in the civil service. As the former permanent Secretary at the Department for Education and Employment has put it:

> Listening has not been one of the most precious public sector competencies, and too many senior managers are where they are because they are good at telling not listening (Bichard 2000)

Certainly to look at the characteristics of 'good listeners' and 'poor listeners' (see table 1a), and compare them with some of the descriptions given to us by users of their experiences of communicating with public service leaders (see table 1b), a number of such leaders would appear to fall into the latter category.

What Users Want: Judgements and 'Projects' in User Voice

In our research, we found a relationship between notions of user voice and 'agency' in public services (Hoggett 2001; Lister 2001). Agency refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently and make their own free choices (Barker 2005). We were able to set this against the structural and cultural constraints that users encountered in the public service environment. Emirbayer and Mische (1998) distinguish three important and inter-related components of agency: habit, judgement and projectivity. We found that habit is often important in guiding users' choice about how to express their voice, whereby 'habits of the heart' (or the 'notions, opinions and ideas that shape mental habits'; Bellah *et al.* 1985: 37) serve to underpin a form of 'linguistic habitus' (Thompson 1991, after Bourdieu 1977). Our findings therefore support those of Baldock and Ungerson (1996) for community care users, that such things are influenced by the habitual dispositions that shape choice in our everyday lives. However, in this article we also examine the two other components of agency: judgement and projectivity.

It is clear that voice is based on *judgements* that users form about public services. We asked users how they would know that the service was performing well. At one level, people spoke about tangible 'attributes', such as whether or not the floors were kept clean (see table 2a). As might be expected, perceptions here of service failures led them to reflect on whether or not to raise their voice. This is the relatively straightforward level at which many studies of 'customer satisfaction' tend to be conducted.

However, in addition to the service's key attributes, users spoke about the outcomes that the service produced for them. This could be further subdivided into individualistic (e.g. 'It helps me feel more self-confident'), and more collectivistic/relational outcomes (e.g. 'It gives me a sense of community') (see table 2b). However, mechanisms for listening to users' views at this level are often limited – rarely are these outcomes explored with users in any

543

Table 1a

'Good listeners' vs. 'poor listeners'

A 'good listener':	A 'poor listener':
Uses eye contact appropriately.	Doesn't give eye contact (eyes wander).
Is attentive and alert to a speaker's verbal and nonverbal behaviour.	Is not interested in the speaker (doesn't care; daydreaming).
Is patient and doesn't interrupt (waits for the speaker to finish).	Interrupts the speaker (is impatient).
Is responsive, using verbal and nonverbal expressions.	Is distracted (fidgeting) and does not pay attention to the speaker.
Paraphrases, restates or summarizes what the speaker says.	Changes the subject.
Provides constructive (verbal or nonverbal) feedback.	Gives the speaker little or no (verbal or non-verbal) feedback.
Is empathic (works to understand the speaker).	Talks too much. Gives unwanted advice.
Shows interest in the speaker as a person.	Is self-preoccupied.
Demonstrates a caring attitude and is willing to listen.	Is too busy to listen.
Doesn't criticize, is non-judgmental.	Is judgmental.
Is open-minded.	Is closed-minded.

Source: Purdy and Newman 1999.

544

Table 1b

Some service user experiences

'If they listened to me one-to-one then I would go and express my feelings but they don't listen. They say "yes, yes, oh yes we're doing this, we're doing that". Once your back's turned, "oh well we won't bother just yet". That's what they do.' (tenant, F, 40s)
'There have been occasions when they've been putting on a show, but the thing is you can tell. They're backing away from you all the time . . . I'll wait for the day when all me problems are over. But now I'm just waiting for the day when I next sit and put pen to paper again, go over the same old ground, the same old requests and the same old non-acknowledgement' (tenant, M, 50s)
'I'd write to the Leisure and something services. And they would send me a letter back. And it would always say that I was the only one who had complained, or, you know, that it was just a one off thing. And it was really . . . It wasn't good that. It really wasn't good. . . .' (leisure services user, F, 60s)

Table 2a

Examples of key service attributes for leisure services

Attributes
Convenience of the opening hours
Cleanliness and tidiness of the facilities
Safety and security in the facilities
Quality of heating and lighting
Provision for different ages and abilities
Affordability of the prices
Quality of the equipment
Waiting times for staff attention
Helpfulness of the staff
Sensitivity and respectfulness of the staff

systematic way. As this is another area in which perceptions of service failures might lead users to raise their voice, we feel it is equally deserving of public service leaders' attention.

Thinking about the outcomes of the service helps to build bridges to a third way in which users make judgements in relation to public services. This involves users' values – what they want in life or see as a better way of living (Laaksonen 1994). Values therefore summarize some of the more abstract end results that people hold dear. When users sense that the values underpinning the service are not compatible with their own, this can also lead them to reflect on whether or not to raise their voice (Simmons *et al.* 2007a). In short, users' judgements about the service were an important part of their 'agency', underpinning their subsequent actions, or 'projects'.

For Emirbayer and Mische (1998: 971), *projects* in human agency represent 'possible future trajectories of action in which received structures of thought

Table 2b

Examples of key outcomes for leisure services

Outcomes
Helps me stay healthy
Provides me with mental stimulation
Gives my life more variety
Gives me enjoyment
Helps me feel more self-confident
Gives me a sense of achievement
Collectivistic/relational
Gives me a social connection
Helps me meet like-minded people
Stops me from feeling isolated
Gives me a sense of community

and action may be creatively reconfigured in relation to actors' hopes, fears and desires for the future'. Archer (2003: 6) concurs: 'a project is a human device, be it individual or collective . . . it involves an end that is desired, however tentatively or nebulously, and also some notion, however imprecise, of the course of action through which to achieve it'. When we asked service users about the ways in which they used 'voice', several broad dimensions of their 'projectivity' emerged (see figure 1).

First, there was a sense of *purpose* (A). Sometimes this was about 'maintenance', which might involve attempting to ensure that standards of service that had previously been enjoyed were maintained and not allowed to slip. Conversely, voice was also used in an attempt to spur greater innovation in the

Figure 1

Key dimensions of 'projects' in user voice

546
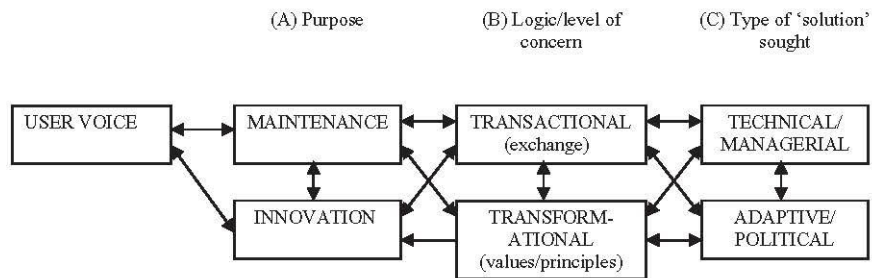
service where changes could be identified that would lead to perceived service improvements and/or development. Second, there was often an underpinning *logic* within the messages sent by service users that reflected different *levels of concern* (B). This logic was either 'transactional', focused on discrete (one-off or regular) transactions within the public service encounter and based on notions of exchange within the service environment itself, or 'transformational', focused more holistically on the service as a whole and often based on the values and principles that were perceived to be most important in relation to the service. Finally, there was a difference in the *type of solution* that was typically sought (C). This was either a 'technical'/'managerial' solution (with an emphasis on trying to find a way to 'do things right'), or an 'adaptive'/ 'political' solution (with an emphasis on trying to find a way to 'do the right things').

A very striking thing happened when we compared these findings with the leadership literature, however. Leadership 'projects' appear to tread exactly the same ground (see figure 2). This is evident in some of the leading texts on leadership. For example, Ronald Heifetz (1994) talks of leaders' purpose in providing protection and order (i.e. 'maintenance'), while Bernard Bass (2000) speaks of the need for leaders to seek 'innovation' and change. Meanwhile, in his Pulitzer Prize-winning book on leadership, James MacGregor Burns (1978) helpfully distinguishes between 'transactional' and 'transformational' leadership. He shows how the former is based on shallow relationships between 'leaders' and 'followers' who are each self-interested participants in an exchange process, while the latter is a process in which 'leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation' (Burns 1978: 20, cited in Denhardt and Campbell, 2006). Finally, in relation to the type of solution sought, Heifetz (1994) discusses the distinction between 'technical' and 'adaptive' solutions; while the public management literature is replete with examples of the distinction between 'managerial' and 'political' leadership (e.g. Hartley and Allison 2000; Hartley 2002; Morrell and Hartley 2006; Leach and Lowndes 2007).

The fact that both user projects and leadership projects tread the same ground provides the basis for competition (and, hence, perceived incompat-

Figure 2

Key dimensions of leadership projects

547
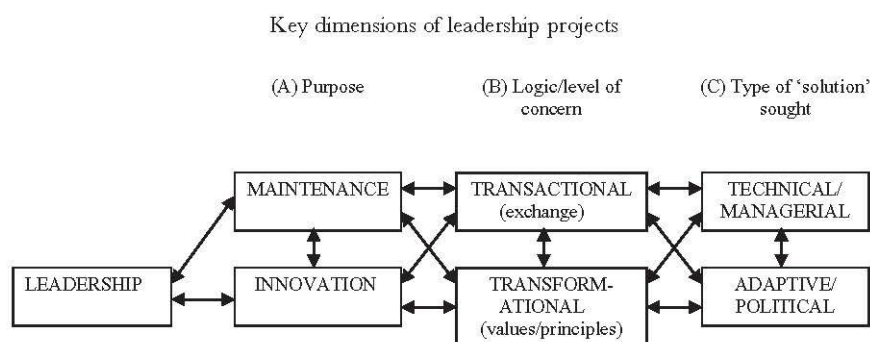
Figure 3

What happens at the boundary between leadership and user voice?
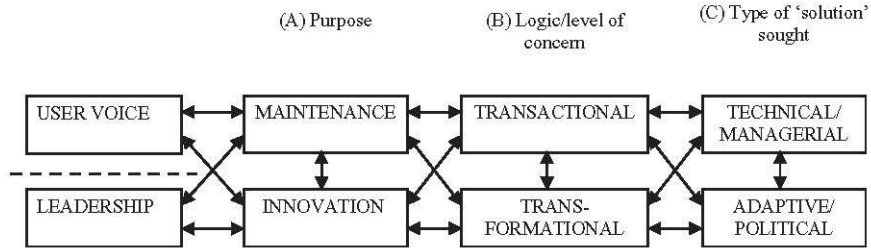
ibilities) between them. However, for the same reason, we argue that this also provides a basis for co-operation (and, hence, potential complementarities) between them. All of these different dimensions are inter-related, as indicated by the various directional arrows in figure 3.

The key question for this article is: What happens at the boundary between leadership and user voice? We are unable to unproblematically indicate the nature of the relationship between leadership and user voice at this stage. This is because the answer to our question depends on what kind of leadership, and what kind of listening, are being employed.

The Nature of Leadership and the Nature of Listening

As testified by the reams of research material on the subject, leadership is not an unproblematic concept. For example, one important literature differentiates between different leadership styles. It is common for such leadership styles to be depicted as falling on a spectrum, with authority/dictat at one end and democracy/consensus at the other (Bass 1981; Ferlie *et al.* 2003). Some commentators have asserted that in current public sector environments dictatorial/coercive leadership styles of 'command and control' have become untenable (e.g. Harris and Mujis 2004; Harris 2005). They assert that instead there are more consensual and democratic ways of leading that are more appropriate. There is danger, however, in setting up either of these 'polar opposites' as the 'one best way'. In practice, different situations at different times in different contexts will require different approaches. In other words, in some cases leaders will be expected to give direction, in others to facilitate wider participation and shared learning (Grint 2005, 2009). In many ways this may seem a banal observation, but in some contemporary texts there seems often to be such a desire to knock down the 'straw man' of directive/coercive leadership that this is often left implicit.[3]

In this article we seek to get away from notions of a continuum that are implicit in the binary distinction between authority/dictat and democracy/consensus. Instead, we prefer a tri-fold depiction of leadership styles, adding to the above pairing a third, more 'individualized' leadership style that

548

Figure 4

A range of leadership styles
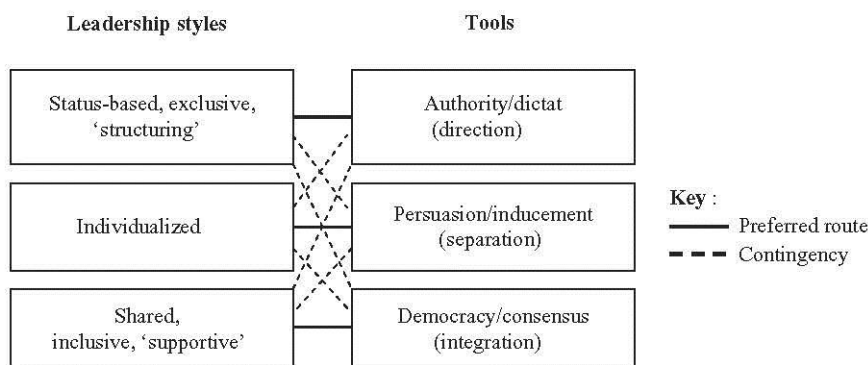
depends on persuasion/inducement (Dansereau *et al.* 1995, Yammarino and Dansereau 2002) (see figure 4). Furthermore, rather than taking a static 'either-or' perspective to characterize public service environments in terms of one or other leadership style, we see these alternative ways of leading as components of a more dynamic leadership portfolio, in which it is possible to switch between the different styles. We think it is important to recognize that elements of each leadership style are likely to be present within the service system at any time. However, this is not to say that one leadership style may not tend to be more dominant than the others in any particular context.

The notion of 'preferred routes' indicated in figure 4 is supported by research evidence showing that leaders are often 'guided by an "internal compass" [or] reference point from which everything can be checked to determine a sense of "rightness"' (Smythe and Norton 2007: 74). However, while each ideal type may provide preferred tools that leaders will reach for in the course of enacting leadership, this may not prevent them from reaching for some of the other available tools if the situation demands it. Contingent situations may demand that tools are 'borrowed' from other approaches so that institutional order might be maintained. Hall's (1972: 49) theoretical distinction between 'closed' and 'open' systems is useful in guiding under-standing here. In the 'closed' system model the organization is more insular and single-minded, focused on the pursuit of particular purposive goals. For Wexler (2005: 6), leaders within closed systems are 'locked in to a preferred worldview'. In a more 'open' system model the organization is not only concerned with such goals, but also in responding to more widely to external and internal pressures. Wexler (2005: 5) suggests that this model is more appropriate in contemporary contexts, observing that 'increasing awareness of the simultaneous existence of diverse and conflicting worldviews [means] it is vital that one is able to speak and navigate in the language and conventions of more than one worldview'.

Figure 5

Where leadership meets listening
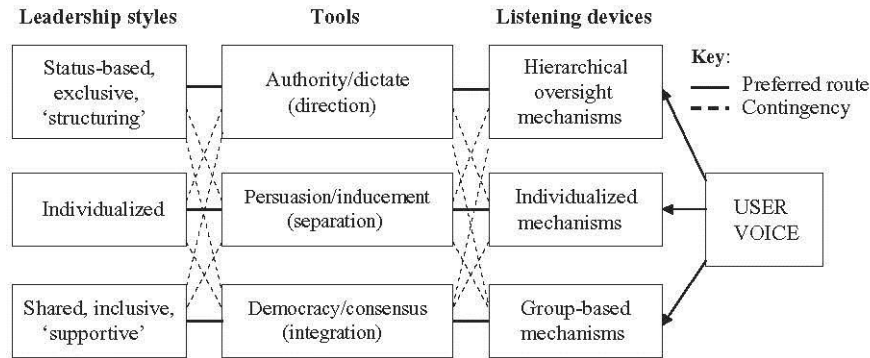
In his influential text *Beyond Rational Management*, Quinn (1988) goes one step further. Emphasizing the importance of values as well as goals in guiding organizational leadership, he distinguishes between one leadership model that is 'purposive, static and entropic', and another that is 'holistic, dynamic and generative' (Quinn 1988: xv). The value set within leaders' 'purposive frame' may be seen as the equivalent of their internal compass, while leaders' 'holistic frame' is drawn more widely to include not only this value set but also a range of competing values. While the former may provide the basis for 'rational' argumentation, the latter acknowledges the often 'messy' nature of policy-making and implementation (Leach 1982; Fisher 1998). Importantly, Quinn (1988) proposes that exceptional leaders do not achieve excellence by using one or the other frame but by using both in conjunction.

In this way, for example, public service leaders that favour a status-based, 'structuring' leadership style (Handy 1985) might nevertheless organize a more group-based, democratic consultation on a particular issue in order to facilitate learning, gain legitimacy, smooth implementation, and so on. Similarly, public service leaders that favour a more 'supportive' leadership style (Handy 1985) might issue directive orders in particular instances in order to reach a final decision, close off debates, and so on. Alternatively, in either case, leaders might also seek to persuade individuals to follow a particular favoured course of action by offering them incentives or inducements to do so.

Alongside the different leadership styles, we are able to place different 'listening devices' in the public sector (see figure 5). These different listening devices were the predominant focus of our research into user voice, and represent the major categories of interfaces through which users could establish communication with providers (Simmons *et al.* 2007a, 2007b; Simmons 2009). Users are therefore able to choose how they express their views from a range of options:

1. Hierarchical oversight mechanisms (e.g. elected representatives, senior officials, ombudsmen).

2. Individualized mechanisms direct with service providers (e.g. suggestion schemes, complaints procedures, personal communications).
3. Group-based mechanisms (e.g. user groups, consultative committees, user forums).

Support for hierarchical oversight mechanisms reflects a bias toward more 'structuring' styles of leadership. In the most extreme examples of this (where experts are expected to define service users' needs and administrators are expected to make sure the service is delivered according to strict rules of eligibility), the service is overseen and regulated by local or central government politicians, through which individuals can seek redress. The expression of voice through any other channel would be regarded as undue influence, since the aim is to meet professionally-assessed needs through rule-bound allocation procedures that treat everyone the same. These processes therefore relate to the tools of authority and dictat. By contrast, support for group-based mechanisms reflects a bias towards more inclusive and 'supportive' styles of leadership. Here, users may be facilitated to relate to the service through a sense of membership/ownership that confers rights (but also responsibilities) to express their views through collective processes. These processes relate more to the tools of democracy, consensus building and co-production. Similarly, support for individualized mechanisms reflects an environment in which users are generally seen as utility-maximizing individuals, negotiating the role of consumer in such a way as to support their private needs and wants. The provider role is to match supply to demand (or where this is not possible, to offer incentives to divert demand to alternatives), and to respond directly to feedback from individual service users. These processes relate more to the tools of persuasion and inducement.

Listening to user voice: provider perspectives

Each of the above 'ideal type' listening mechanisms is associated with a set of preferred tools, reflecting different value positions and/or cultural norms. In our research, these issues became particularly apparent when we looked at people's communications and the responses they had received. In one case – a leisure service provided by a private sector contractor – hierarchical oversight mechanisms were frowned upon. As one manager put it:

> *'If they go to their councillor, the councillor is only going to have to come back to me anyway, and I will just send him away with the same answer I would have given the customer direct. So all they are doing is spending a week or two longer to get the same answer, because it takes forever to get these messages up and down the chain'* (leisure services manager, F, 30s)

This answer denies that the councillor might have: (1) any representative responsibility to investigate the issue independently; or (2) any authoritative power to request service-level variations outside the contract. Such matters are familiar aspects of current debates about 'depoliticisation' and the so-called 'democratic deficit' in today's public services (Flinders and Buller 2006; Newman and Clarke 2009).

551

We also found that providers often attempted to persuade users to see their point of view, particularly where this meant users abandoning their issue with the service. Common techniques included telling service users that 'this is the first complaint of this nature that we have received', or 'resource constraints prevent us from taking any action'. Also common was a form of 'projection'; gaining people's confidence by projecting an ostensibly similar degree of anger at their source of discontent (e.g. 'I am as upset about this as you are'). However, this was generally a disarming tactic used to deflect users' messages – the emotion itself (even if real rather than false) was usually shallow and temporary (cf. Goffman 1952):

'You need to try and keep the customers happy and make sure they come back. That's my view on the matter . . . Whereas you would really like to say "piss-off" – excuse me on tape . . . ' (senior leisure services manager, M, 30s)

It is often easier for providers to deflect users via written channels than face-to-face. This made group-based channels challenging and often unpopular with some providers. We therefore found mixed levels of commitment to more participative and deliberative listening mechanisms in some of our case study organizations:

'At a user group you get so tied down in trying to give an answer to satisfy someone. An answer that is, you know, a bit weak and not as strong as it would be if you had a few days to think about it. I don't think you can always give the answer people want' (leisure services manager, M, 20s)

'You have got the possibility of a quango being generated, a little tight-knit club that seems to have a lot of power. There was no way I was going to let that happen' (leisure services manager, M, 30s)

As we have suggested above in relation to leadership, while the above examples represent biases towards particular values and norms, there are often contingencies that lead public service organizations to borrow from other approaches. Hence it is common for service providers to utilize all three forms of listening device – at least in principle. However, in practice, it seems that organizational listening is not only an underdeveloped skill in the public sector, as Bichard (2000) suggests, but that there are times (i.e. when it is not 'contingent' to do so) when certain listening devices are either under-utilized or switched off. However, it is not always immediately obvious that this is the case to users on the outside. As the major interfaces ostensibly offered to service users through which to communicate, we might predict that this under-utilization of one mechanism or another might generate difficulties and frustrations from a user perspective.

Listening to user voice: user perspectives

Our semi-structured interviews with service users showed support for a full range of mechanisms for the expression of voice. Support for hierarchical

oversight mechanisms was built on users' belief in the legitimacy of the 'hierarchy' to act on their behalf, especially where they did not believe they had a strong enough voice on their own. This again relates to the tools of authority and dictat. There are certainly times when service users value the use of such tools, or believe it to be necessary. Individualized mechanisms were supported as a means to communicate a personal perspective on service issues. They were also commonly used to give positive/negative reinforcement to providers: either praise or, more often, criticism (linked to a range of potential sanctions). This relates clearly to the tools of persuasion and inducement. Group-based mechanisms were valued as an opportunity for shared learning/shared problem-solving, and for providing 'strength in numbers'. This in turn relates to the tools of democracy and consensus – with 'strength in numbers' used as a counterweight to 'even out' perceived power imbalances between users and providers.

Our survey investigated the circumstances that might prompt the use of these mechanisms (see table 3). Overall, voice was widely intended to increase the likelihood of action (e). However, the nature of this action varied. Individualistic mechanisms were considered the most appropriate for discussing problems (a, b) and getting recompense (c). Hierarchical oversight mechanisms were considered the most appropriate for campaigning against major change or closures (d). Groups were considered the most appropriate for gaining a better understanding of the service (f) and discussing new ideas (g). It would seem, then, that these survey findings support those from the in-depth interviews about the variations in users' approach to 'voice'.

We also found that people have a tendency to prefer one channel or another for expressing their views. For example, some people preferred group-based to individualized mechanisms:

'I think there is a feeling that one can talk things through and that several people can voice their opinions in a group. Whereas if you write a letter . . . in some ways a letter seems more formal. If you are having a debate, you can always say "Well I can see what your problem is or whatever it may be". The two way thing, I think, is much more useful than just writing a letter.' (leisure service user, M, 60s)

'What I object to is that only the people who attend on a Tuesday are the people who are really consulted about how the centre runs. I spoke to the chair of the group about it and basically the manager is inflexible, he's not prepared to meet on any other day. And as someone who only comes on a Monday and a Wednesday, I think I am being disenfranchised. Of course, I am a bit more articulate than some of the clients that come to the centre, and I'm able to put pen to paper. But that's not good enough, it's just not good enough'. (day centre user, M, 50s)

Despite this, however, there is strong support for the provision of a full range of mechanisms to be made available (see table 4). This is sometimes self-oriented, allowing strategy switching if users are frustrated in following their preferred channel. However, it is also other-oriented, based on recognition of the fact that not everybody feels comfortable expressing their views in the same way, and the idea that everybody should be able to communicate their

553

Table 3

Circumstances that prompt the use of voice

Q. Under which of the following circumstances might you consider expressing your views?	Housing (N = 109)			Leisure (N = 318)			Day care (N = 116)		
	HIER %	IND %	GRP %	HIER %	IND %	GRP %	HIER %	IND %	GRP %
(a) Discuss one-off problem	35.3	38.5	31.9	12.2	57.6	24.4	29.5	59.8	45.5
(b) Discuss ongoing problem	55.3	62.6	53.6	41.6	81.5	53.8	45.5	44.8	48.5
(c) Get recompense	24.7	28.6	7.2	18.4	54.5	22.2	18.2	18.4	15.2
(d) Campaign against closure	30.6	15.4	30.4	61.7	31.8	50.7	47.7	34.5	36.4
(e) Increase likelihood of action	63.5	57.1	50.7	35.3	45.5	47.6	36.4	36.8	56.1
(f) Get better understanding	17.6	19.8	42.0	6.5	22.7	8.7	6.8	26.4	28.8
(g) Discuss new ideas	20.0	8.8	43.5	17.6	15.2	38.0	11.4	47.1	43.9

554

Table 4

Support for different voice mechanisms

	Hier %	Ind %	Grp %
Q. In which of these ways have you ever expressed your views?	12.3	38.8*	9.9
Q. If you wanted to express your views, would you consider doing so in any of these ways?	44.4	78.0	50.8
Q. In general, do you support the idea of being able to express your views in any of these ways?	84.8	89.3	78.7

Notes: N = 543.
* This figure does not include expressing views to frontline staff, which would raise it still further.

views in the way that suits them best. Hence, table 4 shows that a larger number of people support the idea of having each mechanism than would ever consider using them. All of these things show that there are also contingencies from a service user perspective that make the availability of alternative approaches valuable. It suggests that a full range of mechanisms for users to express their views should be maintained.

In sum, the above analysis shows that, once again, public service leaders and public service users tread similar territories – this time employing similar tools and approaches in their communicative practices. However, this again can potentially lead to either conflictual or concordant relationships. The key point here is that each of the different approaches in figure 5 is based on different value positions and/or cultural norms. Values direct people's attention to what is more and less important, while cultural norms define what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. This is supported by the institutional structures of public service organizations. Institutions preserve cultural values and norms, give them authority, and provide a context for social interaction (Brett 2000). Yet importantly, as Parsons (1991) points out, cultural values and norms are *both* institutionalized in social systems *and* internalized in the personalities of individuals. If the values and norms institutionalized in public service providers are compatible with those internalized in service users there is 'cultural congruence'. If they are incompatible, there are 'culture clashes'. Service users assemble their values and norms from a variety of places, so it cannot be assumed that they will conform to those of public service providers, even where there are attempts by provider organizations at 'institutionalizing' them. Users' 'choice about voice' (i.e. the choice of mechanism through which to express their views), is therefore often linked to a more personal set of dispositions (Simmons *et al.* 2007a, 2007b).

Our research showed that 70 per cent of users had expressed their views about the service in one way or another at some time or another. Yet people's

Table 5

Circumstances that inhibit the use of voice

Q. Here are a number of reasons why people might not express their views. Which of these apply to you?	Housing (N = 109)			Leisure (N = 318)			Day care (N = 116)		
	HIER %	IND %	GRP %	HIER %	IND %	GRP %	HIER %	IND %	GRP %
(a) Not appropriate level	10.1	6.5	13.8	25.6	15.4	9.2	17.4	7.2	14.4
(b) Do not trust them	21.1	22.9	22.0	31.9	13.0	15.8	22.9	11.7	11.7
(c) Cause bad feeling with staff	7.3	7.3	13.8	8.1	19.2	14.3	17.4	24.5	22.5
(d) Would not be listened to	33.0	49.5	31.2	42.6	37.2	31.9	33.0	12.6	18.9
(e) Would take too much time	23.9	15.6	30.3	44.0	51.3	63.0	18.3	8.1	11.8
(f) Do not talk my language	14.7	6.4	11.0	15.8	2.6	7.3	12.8	5.4	6.3
(g) Would be made to feel small	24.8	19.3	8.3	9.2	10.3	5.1	10.1	6.3	10.8

556

'choice about voice' could also include the choice to remain silent. As we have shown, table 3 suggests that the expression of user voice is widely intended to increase the likelihood of action. However, table 5 shows the circumstances that might inhibit users from expressing their views through these mechanisms. The most common of these is a sense they would not be listened to (d).

This notion of not using 'voice' due to the belief that one would not be listened to provides a further important component of the dynamics of 'choice about voice' (Simmons *et al.* 2007a). It represents a withdrawal of the individual from communicative action, or, as Hoggett (2001) puts it, a 'refusal of agency'. In sociological terms, people who withdraw become 'holdouts' (i.e. alienated from the service system) or 'escapees' (i.e. people who currently find exit from the system unfeasible, but who would take the first feasible opportunity to leave) (Homans 1961). This lowering of commitment and concomitant withdrawal of trust and support can have serious implications for policy-making and service delivery. First, there are implications for day-to-day system control, whereby it may be harder to gain service users' consent. Second, we have identified that it may eventually result in 'leakage' from the service system in one of two ways. The first we have characterized as 'reluctant exit', whereby users cross a tolerance threshold, leading to the abandonment of the public sector for private sector services. This has implications for the long-term support of public provision. The second we have characterized as 'exit without alternatives', whereby people prefer 'no service' to a 'poor service'. This has implications for the depth of social support, and potentially even for the safety of users and others in society (Simmons *et al.* 2007a).

Despite the fact that many users see their relationships with service providers as relatively positive, and are generally willing to share their views with providers in the best interests of the service, there are mixed views about the extent to which providers are interested in making available genuine opportunities for this. Our research indicates that the less there are considered to be good opportunities to express one's views, the less positive these relationships are considered to be (see table 6). Not only this; the less there are considered to be good opportunities to express one's views, the lower the overall quality of the service is perceived to be (see table 7).

In today's public service environment, where imperatives toward 'customer insight' (IDeA *et al.* 2007) and 'engaging the public' (e.g. Newman and Clarke 2009) have become such an important focus, these issues cannot be easily ignored.

Leadership and Listening: Getting the Balance Right

We began by arguing that there are potential complementarities as well as incompatibilities between leadership and listening. This led us to highlight the similarities between the projects of service users, and those of service leaders. From a public service leader perspective, we have subsequently attempted to demonstrate how both 'leadership' and 'listening' may be differentiated according to three broad sets of values and norms that each provide different 'tools' for taking action. The same broad sets of values and norms appear to

557

Table 6

Nature of user-provider relationships vs. 'good opportunities' to express views

Good opportunities?	Day care (N = 116)		Leisure (N = 318)		Housing (N = 109)	
Relationship?	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
Very positive	88.5	11.5	79.2	20.8	77.8	22.2
Quite positive	78.1	21.9	43.8	56.2	58.3	41.7
Neither pos/neg	42.9	57.1	18.8	81.3	40.6	59.4
Quite negative	0	100.0	7.7	92.3	9.1	90.9
Very negative	0	100.0	0	0	0	100.0

Note: Questions asked: 'Are there are good opportunities available to express your views about the service?' and 'On balance, how positive or negative is your relationship with the people who provide the service?'

Table 7

Perceptions of service quality vs. 'good opportunities' to express views

Good opportunities?	Day care (N = 116)		Leisure (N = 318)		Housing (N = 109)	
Service quality?	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
Very good	88.1	11.9	65.5	34.5	100.0	0.0
Good	87.5	12.5	40.2	59.8	69.2	30.8
Average	33.3	66.7	20.0	80.0	44.7	55.3
Poor	0	100.0	14.3	85.7	16.7	83.3
Very poor	0	100.0	0	100.0	0	100.0

Note: Questions asked: 'Are there are good opportunities available to express your views about the service?' and 'On balance, how good a service do you think you get?'

guide users' 'choice about voice'. However, our analysis has shown that different service users have different preferences and expectations about how they would like to be listened to.

We believe there is an increasing need to be able to communicate and/or connect with this 'differentiated consumer' in public services (Simmons 2009). Our argument now turns to the ways in which public service organizations might respond. Here, we assert that there is a need for an appropriate balance to be given to both leadership and listening, and that if this listening is going to be effective, sufficient balance should also be given in the attention paid to each of the different mechanisms for hearing users' voice. Furthermore, it is worth noting that users' desire for sensitivity to their individual and collective

needs (in terms of 'distributive justice') was matched by their desire for 'procedural' and 'relational' justice in public service organizations (cf. Bies and Moag 1986; Sousa and Vala 2002). Hence, users told us that listening did not always mean that they expected to be given what exactly they were asking for. Equally important was a process that reassured them that their views had been taken seriously and given due consideration, even if this might eventually end up making little or no difference to the outcome. It is a connection with service users' hopes, fears, expectations, dilemmas – indeed all the elements of the human condition – that is important here. Its absence can serve to create perceptions of a lack of 'institutional responsiveness'. We therefore argue for a more careful consideration of the extent to which the institutional arrangements are balanced in relation to leadership and listening. Evidently once leaders have listened, they must filter and act on the views expressed. However, a key message of this article is that it is important that the 'filter' applied is not too uni-dimensional; there are a number of leadership and listening styles, and each has its own merit.

Earlier, we indicated our research suggested that a full range of mechanisms for users to express their views should be provided. Part of the solution to culture clashes is therefore proposed to lie at the level of institutional design. Here, however, the relative power of service providers in establishing institutional 'rules and roles' comes to the fore. For example, Barnes *et al.* (2003: 396) highlight 'the power of public officials to constitute the public in particular ways that tend to privilege notions of a general public interest and that marginalize the voices of "counter-publics" in the dialogic process'. This brings into focus the emerging 'competition' between different actors to represent the interests of the consumer (Clarke 1996). Importantly, if they wish to retain users' support, public service leaders can little afford to put such 'power distance' (Mulder 1977) between themselves and service users in this way.

Nevertheless, our research suggests a number of further ways in which public service leaders can become disconnected. First, they can fail to understand the service attributes and outcomes that are important to service users. One user told us that:

> 'It was just . . . you know when you do something that's slightly silly and you do it every day and it slowly annoys you, and you say "well, why don't we do it that way?". . . That's what happened with this particular system' (leisure services user, M, 20s)

Second, they can differ in their judgements of the service's performance in relation to these key attributes and outcomes (cf. Miranda *et al.* 2010). As another user observed:

> 'The service is supposed to be for us, not for the staff. That's the important thing. . . . They sometimes think that they know better than us. And that's not always the case' (day care service user, M, 40s)

Third, they can differ in the values, beliefs and attitudes they hold. As service users told us:

559

'It was the fact that they didn't even say they were going to consider it. So I thought this was authoritarian – rigidity and all that' (leisure services user, F, 50s)

'The response was as if I was an idiot: "Well, it has been inspected and the inspector said it was alright"' (tenant, F, 50s)

This can be a key site of 'contestation' between users and providers. As one service user put it:

'There was just a culture of "we won't do it if we don't feel like it". And it really takes some getting rid of.' (leisure services user, F, 40s)

As Hoggett (2003: 3) points out, failure to recognize value pluralism and 'welcome rather than fear conflict' is likely to result in increasing levels of negativity and disconnection.

However, a fourth way that providers can become disconnected concerns the exercise of user voice. Different types of voice provide different ways for messages to be communicated and accommodations reached. Where one or other type of voice is stifled, problems can eventually be expected – even if there appear to be short-term gains. This means considering how to ensure that the institutional design is conducive to hearing users' views. However, we have found that even public service organizations with ostensibly elaborate involvement processes often remain remarkably impervious to the input from these processes. In itself, therefore, institutional design is not enough. Institutional effort must also be invested in ensuring that the message gets through. In other words, users also need to feel that providers are *receptive*. For Nichols (1995: 247) this suggests that listening is more than a skill, it is also 'an attitude of caring and concern'. Not only do the different channels need to be kept open by service providers, but reception of user voice through these channels also needs to be clear. This means providers should ensure that they 'tune themselves in' correctly to be able to listen (Simmons *et al.* 2007a, 2007b).

This is even more necessary given the diversity of today's more highly differentiated service user constituency, holding various normative values, commitments and expectations (Simmons 2009; Laing *et al.* 2009). As Corrigan and Joyce (1997: 421) observe, public sector reform has not only led to the fragmentation of service provision, but also to a 'fragmentation of the public'. As a result, people's expectations of public services are changing. Modern public services are having to respond to a wider range of demands, based on difference. However, tensions between universalism and particularism remain unresolved (Thompson and Hoggett 1996). This differentiated nature of public service consumers means that different mechanisms for the expression of user voice will be required (Simmons 2009). If we are to better understand how these issues are addressed in today's public services, we need to understand not only the choices service users make about how they express their views, but also what happens when they do.

In other words, no one of these different models of voice provides a panacaea in today's public service environment. Traditionally the hierarchical 'politics-administration nexus' (Hall 1983) would have been considered the

legitimate conduit for service users. However, this legitimacy has been challenged both by market-based reforms and 'consumerism' on the one hand (e.g. Clode *et al.* 1987; Deakin and Wright, 1990; Simmons *et al.* 2009), and the rise of more egalitarian, identity-based representation on the other (e.g. Barnes 1999; Lister 2001). We found strong demand amongst users of being listened to in each of these three different ways. This means that providers cannot expect 'one-size-fits-all' approaches to 'listening' to be effective.

Many service users seem able negotiate their interactions with providers in ways that are at least sufficiently compatible with the values and norms institutionalized in the public service organization. However, there is scope for confusion when the language users are speaking seems to differ from that of the providers. Where such 'culture clashes' occur, negotiation may prove difficult. Hence, for Brett (2000):

> When people from two different cultural perspectives negotiate, each brings to the table his or her way of thinking about the issues to be negotiated and the process of negotiation based on the ways in which issues are typically assessed and negotiations carried out within that cultural group . . . The same values that generate cultural differences in preferences may also act as cultural blinders. Members of one culture expect preferences to be compatible, and cannot understand the rationality of the other party, whose views on the same issue are at odds with their own

This description fits many of the stories we were told by our respondents – both users and providers. We argue that organizational resistance to hearing the user voice through one mechanism or another should be controlled if negative 'culture clashes' are to be avoided. In seeking greater congruence with users' perspectives, it would seem advantageous for providers to make greater efforts to listen to people, and to understand how they want to be treated as individuals or as members of groups; the role they see for hierarchical oversight, and the extent to which they have become withdrawn. Such understanding can then be utilized to review matters at the institutional level, in terms of both the more 'transactional' issues of everyday policy and practice, and the more 'transformational' issues of organizational values and attitudes (see figures 3 and 4). This is not to say, however, that complete congruence between users and providers should necessarily always be the goal. As Quinn and Hall (1983) point out, sometimes a degree of incongruence can be the most effective condition. This reflects the idea that even where conflicts arise between multiple perspectives, these might result in better understanding and have a beneficial integrative force (Simmel 1922/1955). To return to the point we made in the introduction, this recognizes that there are incompatibilities as well as complementarities between leadership and listening. It is not therefore a matter of eliminating conflict altogether but more that, as Cameron and Freeman (1991: 53) argue, successful leaders should attempt to 'manage the contradictions and incongruencies in their organizations'.

Such contradictions and incongruencies are manifold in today's public services, particularly in the context of recent reforms (Newman and Clarke

2009). For example, Tripathi and Dixon (2008) examine the environment that has been created as neo-liberal managerialism has been juxtaposed over the traditional hierarchical structures of public administration. They argue that the complexity and ambiguity caused by this hybrid development creates a distinctive set of nine public-sector leadership paradoxes (cf. Hood and Peters 2004; Margretts *et al.* 2011 forthcoming). Moreover, Currie *et al.* (2009) compare an emerging, government-prescribed, results-oriented approach to leadership (in what they call 'the new institution') with a more traditional professional value-based approach (in what they call 'the old institution'). This is an important distinction. First, there are often tensions between political, managerial and professional forms of leadership in the public sector, in the extent to which they might reflect one or other set of cultural norms. Second, the ways in which these different forms of leadership are enacted all matter within the public service environment, and all types of leader at different governance levels can learn from a better understanding of the different tools available to them and the conditions in which they might best be used.

In a pressurized environment where a notion of the 'heroic' leader has emerged (e.g. the head teacher who is expected to turn around a school almost single-handedly), and/or where leaders are expected to bear full blame for any errors (e.g. the Shoesmith case in Hackney Children's Services), there may be a temptation for leaders to remain over-reliant on their 'internal compass'. The challenge raised by this article for political, professional and/or managerial leaders socialized into particular doctrines, to paraphrase Quinn (1988: 164–65), is therefore not to affix to one or the other set of tools but to move to a meta-level that allows them to integrate these seemingly contradictory elements and achieve synergy between them.

In support of this position, another leadership theorist, Wexler (2005: 4), makes the valuable overarching point that context is important: 'Contextualists see a world of multiple possibilities rooted in different cognitive lenses or worldviews and attempt to avoid viewing one of these as superior'. A common feature in the recent leadership literature is therefore the exhortation for leaders to be flexible, reflexive, and 'step back' (e.g. Quinn 1988; Vangen and Huxham 2003; Peck and 6 2006). This is important in terms of 'organizational learning'; a failure to listen to inputs via one mechanism or another means losing potential learning opportunities that may help them avoid 'nasty surprises' later down the line. It is also important in terms of maintaining/increasing users' commitment to service goals. The provision of each voice mechanism is expected by service users, and this requires more flexible and multifaceted approach. Where users feel that their views will not be listened to and withdraw, this can have the serious implications we noted earlier. For public service providers, this means it is necessary to demonstrate the extent to which they are 'listening' as well as 'leading'. In turn, this means establishing a framework within which communications can flow easily, and in both directions.

To conclude, then, processes of leadership and listening can be understood as being in dynamic balance. People know a listening culture when they see it. Generally it reflects greater congruence between users' perceptions of how they *actually are* treated by the service, and their expectations of how they *should*

be treated (Simmons *et al.* 2007b). Greater (if not complete) congruence appears to be a valuable organizational goal in a public sector where there is evidence of a significant 'listening gap'. In response, we argue two forms of action are necessary:

- Institutional design that recognizes value pluralism and promotes the provision of a range of 'spaces' for users to exercise choice and voice.
- The investment of institutional effort to make these spaces work, providing listening as well as leadership.

The first provides the 'organizational architecture' to ensure that effective means are provided for organizing the inputs people want to put into an organization – and the outputs that they want to get out. The second provides the commitment necessary to 'reconnect' and strengthen the ties between public service organizations and their differentiated public.

Notes

1. Our main method was case study. We completed a 'major' and 'minor' case in each of three service areas: social care (day care services), leisure services and housing. Day care services were examined in locations where the local authority provides the service directly; leisure services in locations where the service is contracted out to the private sector; and housing services in tenant management organizations. Within each case, the first phase of the research involved in-depth semi-structured interviews with service users known to have expressed their views through different mechanisms: 'hierarchical' channels (e.g. contacting elected officials, ombudsmen); 'individualistic' channels (e.g. complaints procedures, direct personal communications); or 'group-based' channels (e.g. user groups, user forums, consultative committees). We also conducted in-depth interviews with staff, managers, local authority officers and elected representatives. In total, 80 service users and 30 provider representatives were interviewed. Documentary analysis supplemented the interviews. Documents included minutes of group meetings and the 'complaints files' in each organization (including both written communications from users and the providers' replies). A second phase of data collection involved the conduct of face-to-face user surveys in each of our major cases. The survey took basic demographic data, and asked about: (1) what things were important to service users; (2) how (and how often) they communicated their views; (3) what they felt the service should be like compared with how it is; and (4) how they saw their relationship with the service and service providers. A total of 543 surveys were completed; response rates varied between 45 per cent and 55 per cent. Table 8 shows who was interviewed and how the sample was determined. The samples are representative in each case, however in terms of generalizability results from within-case surveys should be seen as 'tin openers' rather than 'dials' (Carter *et al.* 1992).
2. Day care services, housing services and leisure services were selected on the basis that they might offer a range of different sets of relationships within which the issue of voice could be investigated. Cases were selected not for their representativeness but in a purposive sample designed to cover a variety of experiences. Interestingly, when measured against the key values of fairness, reliability, respect and regulation that emerged in the first (qualitative) phase of our research, our survey showed that people's *expectations* were quite similar over the kind of relationships they feel they

Table 8

Sampling criteria

	N	Sample type	Drawn from
Social care	116	Population	All users visiting day care centres
Leisure services	318	Random	(1) Database of centre members (2) Non-members visiting the centres. Different days and times were randomly selected, and every third non-member was approached for an interview
Housing (TMCs)	109	Random	Database of all tenants

should receive from different public services, but that their *experiences* were quite dissimilar over the kind of relationship they actually did receive (see Simmons *et al.* 2007b for detailed analysis).

3. Keith Grint's work is an honourable exception. Grint (2005, 2009) has recently provided an excellent schema, contrasting 'command' (authority/dictat) as appropriate for 'critical problems' (or emergencies), 'management' as appropriate for 'tame problems' (which, even if complicated, have a uni-linear solution), and 'leadership' as appropriate for 'wicked problems' (which have no simple solution). He shows why neither command nor management is sufficient to address the kinds of 'wicked problems' that are increasingly faced in the public sector (see Jackson 2001). Further, he suggests that the role of leadership is to 'ask the appropriate question and to engage collaboration' (or listen?).

References

Alimo-Metcalfe, B. and Alban-Metcalfe, J. (2004), Leadership in Public Sector Organisations. In J. Storey (ed.), *Leadership in Organizations: Current Issues and Key Trends*, London: Routledge.

Archer, M. (2003), *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Baldock J. and Ungerson, C. (1996), Becoming a consumer of care: developing a sociological account of the 'new community care'. In S. Edgell, K. Hetherington and A. Warde (eds), *Consumption Matters*, Oxford: Blackwell/Sociological Review.

Barber, M. (2008), *Instruction to Deliver*, London: Methuen.

Barker, C. (2005), *Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice*, London: Sage.

Barnes, M. (1999), Users as Citizens: collective action and the local governance of welfare, *Social Policy & Administration*, 33, 1: 73–90.

Barnes, M., Newman, J., Knops, A. and Sullivan, H. (2003), Constituting 'the public' in public participation, *Public Administration*, 81, 2: 379–99.

Bass, B. (1981), *Stodgill's Handbook of Leadership*, New York, NY: Free Press.

Bass, B. (2000), The Future of Leadership in Learning Organizations, *Journal of Leadership Studies*, 7, 3: 18–40.

Bellah, R., Madsen, R., Sullivan, W., Swidler, A. and Tipton, S. (1985), *Habits of the Heart*, London: University of California Press.

Bichard, M. (2000), The Modernization and Improvement of Government and Public Services: Creativity, Leadership and Change, *Public Money & Management*, 20, 2: 41–46.

Bies, R. and Moag, J. (1986), Interactional justice: Communication criteria of fairness, *Research on Negotiations in Organizations*, 1: 43–55.

Bourdieu, P. (1977), *Outline of a theory of practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Brett, J. (2000), Culture and Negotiation, *International Journal of Psychology*, 35, 2: 97–104.

Burns, J. M. (1978), *Leadership*, New York, NY: Harper & Row.

Cabinet Office (2001), Prime Minister calls for stronger public sector leadership, Cabinet Office Press Release, 27 March 2001.

Cabinet Office (2006), Public Services Leadership Consortium, http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/workforcematters/stakeholder_fora/pslc.asp (accessed 18 May 2006).

Cameron, K. and Freeman, S. (1991), Cultural Congruence, Strength and Type: relationships to effectiveness, *Organizational Change and Development*, 5: 23–58.

Carter, N., Klein, R. and Day, P. (1992), *How Governments Measure Success: The Use of Performance Indicators in Government*, London: Routledge.

Clarke, J. (1996), Public Nightmares and Communitarian Dreams. In S. Edgell, K. Hetherington and A. Warde (eds), *Consumption Matters: the production and experience of consumption*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Clarke, J. (2009), The People's Police? Citizens, Consumers and Communities. In R. Simmons, M. Powell and I. Greener (eds), *The Consumer in Public Services*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Clarke, J., Newman, J., Smith, N., Vidler, E. and Westmarland, L. (2007), *Creating Citizen-Consumers: Changing Publics and Changing Public Services*, London: Sage.

Clode, D., Parker, C. and Etherington, S. (eds) (1987), *Towards the Sensitive Bureaucracy: consumers, welfare and the new pluralism*, Aldershot: Gower.

Corrigan, P. and Joyce, P. (1997), Reconstructing Public Management, *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 10, 5: 417–32.

Currie, G., Lockett, A. and Suhomlinova, O. (2009), Leadership and institutional change in the public sector: The case of secondary schools in England, *Leadership Quarterly*, 20, 5: 664–79.

Dansereau, F., Yammarino, F., Markham, S., Alutto, J., Newman, J., Dumas, M., Nachman, S., Naughton, T., Kim, K., Al-Kelaabi, S., Lee, S. and Keller, T. (1995), Individualized Leadership: A new multi-level approach, *Leadership Quarterly*, 6, 3: 413–50.

Deakin, N. and Wright, A. (1990), *Consuming Public Services*, London: Routledge.

Denhardt, J. and Campbell, K. (2006), The Role of Democratic Values in Transformational Leadership, *Administration and Society*, 38, 5: 556–72.

Emirbayer, M. and Mische, A. (1998), What Is Agency?' *American Journal of Sociology*, 103, 4: 962–1023.

Ferlie, E., Hartley, J. and Martin, S. (2003), Changing Public Service Organizations: current perspectives and future prospects, *British Journal of Management*, 14, Special issue: S1–S14.

Fisher, C. (1998), *Resource Allocation in the Public Sector*, London: Routledge.

Flinders, M. and Buller, J. (2006), Depoliticisation: Principles, Tactics and Tools, *British Politics*, 1, 3: 293–318.

Goffman, E. (1952), On Cooling the Mark Out, *Psychiatry: Journal of Interpersonal Relations*, 15, 4: 451–63.

Gordon, T. (1977), *Leader Effectiveness Training*, New York, NY: Wyden Books.

Greener I. (2003), Who choosing what? The evolution of the word 'choice' in the NHS and its implications for New Labour, *Social Policy Review*, 15: 49–67.

565

Grint, K. (2005), Problems, problems, problems: The social construction of 'leadership', *Human Relations*, 58, 11: 1467–94.

Grint, K. (2009), *New directions in the leadership of local public services: what has the research taught us?*, paper presented to the ESRC Public Policy Seminar, *Leadership and resilience – the strategic leadership of local communities and local services in a time of fragmentation*, Edinburgh, 30 October.

Hall, P. (1983), Policy Innovation and the Structure of the State: The Politics-Administration Nexus in France and Britain, *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 466, 1: 43–59.

Hall, R. (1972), *Organizations: Structure and Process*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Handy, C. (1985), *Understanding Organizations*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Harris, A. (2005), Leading or Misleading? Distributed Leadership and School Improvement, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 37, 3: 255–65.

Harris, A. and Mujis, D. (2004), *Teacher Leadership: Improvement Through Empowerment*, Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Hartley, J. (2002), Leading Communities: capabilities and cultures, *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 23, 8: 419–29.

Hartley, J. and Allison, M. (2000), The Role of Leadership in the Modernization and Improvement of Public Services, *Public Money and Management*, 20, 2: 35–40.

Heifetz, R. (1994), *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University.

Hirschman, A. (1970), *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hoggett, P. (2001), Agency, Rationality and Social Policy', *Journal of Social Policy*, 30, 1: 37–56.

Hoggett, P. (2003), *Why Public Is Not The Same As Private*, paper presented to The International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations Symposium Series, *Power and Politics*, Boston, 19–21 June.

Homans, G. (1961), *Social Behaviour: Its Elementary Forms*, New York, NY: Harcourt, Brace & World.

Hood, C. and Peters, G. (2004), The Middle Aging of New Public Management: Into the Age of Paradox? *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 14, 3: 267–82.

Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) (2005), *Corporate Peer Review Benchmark*, London: IdeA.

Improvement and Development Agency, Local Government Association and National Consumer Council (IDeA, LGA and NCC) (2007), *Customer Insight*, London: IDeA.

Jackson, P. (2001), Public Sector Added Value: can bureaucracy deliver? *Public Administration*, 79, 1: 5–28.

Johnson, A. (2007) Speech (Secretary of State for Health), 10 December 2007, 'Putting People First', http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/News/Speeches/DH_081194 (accessed 9 January 2008).

Laaksonen, P. (1994), *Consumer Involvement*, London: Routledge.

Laing, A., Hogg, G., Newholm, T. and Keeling, D. (2009), Differentiating Consumers in Professional Services: Information Empowerment and the Emergence of the Fragmented Consumer. In R. Simmons, M. Powell and I. Greener (eds), *The Consumer in Public Services: choice, values and difference*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Leach, S. (1982), In Defence of the Rational Model. In S. Leach and J. Stewart (eds), *Approaches in Public Policy*, London: George Allen & Unwin.

Leach, S. and Lowndes, V. (2007), Of Roles and Rules: Analysing the changing relationship between political leaders and chief executives in local government, *Public Policy and Administration*, 22, 2: 183–200.

Le Grand, J. (2006), Choice and Competition in Public Services, *Research in Public Policy*, Summer, 2: 3–4.

Lister, R. (2001), *Citizenship: feminist perspectives*, London: Macmillan.

Margretts, H., 6, P. and Hood, C. (2011 forthcoming) *Paradoxes of Modernization: Unintended Consequences of Public Policy Reform*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mayo, E. (2004), *Translating words into action for better public services: NCC tackles the realities*, National Consumer Council Press Release, 20 October (Based on YouGov survey of 1,989 people across the UK in July 2004).

Miliband, D. (2004), Choice and Voice in Personalised Learning, Speech to DfES Innovation Unit/DEMOS/OECD Conference, London, 18 May.

Miranda, F., Chamorro, A., Murillo, L. and Vega, J (2010), An Importance-Performance Analysis of Primary Health Care Services: Managers vs. Patients Perceptions, *Journal of Service Science & Management*, 3: 227–34.

Morrell, K. and Hartley, J. (2006), Ethics in leadership: the case of local politicians, *Local Government Studies*, 32, 1: 55–70.

Mulder, M. (1977), *The Daily Power Game*, Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff.

Needham, C. (2001), *Listen and Lead – the challenge from the women of Worcester*, London: openDemocracy.

Newman, J. and Clarke, J. (2009), *Publics, Politics and Power*, London: Sage.

Nichols, M. (1995), *The Lost Art of Listening*, New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Parsons, T. (1991), A Tentative Outline of American Values. In R. Robertson and B. Turner (eds), *Talcott Parsons: theorist of modernity*, London: Sage.

Peck, E. and 6, P. (2006), *Beyond Delivery*, Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Performance and Innovation Unit of the Cabinet Office (PIU) (2001), *Strengthening Leadership in the Public Sector*, London: PIU.

Policy Commission on Public Services (2004), *Making Public Services Personal*, London: National Consumer Council.

Public Administration Select Committee (PASC) (2005), *Choice, Voice and Public Services*, Fourth Report of Session 2004–2005, London: The Stationery Office.

Purdy, M. and Newman, N. (1999), *Listening and Gender: Characteristics of Good and Poor Listeners*, paper presented to the International Listening Association, Albuquerque, NM, March.

Quinn, R. (1988), *Beyond Rational Management*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Quinn, R. and Hall, R. (1983), Environments, Organizations and Policymakers: toward an integrative framework. In R. Hall and R. Quinn (eds), *Organizational Theory and Public Policy*, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Simmel, G. (1922/1955), *Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliations*, translated and edited by Kurt Wolff, Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

Simmons, R. (2009), The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services. In R. Simmons, M. Powell and I. Greener (eds), *The Consumer in Public Services: choice, values and difference*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Simmons, R., Birchall, J. and Prout, A. (2007a), *Our Say: User Voice and Public Service Culture*, London: National Consumer Council.

Simmons, R., Birchall, J. and Prout, A. (2007b), Hearing Voices? User Involvement and Public Service Cultures, *Consumer Policy Review*, 17, 5: 234–40.

Simmons, R., Powell, M. and Greener, I. (eds) (2009), *The Consumer in Public Services: choice, values and difference*, Bristol: Policy Press.

Smythe, E. and Norton, A. (2007), Thinking as Leadership/Leadership as Thinking, *Leadership*, 3, 1: 65–90.

Sousa, F. and Vala, J. (2002), Relational Justice in Organizations, *Social Justice Research*, 15, 2: 99–121.

Thompson, J. (1991), Editor's introduction. In P. Bourdieu (ed.), *Language and Symbolic Power*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Thompson, S. and Hoggett, P. (1996), Universalism, Selectivism and Particularism: Towards a postmodern social policy, *Critical Social Policy*, 46, 1: 21–43.

Tripathi, S. and Dixon, J. (2008), Leadership in a Paradoxical Public-sector Environment: The Challenges of Ambiguity, *International Journal of Leadership in Public Services*, 4, 3: 4–14.

Vangen, S. and Huxham, C. (2003), Enacting Leadership for Collaborative Advantage: dilemmas of ideology and pragmatism in the activities of partnership managers, *British Journal of Management*, 14, Special issue: S61–S76.

Wexler, M. (2005), *Leadership in Context*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Yammarino, F. and Dansereau, F. (2002), Individualized Leadership, *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 9, 1: 90–99.

1.5

PUBLICATION 5

Simmons, R., Birchall, J. & Prout, A. (2012)
'User Involvement in Public Services: Choice About
Voice',
Public Policy and Administration, 27 (1): 3-30

User Involvement in Public Services: 'Choice about Voice'

Richard Simmons
University of Stirling, UK

Johnston Birchall
University of Stirling, UK

Alan Prout
University of Warwick, UK
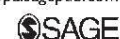
Abstract

Processes of involvement and representation are particularly important in UK public services if users' interests are adequately to be taken into account. Yet there are several different, sometimes competing ways for users' views to be represented, and their interaction is not well understood. This article reports on research exploring these issues in relation to three public services – housing, social care and leisure services. We asked, how do public service users experience and evaluate the alternative ways in which their interests may be represented, and what factors guide their 'choice about voice'? Mechanisms available for users to express their views can be categorised as 'hierarchical' (e.g. contacting elected officials); individualistic (e.g. complaints procedures); or group-based (e.g. user forums). Users make assumptions about what channel is appropriate for particular issues in a particular context. However, their ability to communicate via their chosen channel is dependent on viable opportunities to do so. This idea of viability (or lack of it) goes beyond the simple provision of a full range of channels. It relates to the prospects of users' views being recognised and accepted – and to the sense of disconnection and withdrawal that often accompanies low expectations or disappointing experiences.

Corresponding author:
Richard Simmons, Department of Applied Social Science, Colin Bell Building, University of Stirling, Stirling, FK9 4LA UK
Email: r.a.simmons@stir.ac.uk

113

Introduction

The involvement of citizens as users and consumers of UK public services represents an important arena for engagement in the public sphere (Marquand, 2004). Recently, there has been a strong policy emphasis on 'listening' to citizens and service users, through both 'choice and voice'. PASC (2005: 5) defines choice as 'giving individuals the opportunity to choose from among alternative suppliers, whether or not entirely within the public sector'. Voice is defined as 'giving users a more effective say in the direction of services, by means of representative bodies, complaints mechanisms and surveys of individual preferences and views'. Choice has received considerable attention in the recent literature (e.g. Greener, 2003; Le Grand, 2006). It is also a key feature of reforms such as 'personalisation' whereby, for example, direct payments and individual budgets in social care services have begun to transform citizen relationships with public services (Glendinning, 2009; Glasby and Littlechild, 2009). As expressed through 'exit' (Hirschman, 1970), choice can certainly send useful signals to providers so long as individuals do indeed have opportunities to choose from among viable alternatives. However, in many public services such opportunities are often absent or highly constrained (PASC, 2005). Moreover, while notions of choice invite images of public service users 'shopping around' for the best provider, the best appointment time, the best housing and so on, there is a range of other elements to people's relationships with the public services they use that must also be considered (Clarke et al., 2007).

Our own recent research focused predominantly on 'voice' (Hirschman (1970). For some, voice might represent an attempt to extend the menu of choices available to service users, or to argue for choice where it is not currently available (what we might call 'voice about choice'). However, as Simmons (2009: 58) argues, voice often goes beyond the confines of choice altogether, allowing people to express things such as the depth of feeling on an issue, or a sense of 'membership'/solidarity/support. These differences reflect a variety of perspectives on the kinds of 'public purposes' and 'social anxieties' that people may emphasise at different times (cf. Hoggett, 2003: 2). Voice is therefore important. It provides a way of tapping into a range of important inputs for public services: knowledges, ideas and individual/collective sentiment.

Evidence has suggested a general sense of disconnection and disengagement in this public domain, reflecting such underlying factors as the failure of politics and the political system to accept the new realities of 'post-industrialisation', and the replacement of 'principle and ideas' with 'managerialism and public relations' (Power Inquiry, 2006). The realm of public services provides one area where many people still perceive themselves as possessing a legitimate voice (Simmons et al., 2009; Birchall and Simmons, 2004). Yet similar factors can combine to alienate public service users, potentially leading them towards disengagement. Hence, for Barnes (1999), where such users express dissatisfaction it is over not only the nature of the services they are receiving but also their lack of control over them. Some argue that this sense of a lack of control is exacerbated by factors

associated with recent public sector reform: first, commentators point to the greater fragmentation of the policy-making and service delivery environment in developments such as devolution, decentralisation, partnerships, and the 'mixed economy of welfare' (e.g. Powell, 2007). Second, commentators point to the effects of 'new public management' (NPM) reforms in the public sector that place an increasing emphasis on such notions as managerial autonomy, agency performance and a customer orientation (as opposed to 'old' public administration that emphasised standardisation, political co-ordination and professional control; e.g. Hood, 1991). It can be argued that the reforms of the last three decades have therefore led to cultural as well as 'technical' changes, with a change in the balance between different ways of organising (e.g. Newman, 2001).

Another way to view this is through the lens of citizenship, where these developments have potentially important implications. Lister (2006) identifies two issues. First, in order to have some yardstick against which to measure their claims, she argues that citizens need to understand the 'universal' rights that attach to the *status* of citizenship. However, as Ellison (2000: para 3.3) points out, 'state withdrawal makes way for multiple "spheres of publics", the point being that in this pluralized environment there can be no "point of arrival" consistent with the development of a stable, universal citizenship of the kind anticipated in the post-war era'. Second, for people to be able to act as citizens, Lister argues that there is also a need for spaces in which citizenship can be grounded as a *practice*. Within public services, some argue that NPM reforms have enhanced this aspect of citizenship, others that they have diminished it. Hence, for Christensen and Laegreid (2002: 283), 'the "bottom-up" perspective implied by a customer-orientated system of public administration appears highly democratic and participatory. Its customers do have a potential impact on the amount, type and quality of service they are to receive'. Yet as Sjoblom (1999: 22) argues, 'even if service arrangements related to NPM may increase consumers' choice and efficiency, they may also limit the scope of democracy, or the sphere in which the citizen is able to act politically'. Notions of control are therefore controversial. Importantly, Skelcher (1993; Skelcher et al., 2005) observes that public service agencies generally remain less willing to offer involvement at the higher-order 'discursive core', than at lower orders of discourse.

These matters provide a backdrop to our study of the different channels by which service users communicate their views about public services. They underline the importance of how users see themselves when they use public services, and how they relate with both the services they use and with the people and organisations that provide them. Recent research has reinforced the relational differences that people feel when using public services; a sense of publicness that means it is 'not like shopping' (Clarke, 2009: 161). There are different elements to this. First, the extent to which public services provide collective as well as individual benefits is generally thought to be greater. Second, opportunities for exit (Hirschman, 1970) may be unavailable or too costly for many public service users. In either case, it has been argued that processes of involvement and representation ('voice') are

particularly important in public services if consumer interests are to be adequately taken into account. Such processes are important both at the level of 'issue framing' (Rein and Schon, 1991), and at the 'social accounting level' ('the level of justification and explanation at which people find it necessary to explain to each other why they behave as they do'; Douglas, 1982: 201). This means that user voice is about more than simply complaining and seeking redress (important though this may be). User voice is often also focused on developmental aspects in relation to the service provided, where they might contribute to a process of co-production (e.g. Needham, 2008). In relation to public services, voice may therefore be prompted by a reactive dissatisfaction with aspects of service provision, or be directed towards collectively shared goals. However, there are several different, sometimes competing ways for consumers' views to be represented, and their interaction is not well understood. These mechanisms (or channels) provide the main focus of this article. We assess how service users make their 'choice about voice' and how far this reflects different expressions of their own agency, before considering the effects of the 'listening environment' in different public services.

Theorising voice in public services

Different assumptions and expectations appear to underlie the use of different channels for the expression of user voice. In this article we use insights from grid-group cultural theory to provide a framework for understanding how service users engage in 'choice about voice'. Grid-group cultural theory has been developed as a tool for understanding cultural diversity (Douglas, 1970; 1992; Thompson et al., 1990). It works by plotting two dimensions against each other to create a four-fold field space (see Figure 1). 'Grid' refers to the extent to which cultural environments are structured by rules and ascribed behaviour. 'Group' refers to the extent to which individuals are members of groups with well-defined boundaries.

The four positions in the grid-group framework represent different ideal-types, or 'cultural biases', that may be applied to the relationship between users and

	Low Group	High Group
High Grid	**'Fatalism':** *'uncertainty/apathy'*	**'Hierarchy':** *'bureaucracy'*
Low Grid	**'Individualism':** *'market-based'*	**'Egalitarianism':** *'mutuality'*

Figure 1. The grid-group matrix.

providers of public services. *Hierarchy* sums up a traditional, hierarchical relationship in which service users are dependent on experts to define their needs, and on administrators to make sure the service is delivered according to strict rules of eligibility. The service is overseen and regulated by local or central government politicians, through which individuals can seek redress. The expression of voice through any other channel would be regarded as undue influence, since the aim is to meet professionally assessed needs through rule-bound allocation procedures that treat everyone the same. *Individualism* is represented by market-based relationships, in which service users are constructed as rational, utility-maximising individuals, negotiating the role of consumer in such a way as to support their private needs and wants. The provider role is to match supply to this consumer demand, and to respond directly to feedback from individual service users. *Egalitarianism* is represented by 'mutualistic' forms of relationship, whereby users relate to the service through a sense of membership/ownership that confers rights (but also responsibilities) to express their views through collective processes. The final position is *fatalism*. Social relations here are capricious, and perceived to be imposed by external forces that are not well understood. The pressures on users to conform with any social group are weak, and they tend to consider the expression of voice as pointless 'its never going to change anything,' they reason, 'so why bother?' However, fatalism can have important effects on user-provider relationships within the service system. As Hood (1998: 9) observes, 'a fatalist approach to public management will arise in conditions where co-operation is rejected, distrust widespread, and apathy reigns a state of affairs which will be far from unfamiliar to many readers'.

Grid-group theory provides a useful means of framing the public service context (Hood, 1998; 6 et al., 2002). In particular, in line with the 'requisite variety condition' of the theory (Wildavsky, 1987; Thompson et al., 1990), we would expect elements of all four cultural biases to be present within the service system at any time (however attenuated any of them might be in any particular context). Recognition of the simultaneous presence of all four biases has advantages. As Thompson et al. (1990: 96) put it, 'regimes that have largely excluded a cultural bias lose the wisdom attached to that bias'. If user voice is seen as a 'transfer of wisdom', then each of the different strategies for its expression (with their accompanying assumptions and expectations) must be seen as important. This is what we sought to investigate in our research.

Methodology

Our main method was case study. We completed a 'major' and 'minor' case in each of three service areas: day care services (social care), leisure services and tenant management co-operatives (housing). Cases were selected not for their representativeness but in a purposive sample designed to cover a variety of experiences (see Figure 2).

Within each case, the first phase of the research involved in-depth semi-structured interviews with service users known to have expressed their views through different mechanisms: 'hierarchical' channels (e.g. contacting elected officials, ombudsmen); 'individualistic' channels (e.g. complaints procedures, direct personal communications); or 'group-based' channels (e.g. user groups, user forums, consultative committees). We also conducted in-depth interviews with staff, managers, local authority officers and elected representatives. In total, 80 service users and 30 provider representatives were interviewed. Documentary analysis supplemented the interviews. Documents included minutes of group meetings and the 'complaints files' in each organisation (including both written communications from users and the providers' replies). In each of our 'major' cases, a second phase involved the conduct of face-to-face user surveys. A team of more than thirty interviewers were recruited and trained for this purpose, and a total of 543 surveys completed. Response rates varied between 45 and 55 per cent. Figure 3 shows who was interviewed and how the sample was determined.

Transcripts from the in-depth interviews were analysed (i) by individual respondent ('summaries'), (ii) by question ('grid analysis'), and (iii) according to selected 'thematic codes'. In the first two stages, transcripts were read through to identify descriptive and inferential codes for classifying concepts and themes in

Service	Examined in:
Social care services	Two locations where the local authority provides the service directly
Leisure services	Two locations where the service is contracted out to the private sector
Tenant management organisations (TMOs)	Two locations where TMOs are long-established

Figure 2. Criteria for case selection.

	N	Sample type	Drawn from
Social Care	116	Population	All users visiting day care centres
Leisure services	318	Random	(i) Database of centre members (ii) Non-members visiting the centres. Different days and times were randomly selected, and every 3rd non-member was approached for an interview
TMCs	109	Random	Database of tenants

Figure 3. Sampling criteria.

participants' statements. The aim was to allow the language and concepts of participants to guide the development of our coding schemes — to let the 'voices' of the respondents emerge. Next, transcripts were re-read to code each statement according to the scheme developed through the first two stages. Finally, the coded statements were subjected to pattern analysis to identify common themes and relate them back to our theoretical framework. Insights from this phase of analysis were then used to design the survey instrument and as an interpretative tool for the survey results. While our in-depth interviews helped to establish the range of users' views and experiences, the survey was undertaken to investigate the distribution of these views. A range of descriptive and paired-samples statistics was therefore conducted for this purpose.

The expression of users' views: understanding 'choice about voice'

Most users and providers agree that voice is important. It provides a way of tapping into a range of valuable inputs for public services: knowledges, ideas and individual/collective sentiment. In a key finding from our research, over 70 per cent of service users in each of our three services said they had contributed their views in one way or another at some time or another. This ran contrary to the assumptions of much lower numbers by most service providers, but this is unsurprising: users often express their views through frontline members of staff, and providers acknowledge that the majority of this contact tends to go unrecorded. Voice is therefore extremely commonplace, and reflects people's sense of attachment to public services (Simmons et al., 2007a; Simmons, 2009). Why do people feel this way? In short, it is because they feel a sense of ownership over public services; of having a stake. They also see public services as important and care about them being done well. Evidence for people caring about public services was widespread in our interviews with both users and providers.

> I look after my premises. Can't you see? I'd like the council office up the road to realise: 'Oh, there is a tenant in that premises ... someone who does care for the premises, who does care for the area and not just anybody who's paying rent. (tenant, m, 40 s)

> There will always be a certain number of people that will complain because of personal circumstances of how they are feeling that day. But there are genuine people that will say 'Look, that is not good. I like coming here, I want to keep coming here. Can you do something about it?' And I think it is because they care. I know that sounds quite deep but I think generally they do, otherwise they wouldn't bother. (leisure services manager, m, 20 s)

In our survey 96.5 per cent of day care users, 89.8 per cent of leisure service users, and 66.1 per cent of tenants said they care either 'a great deal' or 'quite a lot' about the service (see Figure 4)[1].

Q: 'On a personal level, how strongly do you care about the service?'	Day Care (N=116)	Leisure (N=318)	Housing (N=109)
A great deal	64.6	26.8	21.1
Quite a lot	31.9	61.0	45.0
Not very much	3.5	11.8	30.3
Not at all	0.0	0.3	3.7

Figure 4. Extent to which users 'care about' the service.

Of course, different kinds of public services tend to be more or less central in the lives of those who use them. Also, the same public services are not as central in the lives of every user. Elsewhere we have suggested that, other things being equal, a service's importance will vary according to the intensity, continuity, and duration of users' need for it (Simmons and Birchall, 2005). For example, episodic or short-term users may consider the service to be less important in the context of their lives than on-going and long-term users. However, where the service stands in people's lives on the span from 'central' to 'peripheral' is also important, and this depends at least in part on the link between the service and other important aspects of people's lives.

While people spoke about tangible 'attributes' (such as whether or not the floors were kept clean) when we asked them how they would know that the service was performing well, for many of our respondents it was the service 'outcomes' that made the service central to their lives. For example, a key benefit for many of our social care respondents was the sense of overcoming social isolation through their attendance at day centres. This extended the value of the service far beyond the immediate use of the service:

> The service is ideal for me. It gives me company. And it encourages you to come out. You see, otherwise I would be sitting in the house staring at the television and I would just about be going out of my head. Company is the number one for me, definitely. This is the highlight of my week. (day care service user, f, 70 s)

People told us how public services had helped to open up new vistas for them. The service had served as a springboard to other things.

> Before, I never got out. I was a right scared-y cat until I came here. There are things that, if I didn't experience them here at the day centre, I wouldn't have ever done them in my life. So it's opened up a whole avenue of trying things. Now, I've tried so many different things, I think 'Yes, I can do it'. So that's what it's done for me. (day care services user, m, 30 s)

> I had a tumour taken off my spine, I have always been a good swimmer, and the minute I could walk far enough to get on a bus, the pool is the first place I went. And I

120

truly believe I would not be getting about like I am without that pool every morning. It's everything to me, it really is. (leisure services user, f, 60 s)

Similarly, leisure service users told us how their use of the service had become connected with other important life goals. For many users this made the idea of stopping their use of the service almost unthinkable.

Hence, while it may be the case that there are different relationships that service users have with the three services that were the focus of this study, each service was important to its users in relative (if not absolute) terms. What each of these services share in common is that users' perception of 'having a stake' provides an important starting point for the expression of voice (cf. Hirschman, 1970).

Despite the implicit and explicit notions of stakeholding evident in many of our respondents' responses, however, it is worth noting that it would be wrong to say that the majority of users want to spend a substantial part of their lives thinking about the public services they use. For the majority, there is a sense that people want providers to take the lead but crucially *not before* they have listened suitably to what users have to say. While in general service users do tend to trust providers to take the lead in running public services, this trust is limited and conditional, not absolute. Users often feel a need to keep their eye on the ball, and to make sure that important matters do not go unchallenged. This has implications for the nature of 'stewardship' in public services (Donaldson et al., 1997; Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000), reflecting a desire for both 'leadership' and 'listening' (Simmons, 2008; see also Needham, 2001). This requires that there are channels or mechanisms through which users are able to exercise 'voice'.

Users are generally able to choose how they express their views about public services from a range of options. In this study we investigated these 'voice mechanisms', each of which reflect different categories within the grid-group framework:

1. Hierarchical oversight mechanisms (e.g. elected representatives, senior officials, ombudsmen) *(hierarchy)*
2. Individualised mechanisms direct to service providers (e.g. suggestion schemes, complaints procedures, direct personal communications) *(individualism)*
3. Group-based mechanisms (e.g. user groups, user forums) *(egalitarianism)*

Analysis of the first-phase in-depth interviews allowed the range of circumstances that might prompt the use of different voice mechanisms to emerge. In the survey, we were then able to investigate the extent to which users felt these circumstances applied to them (see Figure 5a).

Overall, voice is widely intended to increase the likelihood of action (e), reflecting notions of success-oriented, 'instrumental' and 'strategic' actions (Habermas, 1984). Here, users are more likely to use voice about on-going problems (b) than one-off problems (a), reflecting a degree of trust in providers to put one-off problems right 'without needing to be told'. However, other circumstances that stimulate user voice include gaining a better understanding of how the service works (f)

121

(a) Q. Under which of the following circumstances might you consider expressing your views?	Housing (N=109)			Leisure (N=318)			Day Care (N=116)		
	HIER %	IND %	GRP %	HIER %	IND %	GRP %	HIER %	IND %	GRP %
(a) Discuss one-off problem	35.3	38.5	31.9	12.2	57.6	24.4	29.5	59.8	45.5
(b) Discuss ongoing problem	55.3	62.6	53.6	41.6	81.5	53.8	45.5	44.8	48.5
(c) Get recompense	24.7	28.6	7.2	18.4	54.5	22.2	18.2	18.4	15.2
(d) Campaign against closure	30.6	15.4	30.4	61.7	31.8	50.7	47.7	34.5	36.4
(e) Increase likelihood of action	63.5	57.1	50.7	35.3	45.5	47.6	36.4	36.8	56.1
(f) Get better understanding	17.6	19.8	42.0	6.5	22.7	8.7	6.8	26.4	28.8
(g) Discuss new ideas	20.0	8.8	43.5	17.6	15.2	38.0	11.4	47.1	43.9

(b) Q. Here are a number of reasons why people might not express their views. Which of these apply to you?	Housing (N=109)			Leisure (N=318)			Day Care (N=116)		
	HIER %	IND %	GRP %	HIER %	IND %	GRP %	HIER %	IND %	GRP %
(a) Not appropriate level	10.1	6.5	13.8	25.6	15.4	9.2	17.4	7.2	14.4
(b) Do not trust them	21.1	22.9	22.0	31.9	13.0	15.8	22.9	11.7	11.7
(c) Cause bad feeling with staff	7.3	7.3	13.8	8.1	19.2	14.3	17.4	24.5	22.5
(d) Would not be listened to	33.0	49.5	31.2	42.6	37.2	31.9	33.0	12.6	18.9
(e) Would take too much time	23.9	15.6	30.3	44.0	51.3	63.0	18.3	8.1	11.8
(f) Do not talk my language	14.7	6.4	11.0	15.8	2.6	7.3	12.8	5.4	6.3
(g) Would be made to feel small	24.8	19.3	8.3	9.2	10.3	5.1	10.1	6.3	10.8

Figure 5. (a) Circumstances that prompt the use of voice. (b) Circumstances that inhibit the use of voice.

and discussing new ideas (g). These aspects reflect notions of 'communicative' action, where 'the actions of the agents involved are co-ordinated...through acts of reaching understanding' (Habermas, 1984: 285 6). Overall, individualistic mechanisms are considered the most appropriate for discussing one-off problems (a), on-going problems (b) and getting recompense (c). Hierarchical mechanisms are considered the most appropriate for campaigning against major change or closures (d), but are also important in discussing on-going problems. Groups are considered the most appropriate for gaining a better understanding of the service (f) and discussing new ideas (g). Interestingly, groups are also considered the most appropriate to meet service users' key objective increasing the likelihood of action (e) in both leisure and day care services.

Figure 5b shows the survey findings regarding the circumstances that might inhibit users from expressing their views through these mechanisms. The most common of these across all three services is a sense they would not be listened to (k). This is an important finding, observed in more than one-third of service users (although the figure is lower for individualised and group-based mechanisms in day care services). It suggests that there is more to do for service providers to demonstrate to users that they listen carefully to what they have to say. Other observations are more service-specific. Day care users also tend to be more concerned about causing bad feeling with the staff (j), a common finding in social care research that reflects the perceived power relationship felt between service users

and those providing that service. Leisure service users are more concerned that voice takes too much time (l), reflecting the busy lives of highly active people. In our housing case, tenants are more likely to feel that they would be made to feel small (n) if they express their views through individualised and hierarchical mechanisms. This may reflect the relationships of people living in a marginalised community to authority (whether managerial or political).

Our semi-structured interviews provide additional detail. Support for hierarchical mechanisms is built on users' belief in the legitimacy of hierarchy to act on their behalf, especially where they do not believe they have a strong enough voice on their own. Hierarchy is also often seen as a second 'port of call' if initial communications are unsatisfactory (cf. Thomas, 1995).

> There is a point where you should deal with it yourself. You shouldn't just keep saying 'Oh councillor do this, MP do that'. You should actually stand up and take it on yourself. And then if you are not getting satisfaction you think 'Hang on a minute, I am being overpowered here, or not being heard'. Then take it further. (leisure services user, m, 40 s)

However, the use of hierarchical mechanisms is not always about complaining, or taking a complaint 'to the top'. For example, we found that people are often keen to speak to their elected representatives about developmental, resource allocation and policy issues. They are particularly keen to see money spent wisely, staff effort directed appropriately, and policies developed that are both fair and effective.

Individualised mechanisms are used to communicate a personal perspective on service issues, although such communications are not necessarily self-oriented they are often focused on issues of collective concern. Documentary analysis demonstrated that these mechanisms are also used to give positive/negative reinforcement to providers: either praise or, more often, criticism (linked to a range of potential sanctions). Users can be quite strategic about how they utilise individualised mechanisms. One group of users had organised to deliberately send around twenty individual letters rather than one letter countersigned by them all. This was intended to ensure that their issue 'registered in the complaint statistics, so they [the providers] had to take notice of us'. In another instance small group of users had sent individual letters in support of a valued element of the service. In interviews, they admitted that they perceived this element of the service to be threatened, and had hoped to persuade service managers not to cut it by 'lavishing it with praise'.

Group-based mechanisms provide an interesting alternative, tending to be valued as an opportunity both for shared learning/shared problem-solving, and for providing 'strength in numbers'. Groups provide a relatively egalitarian space in which people can discuss issues openly, share information and experiences and learn together. In reality, this sense of egalitarianism is to some extent dependent on how the group is convened. Some groups are convened by local government or service provider representatives, while others are organised by service users themselves. Groups that are organised by service users themselves are common. Some

perspectives suggest that these may be quite radical, using their shared identity and common sense of purpose to campaign for their objectives on their own terms (Barnes, 2009; Beresford, 2009). There was some support for this in our research, particularly in the tenant management organisations and user groups for adults with physical disabilities that we spoke with. However, the experience of our research showed that another perspective could also be applied (Turner, 2008), with many groups being more interested in the positive characteristic of resolving on-going and emergent tensions between themselves and service providers through interaction (cf. Simmel, 1964). Often this is focused on the 'co-production' role, where users seek to discuss both technical and political issues and solutions with service providers. User-led groups may therefore send representatives to speak for them at committees/forums convened by local government or service providers. However, this can lead to the possibility of power imbalances being used to exert disproportionate influence between members of these committees/forums (Barnes et al., 2007). For example, a committee/forum convened by a local authority in which hierarchical power relations continue to be exerted will probably still be more strongly hierarchical than egalitarian. However, it is now beginning to be recognised (and is certainly a lesson from the current research) that for group-based mechanisms such as committees/forums to achieve their purpose, it is important that members are prepared to give equal weight to the views of each individual around the table   no matter what power their role might give them outside the group. Contextual and/or political factors will often decide whether users' expectation of influence in these interactions is based on the mobilisation of radical power or on the mobilisation of ideas and knowledge. Our research suggests that this will reflect the extent to which providers are prepared to treat the committees/forums they convene as more or less egalitarian.

Our survey showed support to be high amongst service users for these group-based mechanisms, but actual participation to be much lower. A more detailed investigation of our data revealed two reasons for this. First, there is a need to better understand the importance of how such participation might be facilitated, including the three elements of what we have previously called the 'participation chain': overcoming resource barriers, providing appropriate opportunities, and appealing to people's dominant motivations (Simmons and Birchall, 2005). This facilitation was noticeably lacking in our leisure services case in particular (Simmons et al., 2007b). Ensuring that all that want to participate can participate is clearly important to democratic goals. However, 'maximum feasible participation' is not a prerequisite for effective involvement. Our research shows there is often a considerable degree of trust invested by users in those of their number who are prepared to participate and represent the user perspective in group-based mechanisms.

I: Do you trust the TMO to always act in your best interests as a tenant?

R: Oh I think so, yes. Because on the committee there is not just one person there is, like, a few people who think of different things and they are putting their views and

then everyone gets something to say about it, you know. It is for a variety of people. As long as you have got a variety of people then you have got different views and awareness of things. (tenant, f, 50 s)

This is underscored by the firm grounding gained from their direct experience of using the service that is shared in common between all service users; a perspective that is often considered to be lacking in other stakeholders (such as service provider representatives).

One doesn't really see the staff using the facilities ... If the staff actually came in and participated a bit, and understood why we think the showers aren't as good as the old showers, for example, I think that would be a way of being aware – that management occasionally sampled, alongside the customers, what was happening. (leisure services user, m, 60 s)

Overall, we found that users strongly support having a full range of opportunities for voice. On average, around 85 per cent supported having hierarchical mechanisms, 89 per cent individualised mechanisms, and 79 per cent group-based mechanisms (see Figure 6). This was in spite of the fact that not all of them would consider using these channels the corresponding figures here are 48 per cent, 78 per cent and 51 per cent.

On a personal level, our interview respondents felt that knowing it was possible to express their views through mechanisms other than their 'preferred' channel was important, even if they currently had little intention of doing so. This is consistent with a good deal of psychological research showing that people often consider the opportunity to do something to be as important as actually doing it. Looking beyond their own self-interest, however, respondents also recognised that everybody has their own way of expressing their views, and that in principle the opportunity to go about this through a range of channels was something to be promoted and/or defended.

	Hier %	Ind %	Grp %
Q. In which of these ways have you ever expressed your views?	12.3	38.8*	9.9
Q. If you wanted to express your views, would you consider doing so in any of these ways?	44.4	78.0	50.8
Q. In general, do you support the idea of being able to express your views in any of these ways?	84.8	89.3	78.7

(N=543)
NB: * This figure does not include expressing views to frontline staff, which would raise it still further.
Hier = hierarchical; Ind = individualised; Grp = group-based.

Figure 6. Support for different voice mechanisms.

Awareness of the availability of the different mechanisms outlined above is generally high amongst service users, although some are clearly better informed than others. Users are also quite discerning about what strategy is appropriate in what circumstances.

> I always try to pitch my enquiry or suggestion at the appropriate level. So I took it that the 'Ideas and Implementation Group', by the very name of the group, was the group that I should be targeting to achieve the desired effect...If I went even higher up and went to my member of Parliament, I've no doubt that they would try and help me but then you have to address the enquiry at the appropriate level. (day centre user, m, 50 s)

This 'logic of appropriateness' may be the result of institutionalisation; that is, people internalising the way they have been told to behave in a certain context. However, it was clear that in none of our cases had a great deal of institutional effort been devoted to such matters. Indeed, despite the fact that the different options are sometimes set out formally in 'service charters' (which also attempt to predetermine the routes that users should follow), neither users nor providers pay much attention to such documents. Reform processes have also often left public service institutions in flux, and users reliant on previously learned 'habits of the heart' (cf. Baldock and Ungerson, 1996, after Bellah et al., 1985). User 'choice about voice', is therefore just as often linked to a more personal set of dispositions, reflecting notions of 'linguistic habitus' (Thompson, 1991, after Bourdieu, 1977).

More specifically, users have different norms, values and beliefs about what is 'fair'. For example, those who favour group-based mechanisms see as fair an open and inclusive approach in which anybody can come to a meeting and expect to be listened to equally. Meanwhile, those who favour individualised mechanisms point to the fact that not everybody can make it along to meetings: it is fairer to make available opportunities for users to record their views through personal communications or universally accessible feedback systems. Users also have different norms, values and beliefs about what is 'sufficient'. Hence, those who favour group-based mechanisms acknowledge the value of individualised mechanisms such as a universally accessible tool, but claim that they are 'not enough' as they do not allow for processes of two-way discussion and debate. Similarly, those who favour individualised mechanisms are broadly supportive of group-based activity, but question whether they are enough on their own, due to the limited numbers of users who are able and willing to attend group meetings. In this way service users often tend to be 'biased' towards one form of 'voice' rather than another, which can lead to frustration if opportunities to express their views through their preferred channel are not perceived to be viable.

> I think there is a feeling that one can talk things through and that several people can voice their opinions in a group. Whereas if you write a letter...in some ways a letter seems more formal. If you are having a debate, you can always say 'Well I can see

what your problem is or whatever it may be'. The two way thing, I think, is much more useful than just writing a letter. (leisure service user, m, 60s)

What I object to is that only the people who attend on a Tuesday are the people who are really consulted about how the centre runs. I spoke to the chair of the group about it and basically the manager is inflexible, he's not prepared to meet on any other day. And as someone who only comes on a Monday and a Wednesday, I think I am being disenfranchised. Of course, I am a bit more articulate than some of the clients that come to the centre, and I'm able to put pen to paper. But that's not good enough, it's just not good enough. (day centre user, m, 50s)

Sometimes 'blindspots' are evident in relation to particular voice mechanisms despite being aware that a particular mechanism is technically available to them, users say it is a route they would not normally consider following. However, this does not mean that they do not see such routes as necessary or legitimate.

I: Did you ever think about contacting your local councillor about the service?

R: No I never thought of it. It never crossed my mind.

I: Was that because you didn't know who they were or was there another reason why it wouldn't have even crossed your mind to do that?

R: I certainly don't know who they are...I have to say right away that I think the council does a really fabulous job...So the fact that I never thought of it... I guess I would think that it was too high. You know, this is a kind of 'macro management/ micromanagement'. He is looking at different, bigger things. He doesn't have time for issues like this...I'm glad to hear the question though, because if I thought the thing was really going to pieces I might do that, contact the councillor. (leisure services user, f, 50s)

Involvement and agency: the dynamics of 'choice about voice'

The basic dynamics surrounding 'choice about voice' are represented in Figure 7. While these dynamics are most easily understood in relation to reactive dissatisfaction with aspects of service provision (or 'complaining behaviour'), they can also be applied to more on-going, co-productive activities. With the onset of a service issue (whether 'technical' or 'political'), users reflect on whether to express their views or not. If they are sufficiently motivated and have a sufficient sense of agency to act, they may communicate their views through one or more of the available channels. Their messages are accompanied by expectations over process and/or outcome.
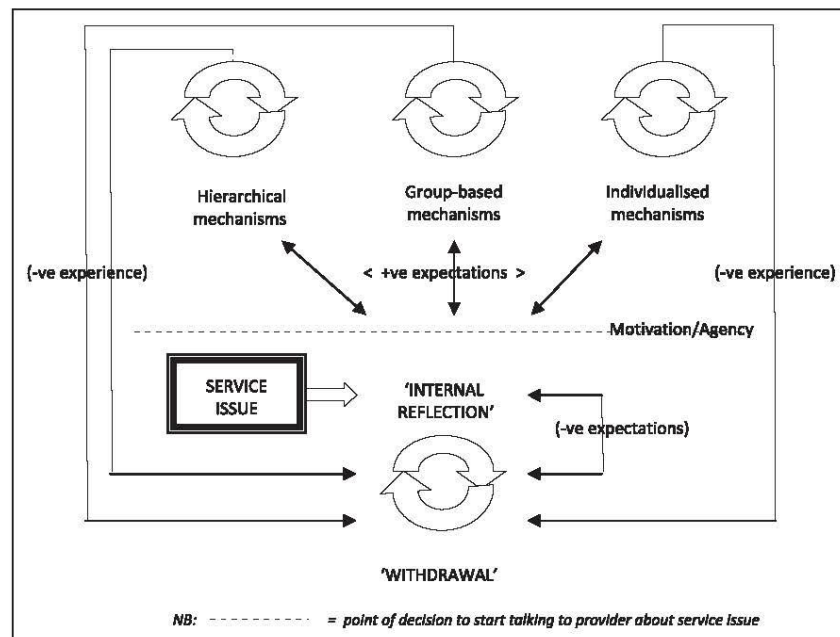
Figure 7. Basic dynamics of 'choice about voice'.

It is worth noting here that people told us that they did not always expect to be given what exactly they were asking for. Equally important was a process that reassured them that their views had been taken seriously and given due consideration, even if this made no eventual difference to the outcome.

> It was just ... you know when you do something that's slightly silly and you do it every day and it slowly annoys you, and you say 'Why don't we do it that way?' ... Well that's what happened with this particular system ... They sent me a letter saying thanks for the comment, but I don't think they could implement it. I mean I understand that maybe it's not that easy for them to do, so I didn't necessarily expect them to, but I am thinking the next time they are going to redesign or re-develop, they could just do it, you know. (leisure services user, m, 20 s)

Indeed, in some cases, due process meant ensuring that other people's views had been taken into account before action was taken, even if this meant that the outcome was different from that one favoured by a particular user.

> I was swimming for seven years and I loved it. And then suddenly they started to play music in the pool. I really blew my stack – I couldn't bear it. So I went to one of the lifeguards and said 'I really don't like this'. And then he went and turned it off. And I felt terrible because I thought, you know, 'what about everybody else ... how does he know

[what they think]?' So there I was, I felt really embarrassed. And then I asked a couple of people, you know, in the pool, and said did they mind the music? And they said 'no'. So I felt I had exercised disproportionate influence. (leisure services user, f, 50 s)

Indeed, in some cases, due process meant ensuring that other people's views had been taken into account before action was taken, even if this meant that the outcome was different from that one favoured by a particular user.

If users' expectations are met when they express their views, they are generally satisfied and all is well. If their expectations are not met, the dynamics become more complex (see Figure 8). First, users may reflect further and either send a fresh communication via the same channel ('persistence'; cf. Craigforth, 2003) or utilise a different channel ('strategy switching'; cf. Rayner, 1999). We found that strategies of persistence, switching and the simultaneous use of multiple channels for voice are not uncommon. This was as much the case for one-off complaints as it was for more on-going developmental service concerns. However, equally commonly users decided not to pursue the matter further. Sometimes they told us that the issue was not a high enough personal priority; sometimes that the providers generally did a good job and they didn't want to rock the boat; sometimes that no other users seemed bothered about it and they didn't want to take up the issue alone. In these situations they preferred to simply drop the issue and move on ('accommodation': cf. Pickering, 1995). For those users interested in co-production rather than a single service event, this meant moving on to the next item on the on-going service agenda.
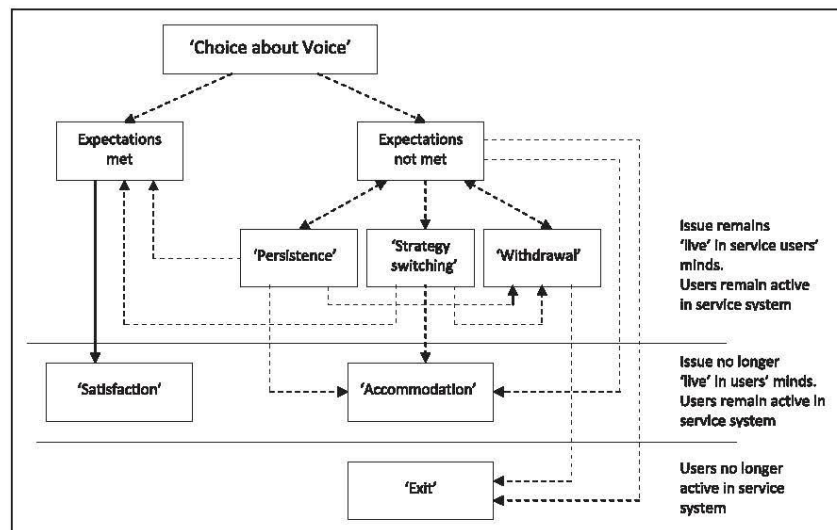
Figure 8. Expectation versus experience in users' 'choice about voice'.

For a significant minority of users whose experience of expressing their views did not match up to their prior expectations, the issue remained 'live', but their expectations of voice had become negative; they saw little point in pursuing further action. For these users, as for those in Figure 7 whose expectations are negative at the outset, the remaining option is withdrawal. Withdrawal occurs where users remain within the service system and still feel they have something to say, but feel 'blocked' from saying it. At the level of the individual, it represents the fourth dimension within grid-group theory, that of fatalism, characterised by a perceived lack of agency, a sense of futility and a sense of isolation. In sociological terms, people who withdraw become 'holdouts' (i.e. alienated from the service system) or 'escapees' (i.e. people who currently find exit from the system unfeasible, but who would take the first feasible opportunity to leave) (Homans, 1961). This lowering of commitment and concomitant withdrawal of trust and support can have serious implications for policy-making and service delivery. First, there are implications for day-to-day system control, whereby it is harder to gain service users' consent. Second, it may eventually result in 'leakage' from the service system in one of two ways: what we have characterised as (i) 'reluctant exit' (whereby users cross a tolerance threshold, leading to the abandonment of the public sector for private sector services), or (ii) 'exit without alternatives' (whereby people prefer 'no service' to a 'poor service').

The above trajectories reflect the 'alternative accounts of agency' offered by Hoggett (2001: 38) in relation to social policy:

- the creative, reflexive welfare subject (e.g. those expressing voice)
- the subject's refusal of agency (e.g. becoming a holdout or escapee)
- the subject's assertion of forms of agency which are destructive toward self and/ or others (e.g. 'reluctant exit'/'exit without alternatives')

Certainly, the concept of agency is an important one in establishing the perceived viability of opportunities for voice. This idea of viability (or lack of it) goes beyond the simple provision of a full range of channels. It relates to the prospects of users' views being recognised and accepted. For example, Lister (2001) points out that 'one of the achievements of the disabled people's movement has been to win recognition of disabled people as *subjects or agents* in welfare policy-making and implementation, as opposed to their more traditional construction as simply the *objects* of policy' (emphasis added). For Emirbayer and Mische (1998), agency is characterised by three inter-related components: habit, judgement and projectivity. We have noted the importance of 'habits of the heart' in guiding users' choice about voice. Voice is also often based on the judgements that users form about public services, as we explored in the previous section. However, our analysis also points to the expression of voice as 'projectivity'. Such projects represent 'possible future trajectories of action in which received structures of thought and action may be creatively reconfigured in relation to actors' hopes, fears and desires for the

future' (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998: 971). Hence, for Archer (2003: 6), 'a project is a human device, be it individual or collective ... it involves an end that is desired, however tentatively or nebulously, and also some notion, however imprecise, of the course of action through which to achieve it'.

Personal resources (e.g. time, money, skills/education, confidence) help to support users' sense of agency (Verba et al., 1995; Simmons and Birchall, 2005). However, users also need to feel that public service organisations are receptive. As we have examined elsewhere (Simmons et al., 2007b), emergent structural and cultural factors in the service environment play an important role here. Archer (2003: 8) argues that such structural and cultural factors can exercise powers of constraint or enablement. However, she also points out that:

> First, such powers are dependent on the existence of human projects; no projects mean no constraints or enablements. Second, to act as an enabling or constraining influence there has to be a relationship of congruence or incongruence respectively with different agential projects. Third, agents have to respond to these influences, which being conditional rather than deterministic, are subject to reflexive deliberation over the nature of the response.

Archer's assertions fit well with the model we have presented of 'the dynamics of choice and voice' in Figure 6. Ideas of constraint and enablement also help show why the simple provision of a full range of channels is insufficient for perceptions of viability. Hence, we found that even where public service organisations have ostensibly elaborate involvement processes, users often report them to remain remarkably impervious to the input from these processes.

> I would write to the council – and I love this council – but, you know, I'd write to the Leisure and something services. And they would send me a letter back. And it would always say that I was the only one who had complained, or, you know, that that was just a one off thing ... It was always a very patronising answer back ... I felt they were covering up whenever I wrote to them. I didn't feel that they were saying 'Oh, we are really sorry about this Mrs. [X]. We will try and see if we can sort it out', or ... you know? Or some discussion with me, so I felt it was a bit patronising and it was a bit of a cover up – 'we must keep these people safe'. I felt they were on the side of the Leisure Centre, and that they just wanted it quiet – you know – 'just keep quiet and it will be all be alright'. (leisure services user, f, 60 s)

> I: Were you disappointed with the response that you received?

> R: Yes. Although it was polite and prompt, I thought if they had said 'we are looking into it again', then I would have been disarmed, you know, I would have had to shut up. It was the fact that they didn't even say they were going to consider it. So I thought this was authoritarian – rigidity and all that – and it is not accomplishing anything.

I: And in terms of come back, what did you feel your options were there?

R: Nothing, I didn't think I had . . . there was no other option to me.

I: There was no point in writing another letter to say, 'Actually I am not quite sure about your answer to this, could you explain that a bit more'. Did you consider that?

R: No I didn't. Mainly because the tone of the letter was very strong. You know, it didn't leave any doors open. (leisure services user, f, 50 s)

Cultural analysis and user voice

Cultural values direct people's attention to what is more and less important, while cultural norms define what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. This is supported by the institutional structures of public service organisations. Institutions preserve cultural values and norms, give them authority, and provide a context for social interaction (Brett, 2000). Yet cultural values and norms are *both* institutionalised in social systems *and* internalised in the personalities of individuals (Parsons, 1991). The preference of users for the use of one channel or another to express their views is based on their personal set of norms, values, beliefs and attitudes. We have characterised these as 'cultural biases'. However, service users get their values and norms from a variety of places, so it cannot be assumed that they will conform to those of public service providers. If the values and norms institutionalised in public service organisations are compatible with those internalised in service users there is 'cultural congruence'. If they are incompatible, there are 'culture clashes'.

Users were asked in our research to describe how the service 'actually is' compared with how it 'ought to be' on a range of indicators. This helped to clarify the extent of 'culture clashes' or 'cultural congruence' (Simmons et al., 2007b). The indicators used for this task were based on the prior analysis of our 80 in-depth user interviews, such as: courtesy and respect; how knowledge is valued; how fairness and equity issues are resolved; and how rules are set and policed. The results showed that much depends on the approach taken within each service context. In only one of our cases (day care) could there have been said to be *cultural congruence*. Here the balance between what 'is' and what 'ought to be' was relatively close. Interestingly, we also observed a very balanced approach to providing choice about voice in this setting. Service users were quite aware of their ability to express their views through either hierarchical mechanisms such as their local councillor or the Care Commission, their individually allocated care worker, or one of the user groups convened regularly within each day care centre.

We discussed earlier the presence of cultural 'blindspots' in some service users, but these were also apparent in service providers. In our leisure services case, for example, when we asked users to compare what 'is' with what 'ought to be', there was a noticeable blindspot in relation to groups. This fits well with our other data from this case   formal user groups had been established in previous years but they

did not sit comfortably with service providers and had later been withdrawn. As one manager openly stated.

> 'You have got the possibility of a quango being generated, a little tight-knit club that seems to have a lot of power. There was no way I was going to let that happen'.

Leisure service providers tended also to be cautious about groups that organised informally within their facilities. Facility managers seemed particularly wary of 'early morning swimmers' as being somehow radical and/or subversive. Because these swimmers typically arrive at the opening time of the swimming pool and share the swimming facilities together on a regular basis, they tend to get talking to one another about matters of common interest. This can lead to requests being made to managers for changes and improvements to the pool and its ancillary facilities from what might be seen as a fairly legitimate group. However, this can also be regarded as challenging by service managers. They therefore prefer to treat early morning swimmers as separate individuals rather than as a collective entity, even where the swimmers have deliberately organised collectively. Badminton players often met with similar disapproval, for similar reasons.

In our housing case there were two blindspots of note. Tenants reported lower levels of congruence between how the service 'is' and how it 'ought to be' in relation to both the individualistic and group-based dimensions. This again was borne out in interviews and in other data collected in this case. Unsurprisingly, this also tended to mean that tenants in this setting were more fatalistic. This was reflected in a lower sense of control   of being less able to 'have a say and make a difference' (Simmons, 2009). As one tenant put it:

> There have been occasions when they've been putting on a show, but the thing is you can tell. They're backing away from you all the time. They're not going to stand there and tell you what's going on … I'll wait for the day when all my problems are over. But now I'm just waiting for the day when I next sit and put pen to paper again, go over the same old ground, the same old requests and the same old non-acknowledgement.
>
> Interviewer: That must make you feel a little bit …
>
> Despondent to say the least.

When they sense that the values underpinning the service are not compatible with their own, this can also lead users to reflect on whether or not to raise their voice. Hence, our findings show that the different channels need both to be open and the reception clear if users are to be persuaded that the opportunities are viable. The absence or blocking of certain channels leads to voice being stifled and opportunities for organisational learning being missed. Such blocking reflects both (i) structural relations of power within the service system and (ii) the

power of hegemonic discourse to legitimate inequalities (e.g. Barnes et al., 2007; Davies et al., 2006). Over time, a sense that service providers are only interested in talking amongst themselves then holds the danger of disconnection and withdrawal as has been noted already in wider political life (e.g. Power Inquiry, 2006).

Culture at the 'front line' is important, but it is also important who holds the power. As we have pointed out, Skelcher (1993; Skelcher et al., 2005) suggests that public service organisations reserve to themselves discussion of 'higher order' issues, and that user voice is sought only at lower levels of discourse. The strength of providers' power relative to users enables them to control the agenda. If the use of power becomes coercive and domineering, this adds significantly to the potential for resistance and/or withdrawal over time.

Providers must therefore think about the styles and strategies they employ as they interact with users. In the same way that users have 'choice about voice', providers have 'choice about dealing with voice'. Sometimes, providers find the user voice to be advantageous in supporting their own arguments for either change or defence of the status quo. However, if providers do not agree with users on an issue, it can be difficult to bring them to terms.

> There was just a culture of 'we won't do it if we don't feel like it'. And it really takes some getting rid of. (leisure services user, f, 40 s)

How can common ground be established, if users' and providers' views of the world are incommensurable? Pellizzoni (2001: 79) argues that there are four alternatives: delegation (where authoritative decisions are made by particular elites; i.e. hierarchical), strategic negotiation (where stakeholders trade or bargain with one another; i.e. individualised), 'overlapping consensus' (where stakeholders find ways to reach a mutual agreement even if their reasons for agreeing may be different; i.e. egalitarian), or separation (where the different parties decide to terminate their interaction, i.e. withdrawal).

It should not be assumed that service users are always happy to delegate decision-making to particular provider elites (or 'hierarchies') even if there is evidence that this is sometimes the case. As we pointed out earlier, there is a sense that people want providers to take the lead but crucially *not before* they have listened suitably to what users have to say. Where users felt that the opportunity to have a say and make a difference was denied to them, withdrawal or separation became more likely. For example, those who did not feel that there were good opportunities to express their views were more likely to be fatalistic (Figure 9a), and to see their relationship with the service provider as negative (Figure 9b). Another possibility in the face of opportunities to have a say and make a difference being denied to them was that user group activity might be based more on the mobilisation of radical power as a way of getting a 'foot in the door' (cf. Simmons, 2009).

A lack of connection with service users' hopes, expectations, dilemmas indeed all the elements of the human condition can serve to create perceptions of a lack of 'institutional responsiveness'. The role of institutional design is important in

(a) Q: *Are there are good opportunities available to express your views about the service?*	Day Care (N=116)		Leisure (N= 318)		Housing (N=109)	
	Fatalism Avg. Score	*N*	*Fatalism Avg. Score*	*N*	*Fatalism Ave. Score*	*N*
Yes	3.01	82	3.33	69	2.76	35
No	2.55*	21	3.11*	115	2.29*	48
Don't know	2.82	7	3.25	129	2.38	26

NB. Lower scores represent a stronger sense of fatalism
* = statistically significant difference between 'yes' and 'no' scores (p < .05)

(b) Good opportunities? / Relationship?	Day Care (N=116)		Leisure (N= 318)		Housing (N=109)	
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)	Yes (%)	No (%)
Very positive	88.5	11.5	79.2	20.8	77.8	22.2
Quite positive	78.1	21.9	43.8	56.2	58.3	41.7
Neither positive or negative	42.9	57.1	18.8	81.3	40.6	59.4
Quite negative	0	100.0	7.7	92.3	9.1	90.9
Very negative	0	100.0	0	0	0	100.0

Figure 9a. (a) User evaluations of opportunities to express views v. fatalism. (b) User evaluations of opportunities' to express views v. nature of user-provider relationships.

addressing these issues (Simmons et al., 2006). We argue that organisations need to be more reflexive about their flexibility and responsiveness to the user voice. Yet, as we have pointed out, many public service organisations still appear to remain remarkably impervious to user input. We therefore argue for a more careful consideration of the extent to which the institutional arrangements are balanced in relation to 'leadership' and 'listening'.

In seeking greater congruence between users' perceptions of what 'is' and what 'should be', it would seem advantageous for greater efforts to be made to listen to people. Crucially, this means better understandings of how people want to be treated as individuals; how they want to be treated as members of collectivities; the role they see for hierarchy; and the extent to which they have become fatalistic. Such understanding can then be utilised to review matters at the institutional level, in terms of both 'lower order' issues of policy and practice, and 'higher order' issues of values and attitudes. Importantly, if they wish to retain users' support, our findings show that public service leaders can little afford to allow themselves to become disconnected.

Conclusion

Our study set out to establish whether public service users want choice about voice, what kind of choice they want, and what the implications of this are for policy

makers and service providers. Grid-group cultural theory provided a useful framework for delineating the different ways in which user-provider relationships were forged. This included the way that some users were able and willing to express their views through a range of voice mechanisms, but also the way that others became fatalistic and withdrawn.

Our findings show that 70 per cent of users express their views in one way or another at some time or another. Despite the fact that people have a tendency to prefer one channel for expressing their views, there is strong support for the provision of a full range of mechanisms to be made available. This is sometimes self-oriented, allowing strategy switching if they are frustrated in the use of their preferred channel. However, it is also other-oriented, based on recognition of the fact that not everybody feels comfortable expressing their views in the same way, and the idea that everybody should be able to communicate their views in the way that suits them best. This suggests that a full range of mechanisms for users to express their views should be provided. However, in itself, this is not enough. The different channels need to be kept open by service providers, but reception of user voice through these channels also needs to be clear. This means providers should ensure that they 'tune themselves in' correctly to be able to listen.

The research shows that resistance to hearing the user voice through one mechanism or another should be controlled if negative culture clashes are to be avoided. This includes the risk of fatalism and withdrawal. As Verweij (2004: 3) observes, 'each of the four cultures has its contribution to make . . . three of them are fragile, but the culture of fatalism is resilient and takes over when one of the other cultural viewpoints is repressed''. The causes of withdrawal therefore need to be considered and addressed before its consequences become more widely felt by public service organisations. We contend that the pursuit of greater cultural congruence is a valuable organisational goal, and that a combination of appropriate institutional design and an investment of institutional effort is required to ensure a more balanced and culturally congruent approach.

Note

1. The lower figure in our housing case can be attributed to the stigma a number of tenants felt was attached to their estate; the estate was therefore seen by many as a temporary place to live until they found something better.

References

Archer M (2003) *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Baldock J and Ungerson C (1996) Becoming a Consumer of Care: Developing a Sociological Account of The 'New Community Care. In: Edgell S, Hetherington K and Warde A (eds) *Consumption Matters*. Oxford: Blackwell/Sociological Review.
Barnes M (1999) Users as Citizens: Collective Action and the Local Governance of Welfare. *Social Policy and Administration* 33(1): 73–90.

Barnes M, Newman J and Sullivan H (2007) *Power, Participation and Political Renewal: Case Studies in Public Participation.* Bristol: The Policy Press.

Barnes, M. (2009) 'Authoritative consumers or Experts by Experience? User groups in health and social care, in Simmons R, Powell M and Greener I (eds) The Consumer in Public Services: Choice, Values and Difference. Bristol: Policy Press.

Bellah R, Madsen R, Sullivan W, Swidler A and Tipton S (1985) *Habits of the Heart.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Beresford, P. (2009) 'Differentiated Consumers? A differentiated view from a service user perspective', in Simmons R, Powell M and Greener I (eds) The Consumer in Public Services: Choice, Values and Difference. Bristol: Policy Press.

Birchall J and Simmons R (2004) *User Power; The Participation of Users in Public Services.* London: National Consumer Council.

Brett J (2000) Culture and Negotiation. *International Journal of Psychology* 35(2): 97–104.

Christensen T and Lagreid P (2002) New Public Management: Puzzles of Democracy and the Influence of Citizens. *Journal of Political Philosophy* 10(3): 267–295.

Clarke J (2009) The People's Police? Citizens, Consumers and Communities. In: Simmons R, Powell M and Greener I (eds) *The Consumer in Public Services.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Clarke J, Newman J, Smith N, Vidler E and Westmarland L (2007) *Creating Citizen-Consumers: Changing Publics and Changing Public Services.* London: SAGE.

Craigforth Consultancy and Research (2003) *Review of Approaches to Persistent Complainers.* Stirling, UK: Craigforth Consultancy and Research.

Davies C, Wetherell M and Barnett E (2006) *Citizens at the Centre.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Denhardt R and Denhardt J (2000) The New Public Service: Serving Rather than Steering. *Public Administration Review* 60(6): 549–559.

Donaldson L, Schoorman D and Davis J (1997) Toward a Stewardship Theory of Management'. *Academy of Management Review* 22(1): 20–47.

Douglas M (1970) *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology.* London: Barrie and Rockliff.

Douglas M (1982) *In the Active Voice.* London: Routledge.

Douglas M (1992) *Risk and Blame: Essays in Cultural Theory.* London: Routledge.

Ellison N (2000) Proactive and Defensive Engagement: Social Citizenship in a Changing Public Sphere, *Sociological Research Online* 5(3).

Emirbayer M and Mische A (1998) What is Agency? *American Journal of Sociology* 103(4): 962–1023.

Glasby J and Littlechild R (2009) *Direct Payments and Personal Budgets: Putting Personalisation into Practice.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Glendinning C (2009) The Consumer in Social Care. In: Simmons R, Powell M and Greener I (eds) *The Consumer in Public Services: Choice, Values and Difference.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Greener I (2003) Who Choosing What? The Evolution of the Word 'Choice' in the NHS and its Implications for New Labour. *Social Policy Review* 15: 49–67.

Habermas J (1984) *The Theory of Communicative Action: Vol. 1. Reason and the Rationalization of Society*, McCarthy T (trans). London: Heinemann.

Hirschman A (1970) *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hoggett P (2001) Agency, Rationality and Social Policy. *Journal of Social Policy* 30(1): 37–56.

Hoggett, P. (2003) 'Why Public is not the Same as Private', Paper to International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations Symposium, *Power and Politics*, Boston, June 19–21.

Homans G (1961) *Social Behaviour: Its Elementary Forms*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and World.

Hood C (1991) A Public Management for All Seasons? *Public Administration* 69(1): 3–19.

Hood C (1998) *The Art of the State: Culture, Rhetoric and Public Management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Le Grand J (2006) Choice and Competition in Public Services. *Research in Public Policy* Summer 2006.

Lister R (2001) *Citizenship: Feminist Perspectives*. London: Macmillan.

Lister R (2006) Gender and Citizenship, Paper to Gender Studies Group, Dept. Applied Social Science, University of Stirling, April.

Marquand D (2004) *Decline of the Public: The Hollowing Out of Citizenship*. Oxford: Polity.

Needham C (2001) *Listen and Lead – the Challenge from the Women of Worcester*. London: openDemocracy.

Needham C (2008) Realising the Potential of Co-Production: Negotiating Improvements in Public Services. *Social Policy and Society* 7(2): 221–231.

Newman, J. (2001) Modernising Governance, London: Sage.

PASC (Public Administration Select Committee) (2005) *Choice, Voice and Public Services*, Fourth Report of Session 2004–05, Volume 1, HC 49-1, London: Stationery Office.

Parsons T (1991) A Tentative Outline of American Values. In: Robertson R and Turner B (eds) *Talcott Parsons: Theorist of Modernity*. London: SAGE.

Pellizzoni L (2001) The Myth of the Best Argument: Power, Deliberation and Reason. *British Journal of Sociology* 52(1): 59–86.

Pickering A (1995) *The Mangle of Practice: Time, Agency and Science*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Powell M (2007) *Understanding the Mixed Economy of Welfare*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Power Inquiry (2006) *Power to the People: The Report of Power, an Independent Inquiry into Britain's Democracy*. Trust, York: Centenary Project of Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust and Joseph Rowntree Reform.

Rayner S (1999) Mapping Institutional Diversity for Implementing The Lisbon Principles. *Ecological Economics* 31: 259–274.

Rein M and Schon D (1991) Frame-reflective Policy Discourse. In: Wagner P, Weiss C, Wittrock B and Wollman H (eds) *Social Sciences, Modern States, National Experiences and Theoretical Crossroads*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Leat D, Seltzer K and Stoker G (2002) *Towards Holistic Governance: The New Reform Agenda*. Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 6P.

Simmel G (1964) *Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliations*. London: Free Press.

Simmons R (2009) The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services. In: Simmons R, Powell M and Greener I (eds) *The Consumer in Public Services: Choice, Values and Difference*. Bristol: Policy Press.

Simmons R and Birchall J (2005) A Joined-Up Approach to User Participation in Public Services: Strengthening the 'Participation Chain. *Social Policy and Administration* 39(3): 260–283.

Simmons R, Birchall J and Prout A (2006) Cultural Tensions in Public Service Delivery: Implications for Producer-consumer Relationships, ESRC/AHRC, Working Paper 026.

Simmons R, Birchall J and Prout A (2007a) *Our Say: User Voice and Public Service Culture*. London: National Consumer Council.

Simmons R, Birchall J and Prout A (2007b) Hearing Voices? User Involvement and Public Service Cultures. *Consumer Policy Review* 17(5): 2–8.

138

Simmons, R. (2008) should be replaced with Simmons, R. (2011, forthcoming) 'Leadership and Listening: the reception of user voice in today's public services', *Social Policy and Administration*.

Simmons R, Powell M and Greener I (2009) *The Consumer in Public Services: Choice, Values and Difference.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Sjoblom S (1999) NPM and Citizenship. In: Rouban L (ed.) *Citizens and the New Governance: Beyond New Public Management.* Amsterdam: IOS Press.

Skelcher C (1993) Involvement and Empowerment in Local Public Services. *Public Money and Management* 13(1): 13–20.

Skelcher C, Mathur N and Smith M (2005) The Public Governance of Collaborative Spaces: Discourse. *design and democracy,* Public Administration 83(3): 573–596.

Thomas JC (1995) *Public Participation in Public Decisions.* London: John Wiley & Sons.

Thompson J (1991) Editor's Introduction to. In: Bourdieu P (ed.) *Language and Symbolic Power.* Oxford: Polity.

Thompson M, Ellis R and Wildavsky A (1990) *Cultural Theory.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Turner B (2008) Civility, Civil Sphere and Citizenship: Solidarity Versus the Enclave Society. *Citizenship Studies* 12(2): 177–184.

Verba S, Schlozman K and Brady H (1995) *Voice and Equality.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Verweij M (2004) Cultural theory, Appendix to Mary Douglas, 'Traditional culture: Let's Hear No More About it. In: Rao V and Walton M (eds) *Culture and Public Action: How Cultural Factors Affect an Unequal World.* Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Wildavsky A (1987) Choosing Preferences by Constructing Institutions: A Cultural Theory of Preference Formation. *American Political Science Review* 81(1): 3–21.

Richard Simmons is Lecturer in Social Policy at the University of Stirling. His research focuses on the governance and delivery of public services, especially in the application of user perspectives. He has a particular interest in mutuality, where his current work considers co-operative, self-help and mutual aid approaches to the 'Big Society' agenda and the financial crisis.

Johnston Birchall is a Professor in the School of Social Sciences, Stirling University. A specialist in socio-economics, he focuses on stakeholder participation in co-operatives, mutuals and public service agencies. His latest book is People-centered Businesses: Co-operatives, Mutual's and the Idea of Membership (Macmillan, 2010). He is currently writing a book on people-centered banking.

Alan Prout is Professor of Sociology and Childhood Studies and Director of the Institute of Education at the University of Warwick. He is author of 'The Future of Childhood' (Falmer Routledge, 2005) and co-author of 'Theorizing Childhood' (Polity Press, 2000). His work focuses on contemporary childhood but also encompasses issues of policy, health and participation.

1.6

PUBLICATION 6

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Check for updates

User voice and complaints as drivers of innovation in public services

Richard Simmons[a] and Carol Brennan[b]

[a]School of Applied Social Science, University of Stirling, Stirling, UK; [b]Business Enterprise and Management, Queen Margaret University, Edinburg, UK

ABSTRACT
User voice and complaints can serve as important inputs to innovation in public services. User knowledge can be harnessed to provide insights and ideas that prompt more effective service responses and add value to service delivery. However, the mechanisms for harnessing user voice and complaints are often not fully understood, and their potential is often underdeveloped. This paper elaborates a conceptual framework which maps the processes by which user voice and complaints might prompt effective public service innovation. Six practical real-world examples are then presented and analysed to illuminate discussion of some critical success factors for consumer-knowledge-enabled innovation.

KEYWORDS User voice; innovation; knowledge; public services; complaints

Introduction: user knowledge and innovation in public services

Valuing consumer knowledge

This paper considers user knowledge as a source of new ideas and creative solutions in today's public service environment. In the face of high expectations and relentless pressures to drive out costs, there is an ever-increasing need for smart, responsive public service provision, facilitated by cultures of innovation and improvement. The paper considers whether user voice and complaints can act as inputs for innovation by raising awareness, broadening and deepening discussion, and promoting strength in a diversity of ideas.

User voice can emerge from a range of sources, and a range of mechanisms have emerged for capturing and responding to it (Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012). Users make choices about which channel for voice they consider appropriate for particular issues in a particular context: for example, through complaint and redress systems, contacting elected officials, participation in user groups/forums, or online mechanisms, such as *Fixmystreet* or *Patient Opinion* (Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012; Simmons and Brennan 2013). In some examples, user voice may also be solicited and structured through more interactive, co-productive initiatives, such as 'Experience-Based Co-design' (Bate and Robert 2007) or 'Experts by Experience' (Barnes 2009). In this way, user voice can feed innovation in different ways – for

example, through the identification and expression of a 'disconfirmation' between expected and actual performance, or as an expression of consumer involvement and desire to 'co-produce' (Simmons 2009).

Research shows people often have a relatively strong attachment to the public services they use, see them as important, and 'care about' them being done to a standard they find acceptable (Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012). In this way, the legitimacy of user knowledge, whether expressed individually or collectively, lies both in users' informed evaluation of their own needs and their lived experience of public service use (Barnes 2009; Centre for Public Scrutiny 2011). Such conditions are important for the expression of voice (Hirschman 1970; Dowding and John 2012).

In considering the role and potential of user voice and complaints, this paper builds on the emerging public service-dominant approach. For Osborne, Radnor, and Nasi (2013), this approach raises concerns around the needs to: acknowledge public services as 'services' (and the centrality of the service user to their performance); incorporate citizen engagement and user involvement; and, therefore, enhance the capacity of public service organizations (PSOs) to understand the needs and expectations of citizens and service users in ways that add value. These concerns are followed through in identifying further needs for: creating a service culture and user-focused mindset; knowing users' expectations, requirements and value expectations; designing both the service and the experience of it; and measuring and assessing the service from the point of view of the user (Osborne, Radnor, and Nasi 2013; Osborne and Strokosch 2013). This in turn 'requires both governing and responding to the service expectations of service users and training and motivating the service delivery workforce to interact positively with these users' (Osborne, Radnor, and Nasi 2013, 140). This is supported by effective communication practices/actions, whether intersubjective communication, or communicative action via other mediums. Respectful and clear communication plays a crucial role in establishing the more open and responsive organizational environments in which public service innovation can take hold.

Such perspectives begin to shift the focus from 'technical' to more 'relational' concerns. This reflects Hoggett's (2003) assessment that, 'the public sector is primarily a site for the enactment of particular kinds of social relations rather than the delivery of goods and services'. For Cloutier et al. (2015), there is an important role here for *relational work* in the 'institutional work' done in PSOs. Institutional work has been defined as 'the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions' (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006, 215). Cloutier et al. (2015, 21) found that institutional work comprises structural, conceptual, operational *and* relational components in PSOs, but that relational work serves to 'glue together' the other three forms and help PSOs navigate pluralism and contradiction. Such issues lead Hartley (2005, 27) to assert that innovation in public services 'is usually not a physical artefact at all, but a change in the relationships between service providers and their users'.

Such relationships provide scope for complementarities and creative solutions, but also for incompatibilities and conflicts of opinion. Hence, there is no guarantee that providers will agree over the appropriateness of voice and complaints in user-informed innovation (Bason 2010; Simmons 2011). Various well-known problems and pitfalls can arise. First, consideration must be given to who complains, how and how successfully. Some citizens do not even realize their entitlements, let alone have the agency to voice complaints about services they receive (e.g. Soss, Fording, and

143

Schram 2011). This leads to the potential for complaint-led innovation to only make use of the knowledge of those most capable of pursuing their complaints. Second, and relatedly, the type and variety of mechanisms for gathering complaints matter. If these are either constrained, or made available but subsequently ignored, they can become tools of containment or exclusion (Simmons 2009). In this sense, all three of Lukes (1974) faces of power might apply: first, in terms of failing to uphold complaints, even when there are many of them; second, in terms of creating barriers to making complaints, so that few can be made; third, in terms of shaping a false consciousness in which people accept their role in the existing order of things and do not complain (Wood 1996). In this sense, while one goal of better relationships might be to help PSOs to manage better, the notion of nothing but good faith on their part cannot be assumed, and there is a need to maintain a variety of tools to help minimize and/or eliminate these issues (Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012).

Indeed, Figure 1 shows how there is a range of potentially 'legitimate knowledges' in relation to public service issues. Each legitimate form of knowledge has its strengths and weaknesses. In this way, as Osborne and Strokosch (2013) recognize, while it is clear that user-led transformative innovation *can* occur, it is not always straightforwardly clear that all such innovations *should* occur; there is a need for wider debate. An important question here lies in the notion of 'boundary troubles' between different forms of knowledge. In short, who is it that decides when service innovation is called for – and are these the right people to do so?

Yet agreement and disagreement can each help prompt innovation (Cameron and Freeman 1991). A 'consumer knowledge management (CKM)' approach (Gibbert, Leibold, and Probst 2002) is offered here as tool for engaging with these issues and building 'integrative capacity' (Liao, Kickul, and Ma 2009). The outset assumptions in CKM are that:

- Consumers have legitimate and distinctive knowledge that can contribute to service innovation, which may be 'managed' (acquired, absorbed, assimilated) alongside a range of other knowledges (Simmons and Brennan 2013)

Form of knowledge	Critique
Individual (e.g. Consumer)	'Biased'
Local (e.g. Local community)	'Anecdotal'
Specialised (e.g. Health professional)	'Inaccessible'
Strategic (e.g. Chief Executive)	'Disconnected'
Holistic (e.g. Academic professor)	'Abstract'

Figure 1. Competing/complementary forms of knowledge.

144

- Such combinatory approaches may help contain any negative tendencies to over-customization and/or inefficiency in public service innovations (Osborne, Radnor, and Nasi 2013)

Hence, CKM suggests moving beyond a plain one-way, administrative analysis of consumer knowledge, for example by analysing the data it holds on its consumers (including complaints statistics). It also contrasts with another commonly used term, consumer relationship management (CRM). While CRM may take consumer knowledge fully into account, it also encompasses a well-known range of more negative approaches to the consumer–provider relationship – such as 'cooling the mark out' (Goffman 1952) or 'therapy' and 'manipulation' (Arnstein 1968). Instead, CKM explicitly recognizes consumer knowledge to be as potentially significant to organizational decision-making as any other legitimate source. Acceptance of greater 'polyvocality' widens the repertoire of public services to deal with problems, and to promote innovation and improvement. Indeed, as Mulgan (2007, 4) observes:

> Users have always played a decisive role in social innovation – a role which is increasingly recognised in business too. In all cases, innovation usually involves some struggle against vested interests; the "contagious courage" that persuades others to change; and the pragmatic persistence that turns promising ideas into real institutions.

Where PSOs are sufficiently open and responsive, this can help unlock the tacit or 'sticky' knowledge that service users possess in order to improve existing or develop new services (Von Hippel 1994, 2005; cf. Bason 2010; Bessant and Maher 2009). This may involve a direct response to group voice, an individual communication, or the identification of trends in aggregate data (Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012; Schibrowsky and Lapidus 1994). In this way, voice and complaints can help identify blind spots and dissonance in operational contexts, and foster innovation through the development of the new ideas and creative solutions (Bason 2010).

Receptiveness to users' contributions acts as a catalyst for change. However, while public service users may be more likely to complain than exit if sufficiently convinced voice will be effective (Hirschman 1986; Dowding and John 2012), research shows around one third feel they 'would not be listened to' (Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012). Hence, as Osborne and Strokosch (2013, S40) observe:

> It is not simply a case of empowering service users and expecting them to immediately begin transforming (public) services. Enhanced co-production requires a genuine partnership between public service professionals and service users that is predicated upon the use of knowledge to transform service delivery.

Such openness and receptiveness from public service providers emphasizes the overarching importance of greater competence, commitment and a more favourable organizational culture (Simmons and Brennan 2013). These issues underpin the analytical framework developed in this paper, which maps out how 'consumer-knowledge-enabled innovation (CKEI)' (cf. Belkahla and Triki 2011) may be promoted through better 'CKM'.

The paper progresses as follows: first, the detailed analytical framework is presented. This considers (i) how PSOs go about valuing and managing knowledge through CKM, and (ii) from this, how CKEI may be captured from voice and complaints. Second, six practical real-world examples from the United Kingdom are described, and related to the framework. Finally, further discussion seeks to

145

examine three key issues: the role and potential of user knowledge in public service innovation, PSOs' 'readiness' for CKEI, and the wider promotion of a public service-dominant approach.

Analytical framework

The analytical framework serves as a 'process map' by which user voice and complaints might prompt effective public service innovation. In this way, it stands as an intermediate step between a more general conceptual framework and a more detailed 'service blueprint' – the latter being a visualization of service user and service staff actions/interactions that 'highlights the role(s) and relationship(s) of the service user within the service delivery system' through, for example, 'touchpoints', 'waitpoints' and 'failpoints' (Radnor et al. 2014).

The framework brings together the two related, but analytically distinct, elements of 'CKM' (or how consumer knowledge is valued and managed; see Figure 2), and 'CKEI' (or how innovation is captured from this process; see Figure 3). Combining these elements in the overall framework shows their inter-relationships in each of three notional 'systems' within PSOs: the 'service delivery', 'innovation' and 'CKM' systems (see Figure 4).
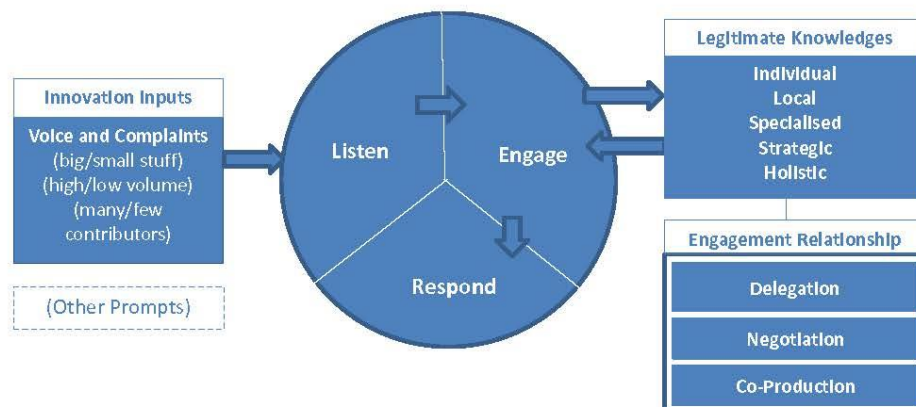
Figure 2. Valuing and managing consumer knowledge.
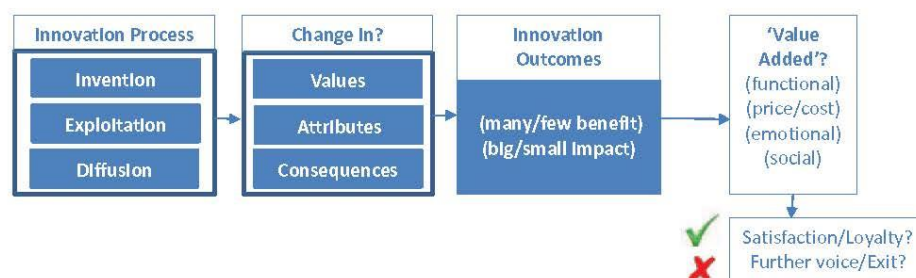
Figure 3. Capturing innovation.
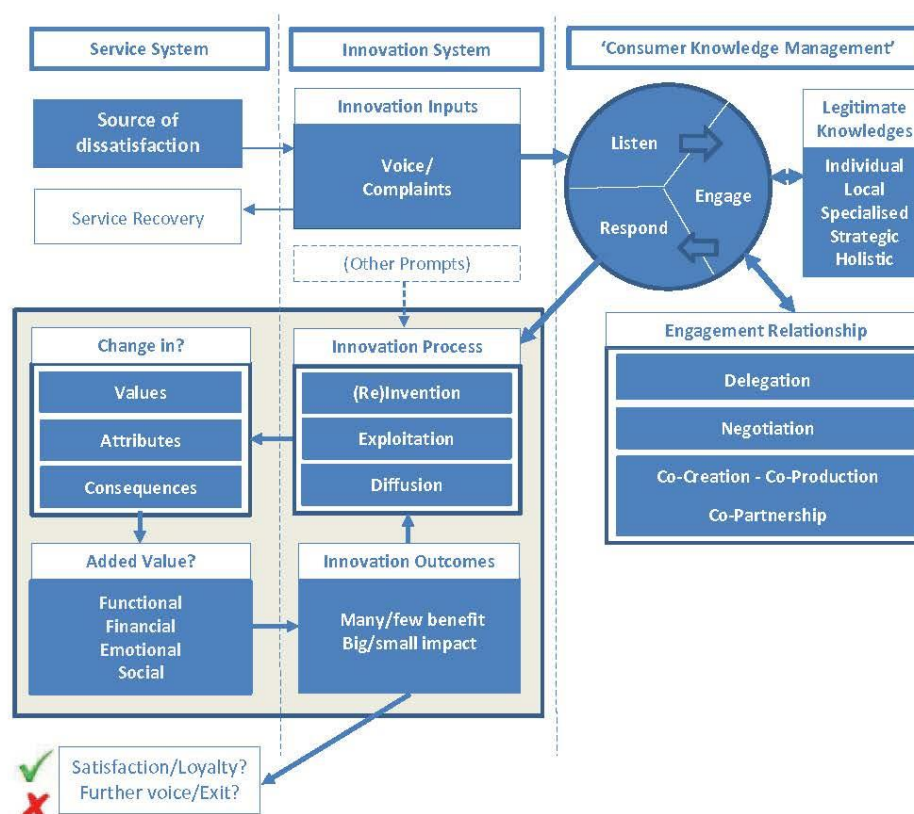
Figure 4. Integrated analytical framework.

Voice, complaints and 'CKM' in public services

The 'CKM' element of the framework is concerned with an open-learning approach to valuing and managing consumer knowledge. Sometimes user voice and complaints are dismissed in PSOs, with people being labelled for example as 'the usual suspects' (e.g. Boswell, Settle, and Dugdale 2015) or 'frivolous' or 'vexatious complainants' (e.g. Hodges 2014). While these stereotypes are now being challenged, and the reasons for users' persistence investigated more fully, there can remain a tendency in PSOs to 'fear rather than welcome value pluralism or conflict' (Hoggett 2003, 3).

By contrast, a CKM approach regards voice and complaints as important inputs or prompts to innovation. Such inputs are elicited and encouraged through the above range of mechanisms to provide constant stimulation and insights. Leadbeater (2012) observes that these may:

- relate to either 'big stuff' (e.g. an innovation that saves £50,000 ten times per year) or 'small' stuff (e.g. an innovation that saves £5 100,000 times per year),
- be 'high volume' (i.e. those who 'shout the loudest') or 'low volume' (i.e. those who are 'hard to hear'),

147

- involve 'many contributors' (collective voice/large aggregate numbers of complainants) or 'few contributors' (perhaps even a single individual).

The important thing is that the CKM process is able to find ways to capture the learning opportunities provided by these different inputs – even where, for example, they are 'low volume'. These may combine with 'other prompts' (especially those contributed by other legitimate knowledge bearers) in bringing about service innovation.

This leads to the 'listen, engage, respond' element of the framework (adapted from Bhalla 2011). The 'listen' component reflects the openness and receptiveness of public service providers to voice, including complaints. However, as recognized by a former Departmental Permanent Secretary, 'listening has not been one of the most precious public sector competencies, and too many managers are where they are because they are good at telling not listening' (Bichard 2000). Good listening is a key facilitating factor for CKM – and poor listening a key constraining factor (Simmons 2011).

'Engage' is the next stage of CKM. Here, the organization engages creatively with user inputs, where appropriate connecting with other legitimate knowledges in shaping a response. This recognizes that no one source of knowledge has a monopoly on useful insights, and that each has its drawbacks and blind spots. The key here is including consumer knowledge in the mix. It is known from previous research that the 'engagement relationship' sought by public service consumers may vary (Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012). Some may prefer to simply flag the issue then 'delegate' responsibility for finding a solution to public officials. Others may prefer to remain involved and 'negotiate' a solution with service providers (whereby providers come back to the user(s) with proposed actions and provide them with further opportunities to comment until agreement is reached). Still others may prefer to work alongside service providers in a more 'participative' or 'enhanced' co-productive approach (Osborne and Strokosch 2013) to help generate ideas and put those ideas into practice. More work remains to be done to consider the relative effectiveness of these different approaches on the extent to which voice and complaints help prompt innovation in public services.

The final step in the CKM model is 'respond'. It is at this point that action begins to take shape. If user voice and complaints are assessed to be about service recovery, this may generate an appropriate response without resort to much that might be identified as 'innovation'. However, voice and complaints that go beyond simple service recovery represent a potential input into the innovation process. The next section of the paper will, therefore, address another key idea: 'CKEI'.

Voice, complaints and 'CKEI' in public services

It was suggested earlier that the value of consumer knowledge in prompting innovation lies in raising awareness, broadening and deepening discussion, and acknowledging strength in a diversity of ideas. In this way, it has been asserted that user voice represents 'free consultancy' (e.g. Hobbs 2014) or that 'a complaint is a gift' (Barlow and Møller 1996). This places an onus on the receivers of user knowledge to invest that endowment wisely. Once it has been combined with the insights from other legitimate knowledges, a central task is to translate these contributions into energy in support of three key innovation processes: 'invention', 'exploitation' and 'diffusion'

(Rogers 2003; Smith 2010). These three processes imply productive and, to some extent, disruptive change (Bason 2010).

In PSOs, such change may find its expression in service values, attributes (such as tangibles, systems, and practices) and/or consequences (Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012). All are important. For example, Kelly, Mulgan, and Muers (2002) emphasize that: '*values* and value are closely linked. Inappropriate values may lead to the destruction of public value'. Meanwhile, in addition to tangible service attributes, Foss et al. (2012) show that organizational *systems* are strategic resources that innovative organizations have begun to view proactively as necessary facilitators of success. Meanwhile, Hartley (2005) argues that the view of innovation as 'novelty in action' (Altschuler & Zegans, 1997) and 'new ideas that work' (Mulgan and Albury 2003) focuses on innovation as new *practice*. Finally, the consequences of the service may also change, for example in the benefit they provide, for whom and with what impact.

In terms of outcomes, Figure 3 suggests that many people may benefit from service innovations, or just a few, and that this may have a relatively 'big' or 'small' impact. However, where a sufficient number of people benefit by a sufficient amount, a service innovation may be said to 'add value'. Value may be added in a number of important ways: 'financial' value (e.g. cost savings); 'functional' value (e.g. by calibrating public service activities to better fulfil the needs of users and citizens, and creating, sharing, transferring, adapting and embedding good practice; Hartley 2005); 'social' value (e.g. wider non-financial impacts of programmes, organizations and interventions, including the wellbeing of individuals and communities, social capital and the environment; Wood and Leighton 2010) and/or 'emotional' value (e.g. through recognition, compassion, autonomy and care; Mulgan 2007). Notably, the latter form of value is consistently raised as important by public service users in qualitative research into their experience (e.g. Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012, 2013), but is rarely considered in standard assessments of value.

Finally, successful innovations that add value might be expected to develop user satisfaction (and, over time, even loyalty). However, where the innovation does not go far enough it may lead to further user voice and complaints, or even exit (Hirschman 1970). This may prompt further rounds of attempted innovation. Hence, as shown in the bottom-left portion of Figure 4, the above elements of CKEI may circulate in a loop until satisfaction is achieved.

Bringing things together: a 'three systems' framework

Figure 4 brings the elements of CKM and CKEI together to show how they might be understood as part of the same whole. This heuristic framework shows three systems (each represented vertically): the 'service', 'innovation' and 'CKM' systems.

In terms of the elements of CKM and CKEI discussed above, some fit most clearly within the 'service system'. These include sources of dissatisfaction (including those that lead to simple service recovery), but also any changes in the values, attributes or consequences of the service that improve users' perceptions of value in ways that are necessary to rebuild their satisfaction. There are other elements that belong to the 'innovation system', whereby user voice and other inputs are used as resources for innovation processes that in turn produce innovative outcomes. The remainder fall

within the realm of 'CKM'. These include the cycle of listening, engaging different knowledges and responding appropriately.

In sum, Figure 4 synthesizes the key explanatory mechanisms through which user voice and complaints may help to drive public service innovation. Clearly, voice and complaints can serve as prompts for developing ideas. They also signify that providers do not have a monopoly on knowledge about public services. As understanding of these explanatory mechanisms continues to build, it is hoped this will illuminate some of the key ways in which complaints are translated into innovation processes, and with which outcomes.

Disconnections between different elements

Beyond this, however, each link in Figure 4 provides insights into how opportunities for public service innovation may be lost. Starting at the top left, there is a risk that PSOs either fail to recognize the source of user dissatisfaction, or that it is incorrectly recognized and dismissed as a simple service recovery issue. Second, moving to the right, there is a risk that the legitimacy of user knowledge may be dismissed. Third, there is a risk that the communication is not properly listened to (perhaps because the receiver is self-preoccupied, closed-minded or 'too busy' to listen), so that its full implications are imperfectly understood. Fourth, there is a risk the PSO fails to engage the user further in clarifying and developing their communication. Fifth, there is a related risk that the engagement relationship is constructed on the wrong basis (perhaps due to a 'faulty default' assumption of delegation on the part of the service provider). Sixth, there is a risk of non-engagement of other legitimate knowledges, whether their input is directly sought or not. Seventh, there is a risk that even if these knowledges are engaged, they fail to make links with 'other prompts' that might add power and momentum to the process. Each of these risks may compromise the effectiveness of the eventual response.

To this may be added the generic risks associated with innovation processes in the bottom-left portion of Figure 4. Most of these have been widely discussed elsewhere. First, that creative ideas that lead to 'invention' may prove either unexploitable in particular contexts or hard to diffuse (Rogers 2003; Smith 2010). This demands a level of risk tolerance in the pursuit of innovation that is not commonly found in PSOs (Albury 2005). Second, that certain elements of organizations (e.g. values and culture) may be more impervious to change attempts than others (e.g. tangibles, systems and practices) (e.g. Harris and Ogbonna 2002). This may require particular investment in 'cultural innovation' (or a reprioritization or rebalancing within organizational value systems that can help reframe the conceptual or emotional view of a situation, customize new strategies and promote new behaviours; Van Ess Coeling and Simms 1993) as part of the institutional work done by PSOs. Third, that any changes made may result in no – or insufficient – additions of value (or even the unintended consequence of lost value). It is widely recognized that such unintended consequences are all too common (Hood and Peters 2004).

At this point it should be noted that, associated with all the identified risks in Figure 4, there are countless real-life examples of failure of complaints to drive public service innovation, even where they may have had this potential. In this way, the framework does not only look to explain successes, but also failures to realize change (or why potential innovations might fail to emerge).
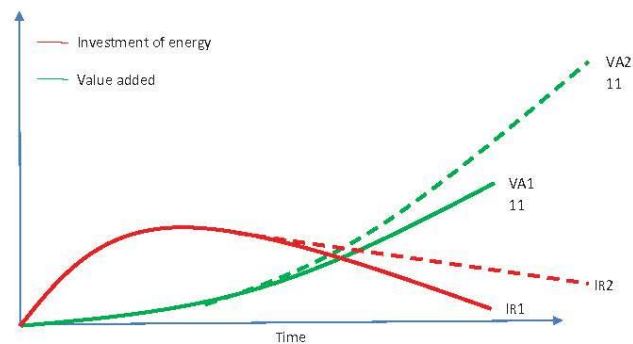
Figure 5. Return on investment of resources in CKEI.

A further risk may be added; that the innovation process is abandoned too early, resulting in an opportunity cost. In this way, it may be prematurely accepted that an attempted innovation has failed, when further circulations of the loop in the bottom-left portion of Figure 4 may lead to its success. Hence, even where value is perceived to be added through an innovation, there remains the risk that this will be a sub-optimal response compared with that which might have been achieved with a little more effort.

Figure 5 plots a hypothetical return over time on the investment of energy and knowledge in an innovation in terms of the value added. In this scenario a considerable investment of PSO resources is made early in the process (IR1) in understanding the problem, gathering information, engaging with stakeholders and so on, only for the response to be rushed in order for those resources to be redeployed back to their original purpose. As a result, the value added (VA1) is much less than that which might have been generated by seeing the job through (VA2), and continuing to invest a little more for a little longer (IR2). While this is a completely hypothetical scenario and many others are possible, the potential loss of net value it raises is very rarely considered in PSOs. Using the above framework to identify critical success factors, it is hoped this paper might encourage a more open, critical and reflective approach.

CKEI: six practical real-world examples

An extended process was followed to identify practical examples of CKEI in PSOs. This included a desk scan of online materials and crowdsourcing from organizations such as Patient Opinion and other public service contacts. The generally poor recording and/or celebration of success stories that this process uncovered meant that some promising examples were incomplete and needed to be excluded. Where more complete examples emerged from the above process, a number were selected for further attention. This included semi-structured interviews with key informants to probe for clarification and additional information. The six practical real-world examples included below have been compiled to exhibit a wide range of experiences and applications of CKEI. All examples are from the UK, and all relate to PSOs in which there are existing procedures for complaint handling. In each example, the framework has been employed to help identify critical success factors for user-led

151

innovation in public services. This is clearly a small and unrepresentative sample, which is used to ground the framework in real-world dynamics. The six examples should therefore be seen as illustrations that provide a first test phase of the theoretical framework. In future, further research might be conducted using a more structured case study approach (e.g. Yin 2013) to explore how the analytical framework might be applied (or even service blueprints developed) in relation to other real-world examples.

The following section commences with a brief description of each of the six examples. It then goes on to discuss and interpret these examples' success.

The six practical examples

A. 'Tell Us Once': Department for Work and Pensions (DWP)

What was the complaint about? An elderly man was fatally run over outside the local post office. His frail and grieving widow attempted for months to cancel his pension, passport and so on. She repeatedly received inflexible responses from the authorities in a never-ending circle of bureaucracy. The final straw came when she was required to go in person to the same post office where her husband had died to cancel his pension.

What happened as a result? The eloquence and passion of her story prompted DWP to lead a partnership of central and local government departments to reduce the burden of bereavement. The result was a hugely innovative back-office fix called 'Tell-Us-Once' (TUO). The TUO service removes the need to separately notify different government services. Following registration of the death, a unique reference number is used to circulate details to all relevant government departments and services. The TUO Programme Manager, Matt Briggs, labels this 'a dynamic and inspiring model of how central and local government can work in true cooperation, smashing boundaries and prejudices with the hammer of a great idea'.

B. Moffat Community Flood Resilience Group: Scottish Flood Forum (SFF)

What was the complaint about? Lack of maintenance of drains is a major feature of flooding. Following repeated complaints, the community of Moffat, a small Scottish town, were angry with the public agencies who had failed to accept responsibility about flooding in the area for fear of litigation and insurance claims.

What happened as a result? In the absence of an adequate response from the statutory agencies, residents formed a 'Community Flood Resilience Group' to reduce their risk. They enlisted SFF, who adapted a US initiative to encourage members to each 'adopt a drain'. Members now check, monitor and notify the Council if drains need unblocking. They also use Twitter and Facebook to co-ordinate a timely collective response to flood risks and alert the authorities to respond. The Council is now fully engaged, in what has become a good example community empowerment and co-production. Director of SFF, Paul Hendy, notes the importance of 'confronting the issues and focusing the anger to develop creative solutions and rebuild confidence … Focusing on people's experiences changes the mindset – it's a totally new way of thinking'. The approach has now been rolled out to other communities in Scotland and beyond.

C. Experience-Based Design (EBD): Luton and Dunstable Head and Neck Cancer Clinic (L&D)

152

What was the complaint about? Patients complained about the insensitivity of being given a cancer diagnosis, then being rushed to further appointments about surgery, radiotherapy, a feeding tube which has to be cleaned, and so on – without time to digest their news or deal with the high emotion and distress.

What happened as a result? Short films of patients' stories were created and watched together by clinical staff and patients. These emotive films prompted deeper understanding of patients' care experiences and willingness to engage. Staff and patients then set about co-designing service change, finding new, innovative solutions to best meet patients' needs; e.g. rescheduling appointments to give patients more time, improving post-surgical training to be more responsive and producing a tracheostomy learning pack. L&D CEO Stephen Ramsden points to more than 40 real service improvements directly from this work. Ward consultant, John Pickles, distinguishes the emotional insights from EBD as particularly important: 'understanding how patients feel at certain points of their care leads us to the hard improvements, many of which we can do quickly and at little or no cost'. EBD is now used extensively in the NHS and beyond.

D. End-of-Life Care: SEQOL Swindon

What was the complaint about? The daughter of a woman who had died complained about lack of communication with her and her family about her mother's end-of-life care. This resulted in their wishes not being taken into account.

What happened as a result? A long face-to-face meeting between the healthcare professionals and the family opened the provider's eyes to the insensitivity and inadequacy of the service system. Care plans were insufficiently robust; forms were jargon-filled and unfit for purpose, and there was poor coordination between primary and secondary care. A multi-agency end-of-life steering group was set up to look at the issues. This resulted in a new 'virtual ward' for end-of-life care, with a ward 'matron' to co-ordinate care plans, hospital admissions, outpatient appointments, and so on. However, when this solution was presented to the family, they were unhappy about not being able themselves to log their location, visiting times and so on. While giving families access to the NHS system proved 'challenging', all parties regathered their efforts to achieve what was agreed to be a vital extension to this innovation. According to the manager responsible, each meeting with the family was 'really important in sparking people's ideas and turning our perspective around'.

E. Addiction Services: Patient Opinion (PO)

What was the complaint about? An addict contacted PO about problems he experienced due to his Addictions Clinic being held on a Friday. Given his chaotic lifestyle, this meant that a missed clinic would leave him unable to access his medication before a 'mop-up' clinic on Monday. This had caused considerable personal distress and challenges.

What happened as a result? The need for change was rejected initially, on the grounds of patients' personal responsibility to attend at the allotted time. However, the intervention of PO led gradually to a deeper engagement with the reality of these patients' lives. For Paul Hodgkin, Chair of PO, 'the transparency of the web got people to act, rather than black-box the problem'. It was suggested the clinic be moved to a Thursday, giving patients more time to access medication before the weekend. This saw drastic reductions in numbers at the 'mop up' clinic – previously stretched to capacity – thereby also saving money. This is an excellent example of 'cultural' innovation and value change.

153

F. Prison Super-complaint: National Consumer Council (NCC) and Prison Reform Trust (PRT)

What was the complaint about? A prisoner complained to the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman that the cost of calls from prison payphones was seven times more than the equivalent cost from a public payphone. This seemed unjustifiable at a time when telecommunications services were generally falling in price. This became an extremely long drawn out issue, which needed to overcome a culture of non-engagement with prisoners.

What happened as a result? The Ombudsman investigated and recommended changes, but the Prison Service rejected these recommendations. PRT and NCC then took on the issue. Eventually, this escalated into a 'super-complaint' to Ofcom (the UK telecommunications regulator). Values needed to shift (in another example of 'cultural innovation'), before service improvements could be achieved for this poorly-represented minority. All UK prison services have since agreed new telecoms contracts in line with market rates. Francesca Cooney from PRT says, 'Prisoners can make more regular and longer calls to families and support systems outside the prison. This makes a huge difference, especially for those with mental health problems and suicidal concerns, providing a safer environment for prisoners. It is also important in reducing re-offending'.

Interpreting change: mapping examples onto the framework

Figure 6 attempts to map each example on to the framework in Figure 4. It also assesses which of the key risks each example had to overcome. This analysis shows that while each example of innovation was achieved in different ways, certain patterns also start to appear.

First, individual (and sometimes local) user knowledge tends to combine with both specialist and strategic professional knowledges to find solutions. Each is an important link in the chain: user knowledges provide the spark for other actors; specialist knowledges help define whether a solution is actually possible or not; strategic knowledges provide the backing and support to see the innovation through. Any weak link in this chain may serve to threaten the innovation, or limit its impact.

Second, an appropriate engagement relationship was eventually found in each example. For 'Tell Us Once', the responsibility for envisaging and developing the back-office fix was necessarily delegated to others. In the 'End-of-Life' example, users negotiated the final solution with providers directly; in the 'Addiction Services' and 'Prison Calls' this negotiation was mediated by a trusted third party (PO and NCC/PRT respectively). Meanwhile, the 'EBD' and 'Flood Group' examples required more 'enhanced co-production' for their innovative outcomes to be achieved.

Third, each example involves a change in values as well as service attributes (such as systems and practices) and consequences for users. In some examples the extent of value change is considerable; indeed, for the 'Addiction Services' and 'Prison Calls' examples, this was the main aspect in which innovation was required. Once this 'cultural innovation' had been achieved, the actual change in service attributes and outcomes was much more straightforward.

Fourth, each of the examples is identified as having a big impact, whether this is for 'the many' or 'the few'. In some examples ('Flood Group', 'EBD', 'Prison Calls'),

Case Studies		Tell Us Once	Community Flood Group	EBD	End of Life Care	Addiction Services	Prison Calls
Knowledges Included	Individual	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Local		x				
	Specialised	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Strategic	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Holistic						
Engagement Relationship	Delegation	x					
	Negotiation				x	x	x
	Co-Production		x	x			
What Changes?	Values	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Attributes	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Consequences	x	x	x	x	x	x
Innovation Outcomes	Many benefit	x	x	x			x
	Few benefit				x	x	
	Big impact	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Small impact						
Value Added	Functional	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Price/Cost	x	x			x	x
	Emotional	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Social	x	x	x	x	x	x
Key Risks to Overcome							
Failure to recognise problem		x	x	x	x	x	x
Legitimacy of user knowledge dismissed						x	x
User(s) not properly listened to		x	x	x	x	x	x
Failure to engage users in solution					x	x	x
Engagement relationship constructed inappropriately						x	x
Failure to engage other legitimate knowledges in solution							x
Failure to link to other prompts							x
Ideas hard to exploit and/or diffuse							
Imperviousness to change		x	x	x	x	x	x
Inability of change to add value							

Figure 6. Matrix of framework components and associated risks by case studies.

impact for many has been achieved following the successful 'diffusion' of an initially more localized innovation.

This impact follows through in significant achievements of value in all examples, across all value categories. This is an important factor in the popularity of each of these innovations. In future, recognizing value in *all* these different ways may help in at least two important respects: *motivating action* (due to seeing the potential benefits of innovation more broadly) and *positively reinforcing innovative behaviours* (due to broader acknowledgement of what has been achieved).

155

In terms of the potential risks, Figure 6 also shows how, in each example, there was a need to overcome at least an initial lack of provider recognition of the problem. This demonstrates the value of user knowledge in identifying issues from a unique perspective. In some examples, however ('Addiction Services', 'Prison Calls'), there continued to be a lack of provider recognition of a problem even when it had been clearly communicated to them by users. In all examples, there is also an identifiable failure to listen appropriately to users, at least initially. This was linked in all examples to PSOs' imperviousness to change. Overcoming this sometimes required the intervention of an enlightened professional or group of professionals ('Tell Us Once', 'EBD', 'End-of-Life'); in other examples the intervention of an enlightened third party ('Addiction Services', 'Prison Calls'); and in one example ('Flood Group'), direct action. However, the effort required in doing so was most obvious in two examples ('Addiction Services', 'Prison Calls'), where Figure 6 shows how many more of the risks to potential CKEI had to be overcome in eventually generating change. Beyond this, it should be noted that the value-addition from extended involvement in Figure 5 was most clearly visible in the 'End-of-Life' example, where the initially-proposed 'virtual ward' solution would have been suboptimal had it been implemented without further engagement with the family.

Finally, the above examples may also be considered in relation to how the boundaries between the three 'systems' in Figure 4 were managed. Once they had opened themselves up to the learning from user voice and the need for change had been accepted, some examples ('Tell Us Once', 'EBD') moved quickly and fluidly between the 'innovation' and 'CKM' systems to generate change (although much more co-productively in the example of EBD). While in the 'End-of-Life' example this progress was complicated by both the need for a multi-agency response crossing organizational boundaries and the need to engage IT knowledge in building the final solution, it is testament to the commitment of the SEQOL team and its partners that this process was seen through successfully. In the 'Flood Group' example, the local council appeared unwilling or unable (or both) to connect its systems with those of the group, until the group's action had become firmly established and the council could see a clearly identifiable 'win'. Even then, its initial engagement was predominantly through the 'service system' in separately supporting the group's activities with its own. Meanwhile, in the 'Addiction Services' and 'Prison Calls' examples, most of the work needed to be done in 'letting input in' (cf. the top half of Figure 4). Once this was accepted, actual service change was a relatively straightforward task.

The limitations of this study must be acknowledged; its findings are derived from a limited, if varied, range of experiences and applications of CKEI. While evaluation of the above examples suggests this paper's analytical framework provides new ways to understand the actions/interactions involved in successful CKEI, this remains to be tested further in future research. In the meantime, this paper suggests that user voice and complaints can act as inputs for innovation by raising awareness, broadening and deepening discussion, and promoting strength in a diversity of ideas. Work is now ongoing to develop the above framework into a simple checklist and/or app to guide the analysis of both formative and summative evaluations of the handling of user voice and complaints in different public service contexts. It is hoped that engagement of this more 'holistic knowledge' with practice will at least get stakeholders to consider different questions, and examine different perspectives, than otherwise might be the case.

Conclusions

This paper draws together a series of inter-connected themes and evidence with regard to CKEI in public services. In concluding this analysis, three seem worthy of note:

- The role and potential of user knowledge in catalysing change.
- The 'readiness' of PSOs for CKEI and implications of this for 'institutional work'.
- The contribution of these insights to the promotion of a public service-dominant approach.

Role and potential of consumer knowledge

This paper considers the role and potential of user voice in public services. It acknowledges that user voice can emerge from a range of sources, and that a range of mechanisms have emerged for capturing and responding to it (Simmons, Birchall, and Prout 2012). This provides access to what nevertheless often remains an under-utilized source of knowledge. The practical real-world examples presented in the paper demonstrate the value of user knowledge in identifying issues from a unique perspective. The legitimacy of this knowledge, whether expressed individually or collectively, lies both in users' informed evaluation of their own needs and their lived experience of public service use (Barnes 2009; Centre for Public Scrutiny 2011). The examples presented in this paper also show how individual (and sometimes local) user knowledge can combine with both specialist and strategic professional knowledges to find innovative public service solutions. These innovations can have dramatic outcomes and add significant value, and many of them have been successfully 'diffused' to other contexts. However, such outcomes are not guaranteed. User knowledge has to connect with that of other legitimate stakeholders, many of whom hold their own perspectives on the issues at hand. The examples not only show how this sharing of territory provides scope for complementarities and creative solutions, but also how this requires incompatibilities and conflicts of opinion to be successfully overcome (cf. Simmons 2011).

Readiness for CKEI and implications for 'institutional work'

Some incompatibilities and conflicts of opinion result from competition between legitimate knowledges. Where, having fully considered the views of users, this competition results in the emergence of arguments that legitimately 'trump' users' concerns, it may be simply argued that the interests of 'procedural' and/or 'distributive' justice have been served.

However, such conditions are often unfulfilled. The six practical real-world examples show a common lack of provider recognition of the problem and failure to listen appropriately to users, at least initially. This was linked in all examples to an imperviousness to change, although most evidently in two examples ('Prison Calls' and 'Addiction Services'). Indeed, there was active *resistance* in these examples to acknowledging users' concerns, ostensibly based on strongly held

values about the rights and responsibilities of their respective client groups. In this way, the 'readiness' of some PSOs for CKEI appears greater than others in terms of their 'culture', 'competence' and 'commitment'. Taking these criteria in turn, first it would appear that in the most resistant examples, 'cultural innovation' and value change was required before further progress could be made. In other examples, once the initial barriers had been overcome, the cultural conditions were a little more complementary to the accommodation of user perspectives. Second, in at least one example ('Flood Group'), it would appear that the PSO also lacked the *competence* to respond to users' input with an effective innovation. This competence was gathered by users themselves in conjunction with a third party, before the innovation could be 'plugged back' into the overall service system for flood management. Finally, the *commitment* shown to pursue and maximize the potential of service innovation was exemplary in all examples: in terms of third parties in the 'Prison Calls' and 'Addiction Services' examples; service providers in the 'Tell Us Once' and 'End-of-Life' examples; service users in the 'Flood Group' example; and both providers and users in the 'EBD' example.

Moreover, in all practical real-world examples there was a need for the kind of 'institutional work' identified by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006, 215). Cloutier et al. (2015) identification here of *relational work* as particularly important supports Hartley's (2005, 27) assertion that innovation in public services 'is usually not a physical artefact at all, but a change in the relationships between service providers and their users'.

New perspectives on a public service-dominant approach

In acknowledging such relational as well as technical concerns, the arguments and analysis in this paper help to elaborate new perspectives on the development of a public service-dominant approach. Given this approach's focus on the centrality of the service user to the performance of public services as 'services', and on incorporating citizen engagement and user involvement at all phases of a (public) service lifecycle (cf. Osborne, Radnor, and Nasi 2013), this paper addresses the capacity of PSOs to understand the needs and expectations of citizens and service users in ways that add value. Moreover, in helping to specify the need for a service culture and user-focused mindset, and to know users' expectations, requirements and value expectations, the paper suggests a series of criteria that might be taken into consideration in (i) designing both the service and the experience of it (cf. Osborne, Radnor, and Nasi 2013), and (ii) measuring and assessing the service from the point of view of the user (cf. Osborne and Strokosch 2013). Moreover, this paper indicates a particular contribution from a broader understanding of 'value addition', using functional, financial, social and emotional criteria. Seeing the potential benefits of innovation in these various ways is more appropriate to the user experience, and advantageous in motivating and reinforcing positive, innovative behaviours. Finally, the paper responds directly to Osborne, Radnor, and Nasi's (2013, 140) exhortations of 'training and motivating the service delivery workforce to interact positively with these users'. As stated above, the authors' engagement with stakeholders in developing tools such as checklists and apps is hoped to at least get them to consider different questions and examine different perspectives than otherwise might be the case. If so,

it is hoped that more future CKEIs, such as those reported in this paper, might be expected in PSOs.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Funding

Notes on contributors

Richard Simmons is a senior lecturer in public and social policy at the University of Stirling. Over the past decade, he has led an extensive programme of research on the use of voice in the governance and delivery of public services. He also writes widely on these issues for academic, policy and practitioner audiences.

Carol Brennan is a reader in consumer policy at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Her research interests are particularly in the fields of consumer empowerment, complaint handling and dispute resolution and customer experience.

References

Albury, D. 2005. "Fostering Innovation in Public Services." *Public Money and Management* 25 (1): 51–56.

Altschuler, A., and M. Zegans. 1997. "Innovation and Public Management." In *Innovation in American Government*, edited by A. Altschuler and R. Behn. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

Arnstein, S. 1968. "A Ladder of Citizen Participation." *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 35: 216–244. doi:10.1080/01944366908977225.

Barlow, J., and C. Møller. 1996. *A Complaint Is a Gift: Using Customer Feedback as a Strategic Tool.* San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Barnes, M. 2009. "Authoritative Consumers or Experts by Experience?" In *The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services*, edited by R. Simmons, M. Powell, and I. Greener. Bristol: Policy Press.

Bason, C. 2010. *Leading Public Sector Innovation.* Bristol: Policy Press.

Bate, P., and G. Robert. 2007. *Bringing User Experience to Healthcare Improvement: Experience-Based Design.* Oxford: Radcliffe.

Belkahla, W., and A. Triki. 2011. "Customer Knowledge Enabled Innovation Capability: Proposing a Measurement Scale." *Journal of Knowledge Management* 15 (4): 648–674. doi:10.1108/13673271111152009.

Bessant, J., and L. Maher. 2009. "Developing Radical Service Innovations in Healthcare – the Role of Design Methods." *International Journal of Innovation Management* 13 (4): 555–568. doi:10.1142/S1363919609002418.

Bhalla, G. 2011. *Collaboration and Co-Creation: New Platforms for Marketing and Innovation.* New York: Springer.

Bichard, M. 2000. "The Modernization and Improvement of Government and Public Services: Creativity, Leadership and Change." *Public Money & Management* 20 (2): 41–46. doi:10.1111/1467-9302.00210.

Boswell, J., C. Settle, and A. Dugdale. 2015. "Who Speaks, and in What Voice? The Challenge of Engaging 'The Public' in Health Policy Decision-Making." *Public Management Review* 17 (9): 1358–1374. doi:10.1080/14719037.2014.943269.

Cameron, K., and S. Freeman. 1991. "Cultural Congruence, Strength and Type." *Organizational Change and Development* 5: 23–58.

Centre for Public Scrutiny. 2011. *Aiming for the Best, Using Lessons from Complaints to Improve Public Services*. London: LGO.

Cloutier, C., J.-L. Denis, A. Langley, and L. Lamothe. 2015. "Agency at the Managerial Interface: Public Sector Reform as Institutional Work." *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*. 10.1093/jopart/muv009. June 1.

Dowding, K., and P. John. 2012. *Exits, Voices and Social Investment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Foss, N., T. Pedersen, J. Pyndt, and M. Schultz. 2012. *Innovating Organization and Management: New Sources of Competitive Advantage*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gibbert, M., M. Leibold, and G. Probst. 2002. "Five Styles of Customer Knowledge Management, and How Smart Companies Use Them to Create Value." *European Management Journal* 20: 459–469. doi:10.1016/S0263-2373(02)00101-9.

Goffman, E. 1952. "On Cooling the Mark Out: Some Aspects of Adaptation to Failure." *Psychiatry: Journal of Interpersonal Relations* 15 (4): 451–463.

Harris, L., and E. Ogbonna. 2002. "The Unintended Consequences of Culture Interventions: A Study of Unexpected Outcomes." *British Journal of Management* 13: 31–49. doi:10.1111/bjom.2002.13. issue-1.

Hartley, J. 2005. "Innovation in Governance and Public Services: Past and Present." *Public Money and Management* 25 (January): 27–34.

Hirschman, A. 1970. *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hirschman, A. 1986. "Exit and Voice. An Expanding Sphere of Influence." In *Rival Views of Market Society*, edited by A. Hirschman. New York: Viking.

Hobbs, G. 2014 "Delivering Continuous Improvement in Government." Paper to Open Forum Workshop: Continuous Improvement: Inspiring Better Public Services, Manchester, May 28.

Hodges, C. 2014. "Consumer Ombudsmen: Better Regulation and Dispute Resolution." *ERA Forum: Journal of the Academy of European Law* 15 (4): 593–608. doi:10.1007/s12027-014-0366-8.

Hoggett, P. 2003. "Why Public Is Not the Same as Private." Paper to The International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations Symposium, Power and Politics, Boston, June 19–21.

Hood, C., and G. Peters. 2004. "The Middle Aging of New Public Management: Into the Age of Paradox?" *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 14 (3): 267–282. doi:10.1093/jopart/muh019.

Kelly, G., G. Mulgan, and S. Muers. 2002. *Creating Public Value: An Analytical Framework for Public Service Reform*. London: Strategy Unit.

Lawrence, T., and R. Suddaby. 2006. "Institutions and Institutional Work." In *Handbook of Organizational Studies*, edited by S. Clegg, E. Ibarra, and L. Bueno. London: Sage.

Leadbeater, C. 2011. "The Challenges of Innovation." http://www.slideshare.net/ibbt/charles-leadbeater-the-challenges-of-innovation

Liao, J., J. Kickul, and H. Ma. 2009. "Organizational Dynamic Capability and Innovation: An Empirical Examination of Internet Firms." *Journal of Small Business Management* 47 (3): 263–286. doi:10.1111/jsbm.2009.47.issue-3.

Lukes, S. 1974. *Power: A Radical View*. London: Macmillan.

Mulgan, G. 2007. *Ready or Not? Taking Innovation in the Public Sector Seriously*. London: NESTA.

Mulgan, G., and D. Albury. 2003. *Innovation in the Public Sector*. London: Cabinet Office.

Osborne, S., Z. Radnor, and G. Nasi. 2013. "A New Theory for Public Service Management? Toward a (Public) Service-Dominant Approach." *The American Review of Public Administration* 43: 135–158. doi:10.1177/0275074012466935.

Osborne, S., and K. Strokosch. 2013. "It Takes Two to Tango? Understanding the Co-Production of Public Services by Integrating the Services Management and Public Administration Perspectives." *British Journal of Management* 24: S31–S47. doi:10.1111/bjom.2013.24.issue-s1.

Radnor, Z., S. Osborne, T. Kinder, and J. Mutton. 2014. "Operationalizing Co-Production in Public Services Delivery: The Contribution of Service Blueprinting." *Public Management Review* 16 (3): 402–423. doi:10.1080/14719037.2013.848923.

Rogers, E. M. 2003. *Diffusion of Innovations*. 5th ed. New York: Free Press.

160

Schibrowsky, J., and R. Lapidus. 1994. "Gaining a Competitive Advantage by Analyzing Aggregate Complaints." *Journal of Consumer Marketing* 11 (1): 15–26. doi:10.1108/07363769410053664.

Simmons, R. 2009. "The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services." In *The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services*, edited by R. Simmons, M. Powell, and I. Greener. Bristol: Policy Press.

Simmons, R. 2011. "Leadership and Listening in Public Services." *Social Policy and Administration* 45 (5): 539–568.

Simmons, R., J. Birchall, and A. Prout. 2012. "'User Involvement in Public Services: 'Choice about Voice'." *Public Policy and Administration* 27 (1): 3–29. doi:10.1177/0952076710384903.

Simmons, R., and C. Brennan. 2013. *Grumbles, Gripes and Grievances: The Role of Complaints in Transforming Public Services*. London: NESTA.

Simmons, R., C. Brennan, C. Gill, and C. Hirst. 2013. *Outcomes of Complaints*. Perth: Care Inspectorate.

Smith, D. 2010. *Exploring Innovation*. 2nd ed. Maidenhead: McGraw-Hill Education.

Soss, J., R. Fording, and S. Schram. 2011. *Disciplining the Poor*. Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press.

Van Ess Coeling, H., and L. Simms. 1993. "Facilitating Innovation through Cultural Assessment." *Journal of Nursing Administration* 23 (4): 46–53. doi:10.1097/00005110-199304000-00013.

Von Hippel, E. 1994. "Sticky Information and the Locus of Problem Solving: Implications for Innovation." *Management Science* 40: 429–439. doi:10.1287/mnsc.40.4.429.

Von Hippel, E. 2005. *Democratizing Innovation*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Wood, C., and D. Leighton. 2010. *Measuring Social Value: The Gap between Policy and Practice*. London: DEMOS.

Wood, D. 1996. "Acting on Complaints about Mental Health Services: Implications of Power Imbalances." *Journal of Management in Medicine* 10 (3): 31–38. doi:10.1108/02689239610122298.

Yin, R. 2013. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. 5th ed. London: Sage.

161

Linking Narrative

2.0 Overview

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Overall Aim

The overall aim of this work is to critically investigate service user involvement and participation and the incorporation of user knowledge in the governance and delivery of UK public services.

2.1.2 Objectives of the Thesis

This thesis assembles a body of six published papers by Simmons on user involvement and participation in public services. It examines factors that continue to be problematic for user involvement and participation, and why in 2017, after more than forty years of research, these issues continue to be controversial. The selected papers are contextualised in a linking narrative that summarises some of the wider issues.

The six published papers consider various aspects of these issues, providing a cumulative contribution to understandings of user involvement and the fields of relationships within which it takes place. Collectively, the papers examine how public service users interact with public services in order to maintain or improve them. Cumulatively, the published papers contribute to a more detailed and nuanced understanding of user involvement and participation, enabling deeper understanding of consumers' motivations and experiences, the choices available to them and how these are constrained. The thesis contributes particularly to the fields of governance, public administration and social policy.

2.1.3 Objectives of the Linking Narrative

- To provide an overview of user involvement and participation in the UK, in particular with regard to user perspectives on their place and role in this.

- To provide an overview of a range of existing literatures, selected to capture key elements of the conceptual and theoretical questions to which the papers are addressed; in particular 'behavioural', 'resource-based', 'identity-based', 'motivational', 'activational', 'relational', and 'cultural-institutional' factors.

- To introduce the broad range of work by Simmons on the above issues, enabling the six included publications to be contextualised effectively.

- To identify the contribution made to the subject area by this body of work.

2.2 The Published Work

PUBLICATION 1	Simmons, R. & Birchall, J. (2005) 'A Joined-Up Approach to User Participation in Public Services: Strengthening the Participation Chain', *Social Policy and Administration,* 39 (3): 260-283
PUBLICATION 2	Simmons, R., Powell, M., Birchall, J. & Doheny, S. (2007) 'Citizen Governance': Opportunities for Inclusivity in Policy and Policy-Making?' *Policy and Politics*, 35 (3): 455-475
PUBLICATION 3	Simmons, R. (2009) 'Understanding the Differentiated Consumer in Public Services', in Simmons, R., Powell, M. & Greener, I. (eds.) *The Consumer in Public Services: Choice, Values and Difference*, Bristol: Policy Press
PUBLICATION 4	Simmons, R. (2011) 'Leadership and Listening in Public Services'*, Social Policy and Administration,* 45 (5): 539–568
PUBLICATION 5	Simmons, R., Birchall, J. & Prout, A. (2012) 'User Involvement in Public Services: Choice About Voice'*, Public Policy and Administration,* 27 (1): 3-30
PUBLICATION 6	Simmons, R. & Brennan, C. (2016) 'User Voice and Complaints as Drivers of Innovation in Public Services', *Public Management Review,* Published online: 21 Nov 2016: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2016.1257061

2.3 Authorship and Standing of the Publications

2.3.1 Authorship

In all of the above publications I was the lead and corresponding author. In PUBLICATION 1, notions of 'mutual incentives theory' were developed as a revision and extension of previous work by my co-author. The notion of the 'participation chain' was originally developed by me. I led the writing effort for this publication, based on the extensive literature review and data analysis I conducted and wrote up for a large ESRC-funded project entitled *'A Theoretical Model of What Motivates Public Service Users to Participate'* (see Figure 1 below). In PUBLICATION 2, I helped develop the central typology with my co-authors for the National Consumer Council-funded *'Citizen Governance'* project (see Figure 1). I developed and wrote the first section of the paper, including the model of intersecting spheres of participation, governance and management, contributed the case study on 'new leisure trusts' (cf. Simmons, 2003; 2004; 2008), edited the

other five cases, and developed much of the argument presented in the second half of the paper. Publications 3, 4 and 5 emerged from the large ESRC-funded project entitled *'Cultures of Consumption and Consumer Involvement in Public Services'* (see Figure 1). PUBLICATION 3 is a sole-authored book chapter, contained within an edited collection for which I was lead editor. I dealt with and pulled together all the contributions for this book (including lead-writing two further chapters), and was corresponding editor for all matters with the publisher. The book was anonymously peer-reviewed. PUBLICATION 4 is sole-authored. In PUBLICATION 5, I developed and wrote up all of the main conceptual ideas and arguments for the paper based on the extensive literature review and data analysis I conducted and wrote up for the ESRC project *'Cultures of Consumption and Consumer Involvement in Public Services'*. My co-authors commented on drafts. I also wrote PUBLICATION 6 myself. I invited my co-author to be included at the submission stage of the final revision of this publication. She was co-investigator on the NESTA-funded project entitled *'Complaints and Innovation in Public Services'* (see Figure 1), and had previously helped assemble four of the practical examples used in the article.

2.3.2 Standing of Publications

The publications included in this thesis are all published in reputable journals. Available impact factors are 1.069 (*Social Policy and Administration*), 1.200 (*Policy and Politics*) and 1.872 (*Public Management Review*). *Public Policy and Administration* will be included in the 2016 ISI citation reports (due 2017). The book is also published with a highly-reputable publisher, *Policy Press*.

The publications also appear to have been well received. A scan of *Google Scholar* and *ResearchGate* citations shows these publications have together been cited more than 200 times. Related publications (Simmons, 2001; 2003; 2004; 2008, 2016; Birchall & Simmons, 2004; Simmons & Birchall, 2007; 2009; Simmons et al, 2007a; b; Simmons & Powell, 2009; Simmons & Brennan, 2013; Prout et al, 2006) have been cited a further 250 times.

Participation has become a commonplace phenomenon and 'internationally-accepted desideratum' across the world (Steifel & Wolfe, 1994: 4). Accordingly, the reach of the six publications has been extensive, including citations from Europe (*UK; France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Netherlands, Belgium, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland, Hungary, Lithuania, Bosnia, Israel*); North America (*USA, Canada*); Central and South America (*Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Colombia*); Africa (*Ghana, Uganda*); Asia (*China, Hong Kong, South Korea, Nepal, Bangladesh, Malaysia*); and Australasia (*Australia, New Zealand*). While the research reported in this thesis was conducted within the UK, the above citations suggest its broader resonance.

2.4 Author's Journey through the Work

Burke (2010: 86) suggests that 'research rarely exists in a vacuum, and it is possible to see threads over time in most researchers' interests'. The research carried out by the author in the last fifteen years followed ten years personal experience of working as a public service manager during the late 1980s and 1990s. Increasingly in these roles, it became necessary to work across the boundaries of different service sectors and seek to involve users and citizens more effectively. The choice to engage in research examining user involvement and participation in public services therefore felt logical and appropriate.

Figure 1 provides an overview of the £500k+ of research connected with user and citizen involvement undertaken since then. Different research projects have opened up questions that have been or are being followed up in subsequent research. For example, the initial large-scale project looking at service users' motivations to participate, in which questions arose about the differences between participation in user-led forums and those where other stakeholders were involved (Project 1), was followed by smaller projects looking at 'citizen governance' (Project 6) and 'new leisure trusts' (unfunded; not shown), in which the emerging context for citizen and user participation in the specific setting of the governing bodies of public service organizations was examined in greater detail. A second large-scale project then built further on the first study, examining other forms of user 'voice' in addition to collective user participation (Project 5).

Subsequent research followed up on emerging questions about the impact of citizen and user involvement in three further projects looking at voice as an expression of dissatisfaction (Projects 7, 8, 10). The first modelled this in relation to innovation in public services (nb. the project report was distributed as evidence to the UK Parliament's Public Administration Select Committee, for an enquiry to which the author also gave oral evidence at the inaugural session). The second examined the impact of dissatisfaction on care services and the work of the Care Inspectorate - the national care regulator in Scotland (nb. the project report was presented to the Executive Team and Board of the Care Inspectorate, who are committed to implementing most of its recommendations). The third has recently examined its impact on prison healthcare services in Scotland for Healthcare Improvement Scotland/Scottish Health Council. The report will be published in early 2017. ESRC funding for a collaborative studentship to study the impact of involvement and participation on local public service outcomes has also been obtained (Project 9).

This research agenda remains very active. Further possibilities for pursuing other projects within this field have emerged, including from the process of writing this linking narrative. These are presented in Section 6.3 and are currently the subject of further funding proposals.

Large-scale, theoretical	Small-scale, thematic	Small-scale, applied
5. £145 063 '*Cultures of Consumption and Consumer Involvement in Public Services*', ESRC/AHRC 'Cultures of Consumption' Programme, July 2003 - November 2005 (with J.Birchall, A.Prout) (ESRC grade: 'good')	**9. c. £50 000** ESRC +3 Collaborative studentship (awarded to Max French): '*Understanding the Impact of User and Community Involvement on Local Service Outcomes in Scotland*' (November 2013- November 2016)	**10. £6 000** '*Listening and Learning: Health Complaints in Prisons*', Healthcare Improvement Scotland/Scottish Health Council (November 2015- March 2016) **8. £40 000** '*Outcomes of Complaints and Investigations*', Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Care Inspectorate) (December 2012- May 2013)
1. £124 871 '*A Theoretical Model of What Motivates Public Service Users to Participate*', ESRC 'Democracy and Participation' Programme, March 2000-March 2002 (with J.Birchall) (ESRC grade: 'outstanding') **2. £5 860** '*Extension of Participation Project to South Lewisham*', LB Lewisham, April 2002 (with J.Birchall)	**7. £30 000** '*Complaints and Innovation in Public Services*', National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) (June 2012- October 2012) (with C.Brennan) **6. £10 000** '*Citizen Governance Project*', National Consumer Council, January-March 2006 (with J.Birchall, M.Powell)	**4. £37 573** '*The Role of Mediation in Tackling Neighbour Disputes and Anti-Social Behaviour*', Scottish Executive, August 2002 – February 2003 (with A.Brown, A.Barclay, S.Eley, R.Sidaway) **3. £59 955** '*Eliciting Service Users' Views in Health Service Research*', NHS Service Delivery Organisation, April 2002-January 2003 (with C.Archibald, J.Brownlie, I.Ferguson, G.Hubbard, A.Innes, K.Stalker)

Figure 1: *Journey Taken through the Work*

The above research has developed in its focus, application and thinking over time. Yet, as summarised in Figure 1, these developments have a logical connection and interrelation, which has enabled the research to move in different directions. This thesis seeks to consolidate this work.

2.5 Structure of the Linking Narrative

The linking narrative for this thesis proceeds as follows. Sections 3 and 4 seek to provide a contextualisation for the six published papers. *Section 3* provides more specific background information. This includes a brief methodological overview of the above papers and a section

defining the boundaries for the research. These are followed by consideration of both the empirical context for involvement and participation in the public services (and how this has developed over time), and the conceptual context (asking 'why participation and involvement'?). *Section 4* provides a wider context of existing theory and research connected with this field of study that relates to the published papers (cf. Figure 13; page 229). It employs a range of broader literatures, selected to capture key elements of the conceptual and theoretical questions to which the papers are addressed. In particular, this section critically appraises the relevant literature with regard to 'behavioural', 'resource-based', 'identity-based', 'motivational', 'activational', 'subject-object relational', 'subject-other relational', and 'cultural-institutional' factors. Various overarching, 'high-level' questions for this field of research and for the work in this thesis are identified.

Sections 5 and 6 seek to capture the cumulative contribution of the six published papers to understandings of user involvement and the field of relations in which it takes place. First, the narrative provides a summary of each publication, detailing its individual contribution to the participation literature (Section 5). Second, it identifies the key theoretical contributions located in the six papers and challenges to existing knowledge arising from these works (Section 6.1). Third, it discusses the cumulative contribution of the six papers to addressing the overarching conceptual and theoretical questions identified in the contextualisation (Section 6.2). Finally, Section 6.3 presents a tentative heuristic framework that attempts to both identify and bring together the inter-relationships between these different elements and highlight future opportunities for research.

3.0 Background Information

3.1 Methodological Overview

The papers presented in this thesis contain their own detailed methodological descriptions where appropriate. Therefore the focus of this section is different, providing an overview of the methodological issues that apply across and between these papers rather than those identified in individual papers.

3.1.1 Research Perspective and Research Design

Two papers (PUBLICATIONS 2; 6) were based on case studies drawn predominantly from desk research of secondary sources (although PUBLICATION 2 drew on previous primary research (e.g. Simmons, 2003; 2008; Birchall, 2002), and there was some limited primary data collection for

PUBLICATION 6 to supplement these secondary sources). Cases were utilised to illuminate the typologies and conceptual frameworks at the heart of these papers.

However, most of the projects and publications documented in this thesis are based on primary research. Different research paradigms point researchers in different directions in the process of sense-making (Bryman, 2015). For example, positivist approaches that embark from the delineation of clearly-defined, 'realist' categories and make use of quantitative methods contrast with constructivist approaches that search for patterns of meaning in social phenomena through the use of qualitative methods (Gray, 2009; Blaikie, 2010). Some have argued for a more nuanced and pragmatic approach, whereby agreement may be possible on a prior 'shared reality'; it is just that 'positivists have a greater interest in uncovering specific functional relationships between operationalized variables…[while] constructivists will be more interested in describing the coherent structure of a multi-layered phenomenon in strengthening the fabric of understanding' (Cupchik, 2001: 5).

The author's research on participation and involvement in public services has pursued a similarly nuanced and pragmatic path. Much of the work sits within a constructivist and interpretivist tradition, utilising qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews, documentary analysis and observations. This is the case for all of the small-scale applied studies in Figure 1, and is also a key aspect of the research effort in both large-scale studies. This approach is considered to be particularly appropriate where the focus of research is on deep understandings of users' beliefs, attitudes and experiences (Mason, 2002), as is the case in the above research, which considers such issues as activation, motivations, behavioural choices and identities. An important aspect of the author's work has therefore been to ask people directly about their perspectives, expectations and experiences, and listen carefully to what they have to say. Criticisms of qualitative research as lacking reliability, rigour and generalisability have been widely rehearsed in the literature (Maxwell & Delaney, 2004; Bryman, 2015). However, there are counter-understandings of what constitutes such 'rigour'. These include Charmaz's (2005) criteria of 'credibility', 'originality', 'resonance' and 'usefulness' in qualitative research; Lincoln and Guba's (1985) notions of its 'trustworthiness' (credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability); and Mason's (2002) notions of 'theoretical' (rather than 'empirical') generalisability, in which the wider resonance of qualitative research results is established through, for example, cross-contextual generalities. Strategies employed to counter potential criticisms have therefore not only included intensive reading/immersion in the data and respondent validation (Gibbs, 2007; Barbour, 2001), but strategic comparisons of similar phenomena in different contexts in order to test out and develop theoretical and explanatory propositions (Charmaz, 2000). In sum, in each project there

has been careful analysis of qualitative data, as detailed in the relevant individual papers (see e.g. PUBLICATIONS 1 and 5), in order to capture as much as possible of the range (if not the distribution) of users' responses.

However, in the larger projects it has been possible to attempt to also establish something of these distributions. For example, in *'A Theoretical Model of What Motivates Public Service Users to Participate'*, sample surveys were undertaken following the analysis of semi-structured interview data as a form of inter-group comparison, and as a way of testing the distributions of certain characteristics within more broadly defined populations. This work fed the development of tools such as the scale of collectivistic incentives in PUBLICATION 1. Meanwhile, in *'Cultures of Consumption and Consumer Involvement in Public Services'*, again following the analysis of semi-structured interview data, surveys were used to investigate the differences within and between specific public services in different locations (see PUBLICATION 5). This included the development of an innovative tool to operationalise grid-group cultural theory, recently published as a methodological contribution in the leading journal, *Public Administration* (Impact Factor 1.922) (Simmons, 2016; *not included in this thesis*). In the search for deeper understanding participation and involvement in public services, data has therefore been collected from different sources with the aim of 'corroborating evidence and illuminating a particular theme or theory' (Rudestam and Newton, 2007: 86).

The larger projects are examples of what Creswell (2009) describes as 'sequential studies'; in both cases, the findings from an initial qualitative phase were elaborated/expanded upon with those of another quantitative phase. Following Creswell (2009), these sequential studies may also be termed 'equivalent status designs', given that more or less equal emphasis was given to quantitative and qualitative techniques in order to generate understanding. For Creswell and Plano Clark (2007: 5), 'the central premise is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approaches in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone'. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) assert that such mixed-method approaches are well-suited to applied research, providing more sophisticated explanations than traditional qualitative and quantitative approaches on their own. Such 'methodological pluralism' may therefore facilitate access to different aspects of similar social phenomena (Olsen, 2004). However, again, all research methods have their strengths and limitations, and Mason (2006) warns that there is no point in mixing methods opportunistically without a robust underpinning logic. In the larger projects represented here, there was therefore an attempt at what Mason (2006: 12) calls a 'multi-dimensional logic'; this involves 'recognising that the social world and the issues and problems we seek to research are multidimensional, and that different dimensions

might exist in an uneasy or messy tension, rather than neatly integrated within one plane or dimension'. The analysis of data in these large-scale projects was therefore iterative, moving backwards and forwards between the different stages and datasets (cf. Simmons, 2016). Such analysis may also be described as triangulated and complementary (Mason, 2006), in that the different approaches to the research could be used to provide an overall understanding of people's decisions to participate and the choices they make about expressing their views.

3.1.2 Research Ethics

All projects in Figure 1 were conducted according to rigorous ethical criteria. All primary research was overt, and based on established principles of legitimate access, informed consent, confidentiality/anonymity, prevention of harm (physical, psychological, reputational) and appropriate data storage. Ethical approval and oversight was sought and provided in each case by the Ethics Committee in the Department/School/Faculty of (Applied) Social Sciences at the University of Stirling.

3.2 Boundaries for the Research

3.2.1 Who?

The label 'public participation' can obscure various and sometimes conflicting notions of who is involved. Dietz and Stern, 2008 (cf. US EPA/SAB, 2001; Owen, 2012) offer four categories:

- *General public*: all individuals who are not directly affected by the issue, although they may be part of public opinion on it;
- *Observing public*: which includes the media, cultural elites and opinion leaders who may comment on the issue;
- *Directly affected public*: including individuals and unorganized groups that experience direct, positive or negative, effects from decisions about a particular public service;
- *Stakeholders*: the organized groups which are or will be affected by or that have a strong interest in the outcome of a decision.

While each group is represented to some extent in this thesis, there is a particular focus on *the directly affected*. Affected parties are generally thought to be the best judge of their own interests (e.g. Fiorino, 1990). Participation and involvement is hoped to provide useful intelligence about their needs in order to promote fairer, more just decisions and enable solutions that are better adapted to local conditions (e.g. Laird, 1993). There are important considerations here about the nature of the relationships between service users and those with responsibility for the provision of public services, and the extent to which users feel that they are listened to.

3.2.2 What?

The empirical boundaries for research in this thesis were set around service contexts in which user involvement and participation is both more *intensive* and *extensive*. Whilst arguments for involvement and participation can be made in many public service settings, voice in certain public services (e.g. refuse collection) is generally less intensive and extensive. This thesis therefore focuses on complex/human public service settings, where there is a relatively high level of human interaction between users and providers (such as housing, social care and leisure services), in order to more closely observe how a range of valuable user inputs – such as knowledges, ideas and individual/collective sentiment – might be incorporated effectively into public service governance and delivery mechanisms.

3.2.3 Where?

The research reported in this thesis was conducted within the UK (England and Scotland). It is largely based on geographical units no larger than a single local authority. This recognises that scale can define the boundaries of collective interests and identities; and that within these boundaries issues such as the jointness of supply of goods, group homogeneity and positive interdependence all impact on the possibilities of collective action (e.g. Gavious & Mizrahi, 1999; Marwell & Oliver, 1993).

3.3 The Empirical Context

3.3.1 Understanding 'Context'

Empirical research shows that the 'context' for participation and involvement in the public services requires careful interpretation. First, there is a danger of treating context as something residual, too big to be modelled, and taken as a given (Proeller, 2013: 223). In this sense, the context is seen as a backdrop to 'the action', rather than as part of the action itself (Pollitt, 2013). In response, Clarke (2013: 24) helpfully suggests a plurality of contexts (e.g. spatial, political, governmental, cultural, economic, organisational). He argues that it is only when these contexts are combined, through a lens of 'inter-contextuality', that we begin to see the particular forms of agent and types of agency that are created, which in turn create the possibility of 'imagining problems in particular ways, developing languages for naming the problem, and framing the sorts of remedial action or solution that are reasonable to pursue'. In short, this combination of contexts may be seen to constitute the 'conditions of possibility' that make certain things thinkable, possible, relevant, desirable, necessary - or vice versa – and animate particular actions as solutions to a set of perceived problems (Clarke, 2013: 25).

The above arguments show how contextual factors help to condition the place, role and contribution of participation and involvement. They provide useful ways to conceptualise the particular forms of agent and types of agency that are created through participation and involvement in different 'functional contexts' (e.g. health, education, housing); different 'spatial contexts' (e.g. national, local) at the same time; and the same spatial contexts at different times. A comprehensive analysis of such inter-contextuality lies beyond the scope of this thesis. Yet it is important to acknowledge that 'there is always a broader context' (Rugge, 2013: 44). In a further attempt to situate the papers presented in this thesis, this section provides a brief historical contextualisation in order to briefly examine such matters as: (i) how participation and involvement has become positioned in the 'architecture' of the service system, and (ii) how its role in the governance and delivery of public services has evolved over time.

3.3.2 A Brief Historical Contextualisation

While this section is necessarily selective and abstracted, it nevertheless seeks to elucidate some of the 'multiple and heterogenous movements and tendencies in play' (Clarke et al, 2007: 152) in the UK context. Hence, in each of three selected time periods it seeks to distinguish not only the *dominant tendencies*, but also some of the *residual factors* that are resistant to transformation, as well as *emergent* movements, forces and ways of thinking (Clarke et al, 2007). The analysis also shares with Clarke and Newman (1997: xiv) a distaste for linear, 'from-to' dualisms, such as 'from hierarchies to markets to networks'. Continuities and discontinuities, tensions and ambiguities are evident in such accounts of change. New opportunities have sometimes been grasped; likewise, old patterns of behaviour have often been defended (Pollitt et al, 1998). Hence, in the face of this complexity and non-linearity, boundaries between the three selected time periods (1970s and 1980s; 1990s and 2000s; 2010 onwards) are often ambiguous.

Involvement and Participation in 1970s and 1980s

For Stoker (1997: 157), participation came to prominence in the UK in the late-1960s as an expanded state created 'a wider context for a range of citizen demands and protests', and increasing material standards prompted 'a new political activism based on post-materialist values'. While survey evidence did not yet suggest deep public interest in participation (Royal Commisssion, 1969), official interest came to the fore in the Skeffington Report (1969) on the planning system, and the Community Development Projects (CDPs) established in 1969 (Hill, 2000). The latter emphasised participative social action in 12 deprived communities. Based on assumptions that these communities were 'beset by social pathologies of their own making' (Robinson & Hudson, 2013: 193), the CDPs intended 'to create more responsive local services and

encourage self-help' (Loney 1983: 3). However, on discovering that the main issues for these communities actually lay beyond their own control (e.g. declining heavy industry, high unemployment, poor housing; Loney, 1983), the CDPs were abandoned, and finally wound up in 1976.

Nevertheless, criticisms of 'big government' (e.g. Rose, 1981) and 'bureaucratic paternalism' (e.g. Hambleton, 1988) remained, and participation and involvement continued to be considered as a counter-balance (e.g. Fudge, 1984). Yet despite an increase in bottom-up mobilisation, particularly by community groups, movement was generally slow. Some sympathetic experts began to identify with communities, helping to establish new service arrangements (such as community housing associations that guaranteed tenants a stake in governance). However, resistance amongst less-enlightened professionals remained quite entrenched. A similar pattern was repeated elsewhere in the public services. For example, most schools encouraged parent governors (90 percent had them by 1979 and they became statutory in 1980), yet Local Education Authorities and head-teachers generally retained control over decisions of any import (Farrell & Jones, 2000; Farrell, 2005; 2009; Connolly et al, 2016; Ranson, 1988; 2011; Ranson et al, 2005). Similarly, in 1974 Community Health Councils were established to enable patient involvement, yet lying outside the NHS, with no powers, their challenge to bureau-professionalism was generally minimal (Klein, 1979; 1990; Moon & Lupton, 1995; Baggott, 2005).

The election in 1979 of Margaret Thatcher's Conservative government saw the further marginalisation of these approaches: 'introducing market forces rather than promoting citizen participation as such' (Stoker, 1997: 158). By the mid-1980s, users were thereby increasingly cast as individualistic 'citizens-as-consumers': rational, utility-maximising individuals, pursuing their private needs and wants (Shackley & Ryan, 1994). In response, voice was increasingly promoted through more individualised forms of involvement such as complaint and redress procedures. Such 'consumerization' of public services was also intended to discipline the public service professions (Deakin & Wright, 1990; Abercrombie et al, 1994), with participatory spaces increasingly imagined as places where professional authority might be challenged, or managers steered in the absence of the market's 'invisible hand'.

As the state's frontiers were 'rolled back,' users were also increasingly invited to help govern the new service agencies that were created. For example, parents began to usurp local councillors in school governance, and tenants became board members in the housing associations created to manage former-council housing stocks. Meanwhile, in social care a more pluralist system saw users often enrolled into 'partnership' with providers, with some beginning to be seen as 'co-

producers'. Participation and involvement therefore developed with different emphases in different spaces (Hood et al, 1996). Yet attempts to both consumerise the public and discipline professionals enjoyed only partial success. Reformers faced both supply-side and demand-side problems with user participation and involvement. Supply-side issues included (i) a lack of opportunities for 'exit' (so that users' voice carried little threat; Hirschman, 1986; LeGrand, 2007), and (ii) information asymmetries between users and providers (leaving users 'vulnerable to exploitation'; Shackley & Ryan, 1994: 524). This made it feasible for managers and officials to manipulate or resist user participation and involvement (cf. Arnstein, 1969).

Meanwhile, on the demand-side, users were not universally in favour of taking up the active utility-maximising, citizen-as-consumer role envisaged for them (Baldock & Ungerson, 1996; Biggs, 2001). In this way, the public often remained loyal and respectful of the public service professionals that served them, requiring a more balanced approach than the Conservatives had perhaps envisaged.

<u>Participation and Involvement in 1990s and 2000s</u>

By the 1990s, interest was reviving in broader approaches to user participation (Stoker, 1997). Some claimed 'new' forms of participation (such as user groups, forums and committees) were necessary to empower users collectively as well as individually (Gyford, 1991), and to avoid 'confusing customer satisfaction with public accountability' (Stewart & Stoker, 1995: 207). Meanings attached by users to concepts such as equity, accountability and the public good were recognised to exceed those found in pure market settings (Jenkins & Gray, 1992). Hence, as the 1990s progressed, the Conservatives' underpinning neo-liberal values were translated and mediated in different ways. The picture was then one of transition, flux and complexity rather than direct, controlled change. This created a patchy and ambiguous situation in 1997 for the incoming New Labour government (Stoker, 2001).

New Labour sought to resolve these issues with a pragmatic philosophy of 'what matters is what works'. The market was no longer seen as the 'ideal' to be pursued, yet neither was it fully rejected. Under conditions of 'local governance' and partnerships, the range and diversity of service providers further expanded and more co-productive ways of working began to be promoted (Barnes, 1999; Lowndes & Wilson, 2001; Stoker, 2000; Taylor, 2007). As Reddel (2002: 50) put it:

> *'In recent times, academic writings and government policy pronouncements have utilised various terms such as 'social capital', 'community engagement', 'community regeneration and renewal', 'community capacity building', 'social partnerships', 'social*

entrepreneurship' and 'place management and planning' to describe a new configuration of state/market/civil society relations. Notwithstanding the lack of clarity and consensus of meaning, these notions reflect a growing re-emergence in discourse of the ideas and values of community, localism and citizen participation'

Hence, while state provision continued to be broken up and decentralised, participation and involvement were placed firmly within the new system architecture and given prominence on the public service agenda. As well as studies confirming the advantages of highly participative organisations such as Tenant Management Organisations (Tunstall, 2001; Cairncross et al, 2002), participation and involvement were also institutionalised within new initiatives such as the *New Deal for Communities*, *SureStart* and *Health Action Zones* (Baggott, 2005; Bochel et al, 2008; Martin, 2003; Gustafsson & Driver, 2005; Newman et al, 2004). However, as public services arguably became more fragmented than they had been for over a century, many commentators suggested that the same could be said of the *public* they were trying to serve (e.g. Corrigan & Joyce, 1997).

In this way, some important considerations were emerging about the nature of different user-provider relationships in the public services. Some service users were participating directly in the governance of public service organisations as 'citizen governors' to ensure effective steering and representation (Langlands, 2005; Simmons et al, 2007). Others participated collectively in structures such as user groups, forums or committees to contribute user knowledge and collective sentiment, and hold providers to account (Beresford & Croft, 1993; Simmons & Birchall, 2005). Still others communicated individually through such systems as 'complaint and redress' with service provider representatives, often loading their communications with 'threats' (e.g. switching provider, contacting public service ombudsmen, or informing regulators; Thomas, 1995; Simmons et al, 2012).

In the midst of this complexity there was considerable debate – although little conjunction of policy thinking - on how choice and voice should be accommodated together in public services (e.g. PASC, 2005). Those favouring choice spoke of how 'competition among providers has the most potential for delivering high-quality, efficient, responsive and equitable services' (Le Grand, 2007b: 165). In this formulation, choice was asserted to 'give power to voice' (Le Grand, 2006). These arguments were influential under late-New Labour; with former Foreign Secretary, David Miliband (18/05/2004), stating that:

'Choice and voice are strengthened by the presence of each other: the threat of exit makes [service providers] listen; the ability to make your voice heard provides a tool to the consumer who does not want to change [provider] every time they are unhappy'

However, those favouring voice questioned whether the depiction of service users as 'authoritative consumers' was not a misrepresentation of their identities and/or interests, and that voice instead might be seen as allowing the expression of sentiments derived collectively through more deliberative means (e.g. Barnes, 2009). In this way, some important considerations were emerging about the nature of different user-provider relationships in the public services; the compatibility of which remain a matter of debate.

Participation and Involvement since 2010

User participation and involvement have continued to consolidate around different notions of individualism, community/localism, and citizen governance in public service organisations since 2010. The rise of individualism and consumerism has continued in the extension of developments such as personalisation, choice and competition as means of improving quality and responsiveness. User complaints, the exemplar of 'consumer redress' systems, are increasingly viewed as a key form of involvement (PASC, 2014a; b). Indeed, following the influential Francis Report (2013) into the Mid-Staffordshire hospital scandal, which concluded that user complaints should have been listened to earlier, public service complaints handling (e.g. Clywd & Hart, 2013), and their use as a driver for public service innovation (e.g. Simmons & Brennan, 2013) are receiving increasing attention. The use of digital technologies has been enrolled to assist in this (e.g. Lupton, 2014a; b; de Cindio & Peraboni, 2011; Osimo et al, 2010). However, for many commentators participation and involvement cannot simply be encouraged for its contribution to rational service improvement and innovation; it remains a fundamental feature of the landscape of governance, including steering and co-ordination, scrutiny and accountability (e.g. Fung, 2015; Wampler, 2012; Farrell & Law, 1999; Farrell et al, 2016). Ongoing concerns are therefore evident about the democratic deficit that emerges as the frontiers of the welfare state continue to be rolled back (e.g. Dahl & Soss, 2014; Moss & Coleman, 2014).

With regard to community, participation has remained centre-stage in the 'localism' agenda that has emerged since 2010 (Clarke & Cochrane, 2013). Localities identified as 'ineffective' have been encouraged to become 'successful, integrated communities' (Holman, 2014: 418), and participative and co-productive arrangements have been promoted in order to put valuable community knowledge, skills and assets to work (e.g. Durose et al, 2016). For Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011), this targets the social capital in communities as a replacement for state services under conditions of austerity, thereby reinforcing the view that 'in an era of fiscal austerity, a re-engaged citizenry may represent the only option for agencies that are already overburdened and in crisis' (Cahn & Gray, 2012: 141). However, for Wilkin and Boudeau (2015: 9), appeals to a 'natural and

commendable' self-help not only extend the fragmentation of the public, but create new opportunities for more powerful vested interests:
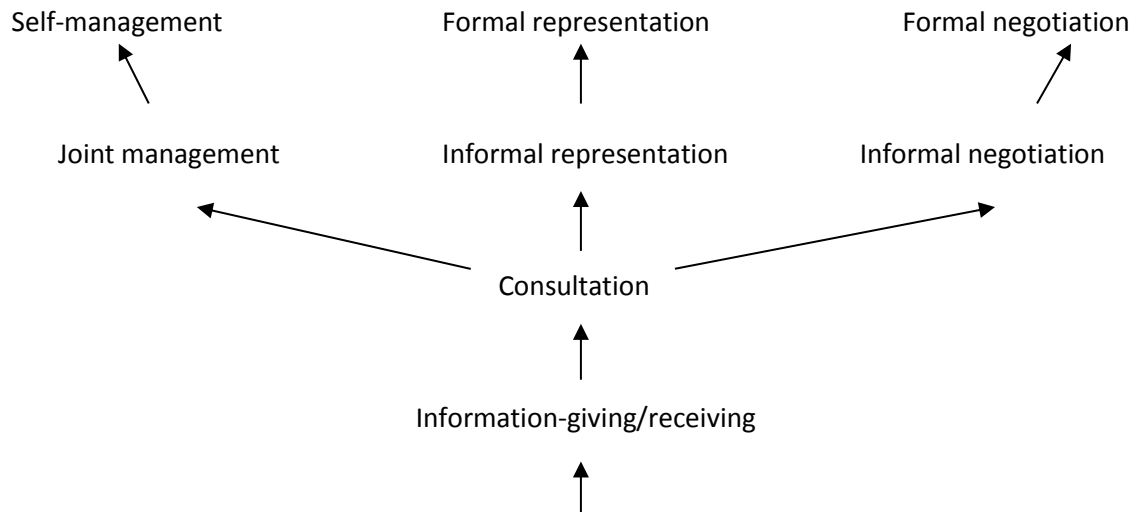
> *'The Coalition government is not against a welfare state per se, despite what many critics charge. On the contrary, they want a welfare state run by and in the interests of private companies, subsidised by public finance... In this way, questions are being asked about the extent to which the 'active' and 'good' citizen is actually being enrolled to attack the 'public' aspect of public services'* (Wilkin & Boudeau, 2015: 9).

Certainly, the extent to which meaningful opportunities for involvement and participation are being created in public service organisations remains unclear. For example, 'free schools' have ostensibly offered parents increased opportunities to oversee their children's education. However, the government's attempt to mobilise public participation here has again enjoyed only limited success (Higham, 2014). Similarly, there is evidence that new structures for Patient and Public Involvement in health generally remain unresponsive to lay knowledge (Gibson et al, 2012). Neither have notions of the 'Big Society' or experimentation with such developments as the 'right to provide' or public service 'mutuals' been seen to have significantly further empowered users (Davies & Pill, 2012; Birchall, 2012). This has left some commentators to assess the situation as 'reinforcing the power base of the controlling institutions with only marginal gains at the local level' (Bailey & Pill, 2015: 289).

3.3.3 Implications for this Thesis

The above contextualisation is important. It shows how participation and involvement has been put to work in different ways for different purposes over time (cf. Farrell, 2010). Expanding on Arnstein's ubiquitous 'ladder' of participation (see Section 4.7.1 below), this author has previously explored these issues in terms of a 'participation tree' with three branches (Birchall & Simmons, 2004; Simmons & Birchall, 2007: see Figure 2).

On the middle branch are strategies that tend to delegate responsibility for public services to providers, but with the democratic safeguard of including user representatives in mechanisms for steering and co-ordination, scrutiny and accountability. On the right-hand branch are strategies in which users negotiate directly with public service providers (either individually or collectively), according to their needs and wants, for example in the rational pursuit of the best package of services to maximise their utility. On the left-hand branch are strategies in which users participate in co-producing public services, even to the extent of formally assuming responsibility for them.

Self-management   Formal representation   Formal negotiation

Joint management   Informal representation   Informal negotiation

Consultation

Information-giving/receiving

Figure 2: *The 'Participation Tree'*

(Birchall & Simmons, 2004; Simmons & Birchall, 2007) (Not included in this thesis)

The three branches of the 'participation tree' correspond with classifications of participation (cf. Brodie et al, 2011) as either: *public* (structures within existing decision-making structures and processes, including organisational panels and committees); *individual* (individual choices and interactions with the world, including involvement in decisions that directly impact them and/or actions that make a statement about the kind of society they want to live in); or *social* (formal/informal structures that are created outside of formal political or organisational structures, including identity or interest groups such as tenants' associations).

Each of these strategies is present throughout the history of participation and involvement, however attenuated one or other of them may appear in a given context at any given time. This shows how tensions remain between consumer-focused models that view the public as individual consumers negotiating their choices about preferred public service options (e.g. Lewis et al, 2005; Martin & Webb, 2009), citizen-focused models that advocate representative public activity in the managing of public services (Bochel et al, 2008; Newman et al, 2004), and self-help/mutual aid models in which participation and involvement encompass co-production and joint-management, or even full responsibility for services (Simmons, 2001; Simmons & Birchall, 2009; Wilkin & Boudeau, 2015). Such tensions are likely to continue in different spaces and places in the public sector. This makes the endeavour to more deeply understand participation and involvement enduringly important.

3.4 Conceptual Contextualisation: Why Involvement and Participation?

3.4.1 The Promotion of Involvement and Participation

Fiorino (1990: 227-228) identifies three sets of imperatives that are used to justify active public involvement and participation in decision-making processes:

i) **Normative**: That a 'technocratic' orientation to decision-making is incompatible with democratic ideals, so that citizens should have the ability to influence collective decisions that affect them.

ii) **Substantive:** That non-experts see problems, issues and solutions that experts miss, so that the accommodation of multiple views improves understanding and assists in the selection of more appropriate solutions.

iii) **Instrumental**: That effective participation in decisions makes them more legitimate and leads to better results.

Normative imperatives see participation as manifestly 'the right thing to do' (cf. Stirling, 2008). *Substantive* imperatives contend that stakeholders aid better understanding through the provision of 'extended facts' and values (cf. Funtowicz & Ravetz, 1993). This helps counter both the so-called 'democratic deficit' associated with broader representative democracy (e.g. Pratchett, 1999) and the 'bounded rationality' of technocratic elites and public service managers entrusted with implementing policy (e.g. Milewa *et al.*, 1999). *Instrumental* imperatives encompass goals such as reducing conflict; building trust, consensus and sustainable support for decisions; and reducing implementation costs (cf. Creighton, 2005). Whilst these elements may be analytically distinct, they are closely intertwined. In this way, this thesis generally considers them as additive or cumulative in explanations of involvement and participation.

At the broadest level, involvement and participation are important features of *democratic* governance (March & Olsen, 1996) as well as the governance *of public services*. For example, Hunold and Peters (2004: 139) assign to participation 'the pull of the ought' as an important democratic ideal. At its most egalitarian, this ideal is conceptualised by Fraser (2003; 2005) as 'participatory parity', whereby 'a democratic state should actively foster the abilities of its citizens to participate in the life of the polity as equals' (Bérubé, 2003: 5). In turn, as meaningful participation is enabled, Benhabib (2008: 45) suggests that 'political agency becomes possible through multiple 'democratic iterations' of public argument, deliberation, and exchange through which rights-claims and principles are contested and contextualized'. Cornwall and Schattan Coelho (2007: 2) identify these interactions as 'new democratic arenas' and 'spaces of

contestation as well as collaboration, into which heterogenous participants bring diverse interpretations of participation and democracy and divergent agendas'. In this way, both excluded groups and the silent majority can begin to engage (Coote, 1999).

From another perspective, March and Olsen (1996) argue that involvement and participation processes encourage ordinary people to attend to the obligations of citizenship. They create the opportunity for users and citizens to come together, share ideas and learn from one another (cf. Durose, 2009; Durose & Lowndes, 2010). Such forms of 'communicative action' serve a range of beneficial outcomes:

> *'Under the functional aspect of* **mutual understanding***, communicative action serves to transmit and renew cultural knowledge; under the aspect of* **coordinating action***, it serves social integration and the establishment of solidarity; finally under the aspect of* **socialization***, communicative action serves the formation of personal identities'.* (Habermas, 1987: 137; emphasis added)

In this way, Richardson (1983: 54-58) asserts that participation brings 'developmental' effects. For example, she argues that it can directly affect the wellbeing and behaviour of the participants – ensuring a sense of dignity and respect, allowing people to discover their real interests, and leading to a heightened sense of social integration (inclusion and cohesion) (cf. Lawton & Macaulay, 2014).

These broad ideas represent an important set of background concepts and conditions to the matters considered in this thesis. However, such forms of 'interest articulation', 'recognition' and (civic and personal) 'development' may also be considered alongside a set of more functional concerns. In this way, 'voice' may be used (as a complement or an alternative to 'exit') as a way to help public services either recover in the face of decline (e.g. Hirschman, 1970), or find ways to innovate and improve (e.g. Albury, 2005; Bason, 2010; Simmons & Brennan, 2013). In either case, further argumentation for advocates of participation and involvement is provided by what Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden (2004: 155) identify as the broader, instrumental concerns of governance with problems of:

- Governability
- Accountability
- Responsiveness
- Legitimacy

Governability is defined here as 'the capacity to solve urgent societal problems' (Van Kersbergen & Van Waarden, 2004: 155). For Klijn and Koppenjan (2000: 379), this capacity is improved as

involvement and participation introduce new actors whose resources may improve the quality of policy measures. Bracht and Tsouros (1990: 204) argue that it is a way of 'negotiating conflicts between different sets of interests and identities [and] forcing co-ordination between loosely structured agencies' (cf. Simmel, 1922 [1955]). Meanwhile, Coote (1999) identifies the potential for this to lead to creative partnerships between people and politicians as a way to bypass existing monopolies on policy formation and implementation. In either case, as March and Olsen (1996: 12) point out, the role of involvement and participation is to 'reduce the chance that viable policies are overlooked', thereby enhancing the functional integration of the service system and increasing public confidence. Here, involvement and participation serve to both lessen the impact of bounded rationality and to generate new alternatives (rather than just limiting debate to existing ones) (Elster, 1998). Yet many researchers argue that the role of involvement and participation extends beyond the realm of *policy* to the realm of *management* in its capacity to solve urgent problems. In this way, the value of involvement and participation has been asserted in increasing mutual understanding between users and providers, improving internal management, and promoting efficiency and effectiveness more successfully than non-democratic management (Richardson, 1983; Franklin, 2001; DeLeon & DeLeon, 2002).

Accountability is defined here as the requirement to give an account *to*, be held to account *by* and take account *of* legitimate stakeholders (Day & Klein, 1987). Simey (1985: 5) asserts that the purpose of accountability 'is to govern the relationship between those who delegate authority and those who receive it'. However, as well as this more formal sense of accountability, there is also a more informal sense (or 'moral obligation'; Thomas, 1998). This informal element is often of equal significance, representing responsibility for meeting the diverse expectations of stakeholders both within and outside the organization. According to Thomas (1998: 352), four components usually exist in an accountability relationship:

- - The assignment of responsibilities (including authority, power and freedom to act), ideally based upon agreed goals or purposes
- - An obligation to answer for the discharge of those responsibilities
- - Surveillance of performance to ensure compliance with directions given
- - Possible sanctions for non-performance and rewards for successful performance

In the *assignment of responsibilities*, DeLeon & DeLeon (2002: 244) argue that greater involvement and participation can be beneficial 'in settings where goals are ambiguous and conflicting and means are uncertain' - as is often the case in complex public services - and that 'accountability can only be created if everybody has a seat at the table'. Meanwhile, in the *obligation to answer* for

the discharge of responsibilities, March and Olsen (1996: 19) assert that 'the capability of citizens to object to the policies and practices of coercive governmental institutions plays a critical role in regulating governmental power'. Hence, Richardson (1983: 64) asserts a need to 'defend against tyranny' and 'protect people from arbitrary decisions by entrenched professionals'. However, while it is accepted that the concentration of power carries the danger of arbitrariness, abuse and corruption (Van Kersbergen & Van Waarden, 2004), the exercise of responsibilities can carry the equally damaging prospect of 'honest incompetence' (Hendry, 2002; Kauppi & van Raaij, 2015). Processes of involvement and participation may therefore seek to hold those to whom authority has been delegated to account for any or all of these inadequacies. This requires *surveillance of performance* as a way to provide checks and balances to control the exercise of power (Van Kersbergen & Van Waarden, 2004), as well as validating internally-developed draft plans and looking for disjunctures (Franklin, 2001). Stewart Ranson (2003) argues that the recent introduction of market-based dimensions of accountability (consumer choice/exit, contract efficiency) does not go far enough in challenging abitrary power. User involvement and participation is therefore asserted as an essential complement to user choice, providing both a 'valuable brake on administrative machinery' (Richardson, 1983: 63) and 'ensuring local ownership and long term maintenance' (Bracht & Tsouros, 1990: 204).

Issues of *responsiveness* follow on from the above. Involvement and participation processes can assist public service organisations in scanning the environment and examining future requirements, thereby facilitating 'the search for solutions which best fit the general interest and provide a wider range of options' (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000: 379). Franklin (2001) suggests this as a way to achieve better services and/or better decisions through the contribution of new ideas and information from the consumer side. Involvement and participation therefore provide 'an opportunity for listening to stakeholders, educating others about programs and performance, confirming and discussing current and future directions, sharpening policies to be in line with customer needs, identifying emerging issues, and providing a valuable sounding block' (Franklin, 2001: 135). For those involved as participants, involvement and participation similarly provides the opportunity for 'advocating change, organizing for action, and maintaining momentum' (Bracht & Tsouros, 1990: 207). From either perspective there is the prospect of saving costs of correcting bad decisions at a later date; reaching common goals more effectively; and generating greater diversity in service provision (Richardson, 1983: 63-66). As these are ongoing tasks in many complex public services, Coote (1999: 4) advocates participation as a learning opportunity for provider representatives; as such, she argues that it should be seen as 'an evolving asset not a passing fashion'.

Legitimacy, defined here as the basis upon which consent is conferred upon governors by the governed, also requires ongoing attention and renewal in a democratic governance system. For Coote (1999: 1), the fact that the pursuit of the political agenda requires action and buy in from many players at many levels strengthens the case for involvement and participation: 'democracy rests on consent; consent requires trust; the public doesn't trust decision-makers; decision makers do not trust the public; authority is vulnerable in a low trust environment; and involvement can help build trust and spread a sense of ownership'. It is largely in this sense that 'participatory democracy' is held as valuable in its own right. Hence, while accepting the necessity of 'representative democracy', Klijn and Koppenjan (2000) contend that it is insufficiently capable of aggregating the preferences of individuals into policy (cf. Fishkin, 1991; Elster, 1998). In this way, Stewart (1999) asserts that involvement and participation do not present a threat to representative democracy – rather, they are necessary to *inform* it. Yet political representatives are not the only potential beneficiaries from this additional input. As McGarvey (2001: 20) puts it:

> *'Public sector professionals have often been viewed as paternalistic and inefficient with the basis of professional judgements being called into question. More knowledgeable and educated citizens are no longer willing to accept unquestioningly the wisdom of professionals. The need to involve customers of public services and have explicit performance standards has therefore been accepted across the political spectrum'.*

It is widely argued that involvement and participation are important in generating consent and commitment (Richardson, 1983; Newman & Clarke, 2009a). For example, Munshi et al (2009: 7) assert that 'participation is linked with democratic processes in the belief that governments that involve the public are in a better position to take good decisions, which in turn enjoy better support once they are taken'. In this way, by involving stakeholders at an early stage, involvement and participation can help prevent a narrow 'politicization of uncertainty' and strengthen support for proposed solutions from different constituencies (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000: 379). For DeLeon and DeLeon (2002: 236) this can build enhanced community leadership and help 'knit together the breach between citizens and public administration'.

3.4.2 Problematising Involvement and Participation

Under the influence of the above arguments, 'participation has come to resemble a 'universal good' in normative templates of public service reform' (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 101). However, with other commentators, these authors acknowledge that this raises difficult questions. They ask, for example, whether participation is about: radical recognition and empowerment; sustaining governmental legitimacy in the face of an 'unengaged' public; or part of the turn towards consumerism in public services (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 134). The empirical reality appears to

be that participation is 'politically ambiguous, both in its conception and in its practices' (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 134; cf. Cowan & Marsh, 2004), which can leave different stakeholders moving at crossed purposes.

Moreover, in the extent to which involvement and participation processes privilege particular sets of interests or identities, there is a concern that they may simply serve to reproduce existing patterns of power and domination (Fraser, 1997; Skelcher, 1993). For example, Newman and Clarke (2009a: 151) observe that 'constituting the public for the purpose of participation may seek to make the public manageable within the bureaucratic and organisational contexts to which they are invited'. For some, their activation may even serve to displace responsibilities onto the individual (Gilliatt *et al.*, 2000; Clarke, 2005; Cowan & Marsh, 2004). Hence, while acknowledging the democratic, developmental and instrumental rationales for involvement outlined earlier, Richardson (1983: 58) cites Kateb (1975: 94) in asking 'can these things be enough if the structure of privilege and the system of cruelty remain intact?'.

There are a number of further issues. For example, Jenkins and Gray (1992: 296) assert that 'questions such as defining who consumers are and assessing their perceptions and needs are far from easy'. There are therefore concerns about whose voice should be heard, through what means, and based on what models of representation (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 101). This reflects concerns about both 'the practical limitations of finding representative spokesmen', and the risks that co-option and manipulation might 'lend spurious legitimacy to providers' (Richardson, 1983: 65).

There may also be concerns about the relative valorisation of 'lay' and 'expert' knowledge and opinion. Richardson (1983: 62) notes that 'decision-making is a complex and difficult activity and consumers' ability to improve decisions can be questioned'. Similarly, Jenkins and Gray (1992: 296) weigh the costs against the benefits, noting that 'the tapping of the consumer dimension is not a costless exercise in terms of manpower and organisational resources' whilst asserting that 'any move towards consumer involvement may not immediately lead to 'good government' or 'good' policy'. Indeed, they argue that 'involvement may lead to a dilution of policy options (a consequence of negotiation) or a loss of central control as power is surrendered…[especially] to groups with vested and narrow interests'' (Jenkins & Gray, 1992: 296; see also Dahl, 1989). In this way, users may even be perceived to bring 'unwelcome opinions' (Coote, 1999: 3; cf. Fishkin, 1991), prompting Harrison (1999: 3) to suggest that 'acceptance of user involvement must always be provisional; user groups are a recognised feature of the organisational landscape but not one to which any superior degree of legitimacy is afforded'. Nevertheless, Coote (1999: 3) argues that

such arguments play into the hands of those in authority who seek to avoid being discomfited by the 'unpredictable outcomes' generated by involvement and participation. Hence, while it is accepted that some 'publics' may be more parochial than others, the balance of legitimacy between users and other stakeholders remains ambiguous and open to challenge (Newman & Clarke, 2009a).

3.4.3 Summary

In short, it seems that participation has been advocated and opposed on many different bases. It has therefore been claimed that 'its proponents and critics only rarely meet on common soil' (Richardson, 1983: 69). Fung (2015: 513) therefore highlights key challenges to creating successful participatory governance in 'the lack of popular or elite consensus on the place of direct citizen participation; and the limited scope and powers of participatory innovations'. Yet claims of a basic *incompatibility* (between, for example, participatory democracy on the one hand and the formal structures of representative democracy/public management on the other) allow little for the possibility of *complementarities* - that involvement and participation engage a wider range of actors in the policy process and thus 'increase the sensitivity of public decisions and programme implementation' (Klijn & Skelcher, 2007: 587; cf. Skelcher & Torfing, 2010). The reality is often more nuanced than either of these extremes suggest. For example, different situations throw up different starting points (whether fundamental alignment or conflict on issues), different expectations about what will happen when participation is introduced, and different experiences (Richardson, 1983; Newman & Clarke, 2009a).

Moreover, while Jenkins and Gray (1992) identify involvement and participation as being fraught with difficulty, they acknowledge that this is also the case for 'centralised authoritarianism' and 'trust in markets'. They therefore conclude that 'there is a case for strong local involvement' (Jenkins & Gray, 1992: 297). Nevertheless, acknowledging that 'change requires a shift in political values and considerable political risk', they stress that 'it must remain in doubt whether the will to take such risks exists' (Jenkins & Gray, 1992: 297). Risks include those rehearsed above (negative cost-benefit analyses, diluted policy options, 'capture' by vested interests and so on), but also that new sites for involvement and participation will encounter an 'unengaged' public (e.g. Stoker, 2006), or that 'those invited to encounters with power in its many forms may go away disheartened' (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 153). Despite this, Newman and Clarke (2009a: 7) point to the proliferation of projects, innovations and contestations around publics and public services as evidence that 'publicness remains a site of significance, the focus of material and symbolic investments'. They therefore maintain a cautious optimism for involvement and participation, on

the basis that participation (i) offers alignments with more democratic movements, and (ii) contributes to alternative framings of 'voice', 'co-production' or 'empowerment' that might otherwise be lost (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 151). 'Governmental forms of value' may therefore be 'desired and discovered' in participation processes (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 179).

3.4.4 Implications and Questions for this Thesis

Evidence from the last 40 years suggests that participation and involvement is not a 'passing fashion'; such debates remain very much alive in today's public services. This thesis acknowledges the different arguments presented above, including issues that might need to be taken into account if participation and involvement is to be seen as 'an evolving asset' (Coote, 1999).

The nature of this asset is important. Some have attempted to invoke a cost-benefit calculus that pitches the investment of resources into involvement and participation processes against the return to the 'public good'. A detailed review of this evidence base lies beyond the scope of this linking narrative. However, existing reviews (e.g. Brannan et al, 2006; Roberts, 2004; Tunstall, 2001; Andrews et al, 2008; Beierle, 2002; Burton et al, 2004; Rogers & Robinson, 2004; Fisher, 2011; ODPM, 2005; NAO, 2004; INVOLVE, 2005) suggest this is a far-from-simple task. Appendix 1 provides a brief summary of some of the evidence that has been put forward with regard to whether or not certain 'technical', 'relational', 'political', 'cultural', 'developmental' or 'emotional' outcomes accrue from involvement and participation. However, for Rogers and Robinson (2004), the generally small-scale, qualitative nature of this evidence can seem a little impressionistic and anecdotal. Minogue et al. (2005: 103) therefore lament the lack of measurable performance data that hinders research on the outcomes of involvement and participation upon services and service users.

It should be noted, however, that ambitions in this direction often founder in accordance with two issues: problems of measurement and the complexity of the interactions involved. First, many of the phenomena of interest are simply not susceptible to measurement. While this is frustrating for those seeking to 'conjure up a clean and orderly world [using] positivistic scientific canons' (Sanderson, 1998), it may be an instance of the maxim (purportedly hung in Albert Einstein's office), that: '*not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted*'. Moreover, even if it can be counted, further methodological issues arise from both the long time-frames potentially involved in the emergence of outcomes and their heterogenous distribution, so that cross-sectional research at a particular time and place may fail to register meaningful results (INVOLVE, 2005). Second, as Andrews and Boyne (2010: 314) observe, 'the

impact of change may depend on multiple contingencies'. For involvement and participation, this leads Roberts (2004: 4) to ask:

> *'Does participation function at all levels of government, in all sectors, for all issues, during all phases of the policy process, with all mechanisms of involvement? Finding answers to these questions is an enormous undertaking given the numbers of variables, levels and units of analysis in a system that is increasingly complex'*

In response, Sanderson (1998: 16) makes the case for a 'pluralistic approach' - developing and applying diverse methodologies to capture different forms of information in order to build a more robust picture. He argues that, while this may fail academic gold-standards of parsimony, it can meet other equally important criteria such as validity, appropriateness and heuristic value (Sanderson, 1998). Hood (2010: 318) concurs: 'a pluralist approach to research may turn out to be like Churchill's famous characterisation of democracy: the worst possible system, except for all the others'. In this way, as Bovaird (2014: 19) points out, governance of the service system may often depend more on 'lateral thinking and emergent practice than on linear 'rational' thinking, such as is embodied in cause-and-effect models'. Such issues remain complex and contested in public service systems (Cairney, 2012; 2013; Astill & Cairney, 2015). In response, Roberts (2004: 316) identifies a need for 'better theory building' and 'the tracking and evaluation of innovative practice' to converge on an understanding of 'what is (and what is not) appropriate' in involvement and participation.

Together then, the historical and conceptual contextualisations of participation point to gaps in both evidence and understanding in relation to user involvement and participation. These perspectives highlight various ways in which involvement and participation can fail. Yet they also suggest various ways in which public services can fail if there is a *lack of involvement and participation*. In short, the nature of different contexts and 'spaces' for user involvement are important in helping shape the ways in which different forms of user participation and involvement take practical form. This leads us to ask the first of this narrative's key questions:

Q1. On what basis is user/consumer involvement sought in different public service contexts and environments, and how might the appropriateness of this be judged?

[These issues are addressed particularly in this thesis in PUBLICATIONS 1, 2, 5, *and* 6. *See Figure 13 (p.229) and Section 6.2.1]*

4.0 Contextualising Literatures - Seminal Research

The tensions and ambiguities revealed in Section 3 help to explain why the subject of user involvement and participation remains topical despite more than forty years of intensive examination across various academic literatures and disciplines. It is to these literatures that the next section turns. This is sub-divided into eight areas of involvement and participation research, selected to capture key elements of the conceptual and theoretical questions to which the six published papers in this thesis are addressed:

- Behavioural explanations

- Resource-based explanations

- Identity-based explanations

- Motivational explanations

- Activational explanations

- 'Subject-object' relational explanations

- 'Subject-other' relational explanations

- Cultural-institutional explanations

In addressing each of these areas, this conceptual and theoretical review and analysis seeks to assess the broader context for the six published papers. It therefore seeks to go further than the literature reviews in each of the individual published papers in this thesis, and to be more than the sum of these 'parts'.

4.1 Behavioural Explanations for Participation

Behavioural explanations for service user involvement and participation cast people in performative roles as 'social actors'. Here - in 'a workable alternative to the socially-thin concept of the user' (Lamb & Kling, 2003: 28) - both the nature of the acts produced, and the extent of such action are examined. Nevertheless, *inaction* is often an equal concern of the behavioural literature, and this is also explored in this section.

4.1.1 Behavioural Responses to Decline, or 'Developing Disorder'

Behavioural explanations for involvement and participation can be traced back to Albert Hirschman's seminal 'Exit, Voice and Loyalty' (EVL) framework – recently the subject of a major reanalysis and restatement by Dowding and John (2012). Hirschman (1970) presents two ways in which consumers or citizens might react to decline 'in firms, organizations and states':

- <u>Exit</u> - or 'withdrawal from the relationship'
- <u>Voice</u> - or 'the attempt at repairing or perhaps improving the relationship'

He subsequently refined this position, presenting exit and voice as *'two <u>active reactions</u> and perhaps remedies [available to] social actors who experience <u>developing disorder</u>'* (Hirschman, 1986: 77; emphasis added). Indeed, Hirschman (1986: 79) sees the 'right to exit' and 'right to voice' as 'two basic, complementary ingredients of democratic freedom'.

Social actors must decide between these responses when confronted with 'developing disorder'. However, for *public services*, Hirschman (1986: 88-89) states that the conditions for 'exit' are not normally met, as: 'uniformity of the product is generally considered desirable from society's point of view regardless of individual preferences; buyers of the services are often ill informed about quality; there are few suppliers; and comparison shopping is complicated or even impossible in the case of some very important decisions'. Hence, while arguably more opportunities for exit are emerging with the promotion of 'choice' in public services (LeGrand, 2007a; b; Greener, 2003; Tummers et al, 2013; Taylor-Gooby, 1998), and what Gofen (2012) calls 'entrepreneurial exit' (in which citizens proactively create viable alternatives themselves), 'voice' generally remains the dominant available response to decline (Dowding & John, 2012: 13; cf. Boyle, 2013).

This thesis is predominantly concerned with voice; differentiating, with Dowding and John (2012), between individual and collective variants. This recognises that users may pursue different channels for voice for different reasons in different situations (cf. PUBLICATIONS 1 and 5). However, the thesis also provides some more nuanced insights into the notion of exit (namely, 'reluctant exit' and 'exit without alternatives'; cf. PUBLICATION 5). The notion of 'reluctant exit', often exercised after voice (Simmons et al, 2012), draws on two further important insights from Hirschman's (1970) seminal text: (i) loyalty, and (ii) notions of 'alert' and 'inert' consumers (who respond to 'decline' at different speeds). Loyalty is 'a special attachment to an organization' that makes exit *less* likely (Hirschman, 1970: 77) and, 'on average, tends to make voice *more* likely' (Dowding & John, 2012: 5). Loyalty may therefore make 'alert' consumers (i.e. those who respond quickly) reluctant to exit until they feel they have exhausted (or have become exhausted by) the available voice opportunities. In conjunction with the 'inert' (who respond more slowly or not at all), such individuals may provide the organization with sufficient time to recover before 'disorder' takes hold (Hirschman, 1970). It may be thought that this might place a premium on the voice activity of the alert, 'as a gift that many people bring to the public domain' (Newman & Clarke (2009a: 152). However, as Hirschman (1986: 79) points out: 'many organizations and their agents are not at all keen on having their members tell them about their shortcomings, and the voicers can often expose themselves to reprisals'.

Hirschman (1986: 79) further observes that: 'the development of voice is arduous if it is resisted and perhaps repressed'. The actual or perceived repression of voice is important (Steele, 1999). Some users may feel excluded from the start in voicing their opinion. Others may be disappointed by their experience of it; for example, not feeling they have been listened to, not receiving feedback following their involvement; or not perceiving any real impact or outcome from it (Newman & Clarke, 2009a). All of this makes exit more likely, including 'reluctant exit' if a private sector alternative is available and affordable. Where it is not, users are faced with two further choices.

First, resistance and repression may promote more covert forms of user behaviour; for example, through what Scott (1985) has famously called the 'weapons of the weak' (e.g. 'foot-dragging', 'backstage bickering', 'acid double talk' - even 'sabotage'). Tovey et al (2001: 162) argue that such 'grassroots pressure' can empower communities, and influence change despite a hostile environment. Newman and Clarke (2009a: 64) therefore suggest a need to 'notice the refusals, resistances, alternative imaginaries and solidarities' that indicate active dissent.

Second, there is the risk of 'exit without alternatives' [cf. PUBLICATION 5]. Neither Hirschman (1970) nor Dowding and John (2012) consider this directly: their assumption appears to be that exit is always to something, rather than nothing. Yet Hoggett et al (2013: 577) recognise such behaviour as a form of *'ressentiment'*, characterised by a deliberate 'rejection of agency' (Hoggett, 2001).

4.1.2 Explaining Behavioural <u>Inaction</u>: Apathy, Support, Acceptance, and Withdrawal

While exit and voice represent two 'active reactions' to developing disorder (Hirschman, 1986), behavioural aspects also relate to people's passivity and inaction. In their review of Hirschman's framework, Dowding and John (2012: 11) point out a four-fold set of possibilities (see Figure 3).

	Exit	Non-Exit
Voice	'Noisy Exit'	'Noisy Non-Exit'
Silence	'Silent Exit'	'Silent Non-Exit'

Figure 3: *Potential Behavioural Reactions* (Source: Dowding et al, 2000)

This includes the reaction they call 'silent non-exit', which may be explained in at least four different ways. First, silent non-exit is often explained as indicating *satisfaction-support*, provided

different aspects of legitimacy are fulfilled. As Van Kersbergen and Van Waarden (2004: 156) observe:

> *'Institutions of power wielding can be legitimate in the eyes of citizens either because they 'work', 'perform', are able to 'deliver the goods' (output legitimacy); or because they result from decisions made according to procedures that include recognised forms of accountability such as the rule of law, democracy, or political or economic competition (input legitimacy)'.*

Hence, sometimes it is sufficient for public service organisations to simply 'deliver the goods' in order to achieve public satisfaction and support (Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). Moreover, even in complex services where 'delivering the goods' means different things to different people, broad-based support might follow public perceptions of sufficient 'procedural justice' for hearing people's claims and deciding on them equitably (Dean, 2003; Roberson et al, 1999; Colquitt et al, 2001; Bies & Moag, 1986; Sousa & Vala, 2002; Folger et al, 1996; Cropanzano et al, 2001).

Second, silent non-exit may be explained as indicating *acceptance-accommodation* (e.g. Pickering, 1995). Sometimes in the face of a service issue, people may decide not to voice their concerns *yet*. Hence, despite caring substantially about the service, their participation remains latent. Acceptance can make such users inert; never fully convinced by particular service arrangements, but not yet troubled enough to tip them into action. Indeed, these users may prefer to simply 'accommodate' their feelings by dropping their issue and moving on (cf. Klandermans, 1997; Jackson and Rucks, 1993). Even so, over time there may be a limit on how often people are prepared to make such accommodations before their loyalty is affected.

Third, silent non-exit is often ascribed to *apathy* or *indifference* on the part of service users (e.g. Skelcher, 1993; Wilson, 1999; Brannan et al, 2006; Bovaird, 2007). In not caring substantially about how things are done, participation becomes superfluous to such people. However, for some authors the role of apathy-indifference is often overstated (Needham, 2002). For example, the research that led to PUBLICATION 1 of this thesis found that only 20% of non-participants could be categorised as genuinely apathetic.

Finally, *withdrawal-avoidance* provides a further possible explanation for silent non-exit. As Hirschman (1986: 81) points out:

> *'There is no doubt that acquiescence, inaction, withdrawal and resignation hold sway much of the time in the social world. This is largely the result of repression of exit and voice'.*

Here, the repression of voice results in public service users feeling trapped within the system; that they have something to say but that they are blocked from saying it or that it would be futile to do so. In short, there is a breakdown in the user-provider relationship. Here, there is value in another widely-cited framework by Rusbult et al (1982; 1988; cf. Lyons & Lowery, 1986; 1989), which adds 'neglect' to exit, voice and loyalty as distinctive responses to dissatisfaction (see Figure 4). Withdrawal-avoidance fits this 'neglect' category (or 'passive-destructive' quadrant).
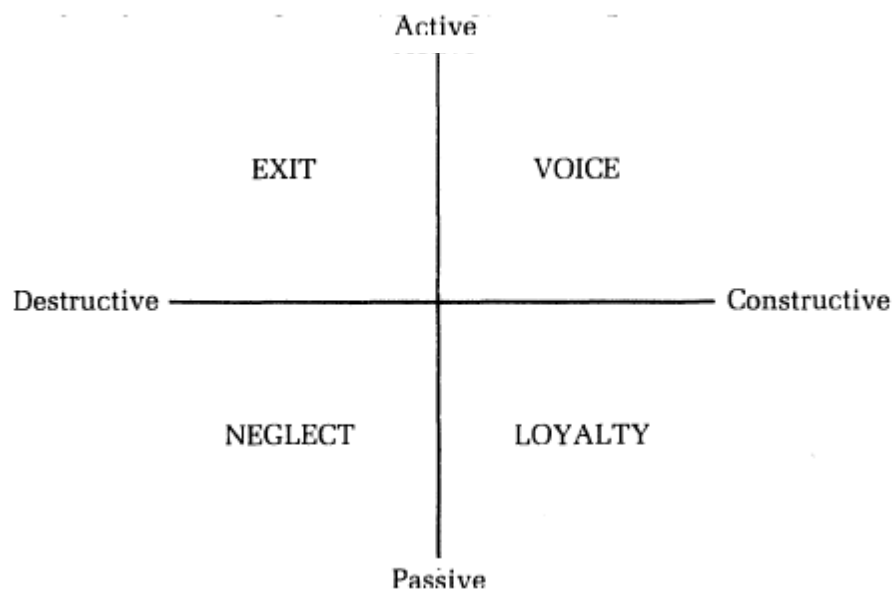
Figure 4: *Responses to Dissatisfaction in Relationships* (Source: Rusbult et al, 1988)

However, such behaviour is not only destructive to public service relationships. Coping theorists (e.g. Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; Lazarus, 1999) argue that 'avoidance' can also be a 'maladaptive' behavioural strategy for individuals over an extended period, in that it 'interferes with those individuals' ability to unlearn, or break apart, the paired association between the situation and the anxieties it holds' (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984: 25; cf. Hoggett et al, 2013).

4.1.3 Implications and Questions for this Thesis

Behavioural explanations for participation help to define the conditions in which different behaviours become more and less likely. This includes the pursuit of different channels for voice for different reasons in different situations. Such behaviours represent a direct rational response to technical/material/relational conditions of service 'decline', which may be mediated by a range of more emotional conditions (e.g. loyalty or anxiety). These issues involve a complex set of interactions in explaining why voice occurs (or does not occur, in the cases of exit and 'silent non-exit). In particular, this leads us to ask the following question:

Q2. How might the range of users' involvement and participation behaviours be characterised?

[These issues are addressed particularly in this thesis in PUBLICATIONS 1, 3, 4, *and* 5. *See Figure 13 (p.229) and Section 6.2.2]*

4.2 Resource-Based Explanations for Participation

Behavioural explanations for user involvement and participation are important, but they are mediated by a further range of factors, including the resources individuals have available to them. Since Verba and Nie's seminal text, '*Participation in America*' (1972), there has been greater awareness of the role that resources play in involvement and participation. This section first examines the role of resources in enabling involvement and participation, including participants' *personal resources* such as time, money and skills (Brady et al, 1995; Parry et al, 1992) and *'infra-resources'* of social capital attached to members of social groups (Hicks & Misra, 1993). Second, it examines the role of <u>resources as assets</u> in providing bargaining power to individuals or groups within the co-dependencies that often between different stakeholders. Particular attention is drawn here to the value of 'user knowledge' (e.g. Jovchelovitch, 2007).

4.2.1 Resources as Enablers: Facilitating Involvement and Participation

<u>Personal Resources</u>

Early contributions to the participation literature, including Almond and Verba's (1963) '*The Civic Culture*' and Milbrath's (1965) '*Political Participation*' identified correlations between participation and 'socio-economic status' (SES; indicating class and status hierarchies). This was explored further in Verba and Nie's '*Participation in America*' (1972) and Pateman's important work on democratic participation (e.g. 1970; 1974). However, Brady et al (1995: 271-2) point out that SES is more useful as a predictor for participation than as an explanation for it. Jackson and Rucks (1993: 222) identify entry costs, lack of knowledge, time, physical ability, skills and confidence as significant barriers for potential participants, so that people's personal endowments of resources may be influential in enabling access. These insights, considered further in PUBLICATION 1, have prompted more detailed research into the role of personal resources in supporting participation.

SES has been found to correlate with certain - but not all - resources. Financial and educational resources are clearly not distributed equally across the SES scale. This is important; Parry et al (1992: 68) suggest these resources form one 'relatively integrated syndrome', in which the well-resourced are advantaged across the board. However, time resources are more equally distributed, as free time varies with life circumstances, not SES (Brady et al, 1995). Moreover, the

distribution of certain other resources may be equalised to some extent. For example, while Parry et al (1992: 68) use educational achievement as a proxy for the *civic skills* that are widely considered important for participation, Brady et al (1995: 273-275) found that such competencies may also be acquired through 'skill acts', such as writing a letter, attending or chairing a meeting, or giving a presentation, and that such skill development opportunities may arise for lower-SES individuals in situations such as voluntary groups and associations. Indeed, amongst the actively involved, Brady et al (1995) found smaller differences between educational groups in the practice of civic skills. This links with an important finding in PUBLICATION 1: that despite a relative lack of educational resources, the building of public service users' capabilities through *experience* and *training* is often very successful in promoting their effective participation. Similarly, the reimbursement of participants' financial costs can help ameliorate their relative lack of financial resources.

The literature therefore suggests that personal resources play an important but complex role in people's transitions from 'service user' to 'participant'. This is important; as March and Olsen (1996: 46) point out, democratic governance involves 'developing capabilities for appropriate political action among citizens, groups and institutions…Capabilities define potentials to affect politics, to exercise rights, and to influence the course of events'. In the interests of democratic equality, Aspinwall (2010: 359) therefore argues the particular need to promote greater capabilities amongst the 'people who stand most to benefit – those with relatively few resources and those with declines in resources'.

'Infra-Resources': the Role of Social Capital

A further set of resources for participation is provided by what Hicks and Misra (1993: 672) term 'infra-resources' (i.e. 'resources that broadly facilitate diverse actors' pursuits of their interests by empowering their actions or conditioning the effectiveness of specific instrumental resources'). This sub-section considers the role of social capital as an infra-resource. Social capital represents a cohesive social force constituted by trust, networks and reciprocity (Putnam, 1995; 2000; Uslaner, 2002; Field, 2017). It has been described as 'the norms and networks that enable people to act collectively' (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000: 225); or 'a set of institutionalized expectations that other actors will reciprocate cooperative overtures' (Boix and Posner 1998: 686). For Putnam (2000: 288-290), social capital thus allows citizens to resolve collective problems more easily, greases the wheels that allow communities to advance smoothly, and widens our awareness of the many ways in which our fates are linked.

The networks that help constitute social capital also serve as conduits for the flow of helpful information that facilitates the achievement of important goals. In this sense, social capital can also help to mitigate the insidious effects of socioeconomic disadvantage (Putnam, 2000: 319-325). For Klandermans and Oegema (1987: 520), networks condition whether people become targets of *mobilization attempts* (cf. PUBLICATION 1). The level of people's integration into networks reinforces their mobilization potential and provides them with feedback on group performance. In Granovetter's seminal work (1973; 1985), this is linked to the extent to which individuals or organisations draw on both 'strong' and 'weak' ties. *Strong ties* produce strong, cohesive, inwardly-focused groups, whose members know that 'calls for help' will be met with immediate aid or the provision of resources, yet also high boundaries between the 'in-group' and those who reside outside the group. This may be overcome through establishing a wider network of *weak ties*, with more distant contacts or acquaintances. The strength of weak ties lies in linking these different actors together (Granovetter, 1973). Notions of bonding, bridging and linking social capital follow a similar logic (Woolcock, 2001; Putnam, 2000).

In sum, social resources and connectedness combine with personal resources in producing *confident* and *competent* participants, high in optimism, self-mastery and social support. Such links, between people's resources and their social connectedness (that increases their exposure to mobilisation attempts) are made explicit in PUBLICATION 1. This is in line with Parry et al's (1992: 176) observation that:

> '*Those who feel most competent - the salaried, older, male, richer and better connected - perhaps have good reasons for their confidence…Nor is it surprising that a sense of powerlessness in the political realm goes with being young, female, working class, uneducated, poor and organisationally isolated*'.

4.2.2 Resources as Assets

The Role of 'Instrumental Political Capital'

'Exchange-based' perspectives of governance assume a rational exchange of resources between actors for instrumental purposes. From this perspective, unless one actor is able to enforce its will on others, there is a need for processes of bargaining, negotiation and coalition formation between public, private or semi-private actors, interests groups, experts and civilians (March & Olsen, 1996; Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000). For Birner and Wittmer (2003: 6) such resources and capabilities constitute *instrumental political capital*; or 'the resources which an actor can dispose of and use to influence policy processes and realize outcomes which are in the actor's perceived interest'.

These insights are helpful in public services, where neither users nor providers hold a monopoly on the required resources (Hoggett, 2003), and each may each attempt to harness the resources they require from others to achieve their goals (Joshi & Moore, 2004; Lowndes, 2004). They build on the explanatory potential of Resource Dependency Theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), in which actors seek to acquire the resources they need (e.g. information, expertise, access, legitimacy, authority, legal and financial resources) through strategic collaborations with other actors. Hence, users may seek to influence the allocation of certain resources they do not control (e.g. finance, authority), while public agencies may seek to acquire certain resources they lack (e.g. local legitimacy, experiential knowledge). Nevertheless, numerous studies indicate that users often have their contributions ignored (Skelcher, 1993; Barnes et al., 2003; Morgan-Trimmer, 2013). In an environment of increasing pressure to meet the resource demands for public services, this may be seen as a potential missed opportunity (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000; Bovaird, 2007).

The Role of 'Intellectual Capital'

For Contandriopoulos (2004: 322), public participation therefore involves 'a perpetual struggle between agents to influence each other's perceptions of their respective positions and, more generally, their perceptions of the reality as a whole'. Arguably, one particularly important category of resources is that of *knowledge*: i.e. the 'intellectual capital' from which ideas about the design and delivery of public services may be drawn (e.g. Bason, 2010). Accordingly, Glynn et al (2003) identify four types of organisation: (i) '*deaf' organisations* (which depend solely upon 'internal scientific' information), (ii) '*hard of hearing' organisations* (which add 'internal narrative' to 'internal scientific' information); (iii) '*selective listening' organisations* (which add 'external scientific' to 'internal scientific' and 'internal narrative' information); and (iv) '*total listening' organisations* (which add 'external narrative' – e.g. from user involvement - to 'external scientific', 'internal scientific' and 'internal narrative' information).

Potter (1988: 163) questions providers' willingness to 'accept consumers as judges'. Yet as long as forty years ago, Klein and Lewis (1976: 153) pointed out that: 'if the professional's knowledge is less than total, so is the consumer's ignorance'. Cruickshank (2003: 2) therefore observes that, 'as knowledge claims are fallible, the best we can do is improve our interpretations of reality'. Franklin (2001: 129) therefore identifies some distinct advantages for public administration in making sure things are 'looked at in a different way that captures outside views'.

Discussing the 'knowledge-power knot', Clarke et al (2007: 114-117), assert the nexus between expertise and authority has been loosened by a 'resurgence of alternative resources of knowledge as the basis for claims-making and challenges to professional power'. As a result, they observe

that 'forms of knowledge variously described as 'lay', 'situated' or 'experiential' have disrupted the authoritative status of formal or objective knowledge'. However, as Jovchelovitch (2007: 182) observes, 'the recognition of diversity and legitimacy in different types of knowledge does not lead to the unconditional acceptance of all knowledges'. This draws attention to the potential complementarities (but also incompatibilities) in the relationship between 'authenticity' and 'expertise' (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 141-142; cf. PUBLICATION 3).

4.2.3 Implications and Questions for this Thesis

Resource-based explanations for participation are important in generating a sense of 'can do' amongst citizens in relation to their involvement and participation (Lowndes et al, 2006). This is particularly important if it is accepted that the citizen voice needs to be clear, loud and equal – *clear* so that public officials know what citizens want, *loud* so they have an incentive to pay attention, and *equal* to ensure equal responsiveness to the needs and preferences of all (Verba et al, 1995). However, while important, resources form part of a broader complex within which they represent a necessary but insufficient condition for explaining user involvement and participation. This leads us to ask the following question:

Q3. To what extent do resources act to support the effectiveness of user involvement and participation on an individual and a collective level?

[These issues are addressed particularly in this thesis in PUBLICATIONS 1, 2, *and* 6. *See Figure 13 (p.229) and Section 6.2.3]*

4.3 Identity-Based Explanations for Participation

The resources available to individuals help to identify some important enabling and constraining factors over people's participation, and to explain what they bring to the process of exchange within participatory processes. In their important text, *'Democratic Governance'*, March and Olsen (1996: 25) acknowledge the value of a 'resource exchange' perspective. However, they argue this is seriously incomplete. In response, they advocate that exchange perspectives should be supplemented with others in which *identities* and *role expectations* are important in constituting social action (March & Olsen, 1996: 37; emphasis added). This recognises how people may attempt to represent and reproduce elements of their identity in their participation (e.g. Fraser, 2003; Jovchelovitch, 2007).

4.3.1 The Construction of Service User Identity

People hold multiple 'personal' identities corresponding to the range of situations, roles, and relationships they find themselves in; as well as multiple 'social' or group identities based on the social categories with which they are associated (Turner et al, 1987). Identities, like resources and capabilities, are therefore something participants 'bring' with them to participatory processes (and which may develop as participation and involvement is enacted; cf. PUBLICATIONS 1, 5). This raises such questions as how important different 'nomenclatures' of user identity are in guiding people's involvement and participation, and how service users configure and organise their identities in relation to such activity.

How Important are Different 'Nomenclatures' of User Identity?

Some commentators (e.g. Haslam et al, 1999) claim that individual nomenclatures (such as 'citizen', 'consumer' and 'client'), as well as collective nomenclatures (such as 'member of the community' and 'member of the public') matter greatly, as they lead to different social representations of public service users. These can be subjectively-positive with regard to public services, as in notions of *consumer* 'sovereignty' (Potter, 1988), or *citizenship* that accords political and social rights (Tovey et al, 2001). Yet such nomenclatures also beg the danger of more negative representations, through stereotypes/labelling (McGarty et al, 2002). Users cannot choose how 'others' label them (Becker, 1974). They may therefore feel mis-labelled and/or misunderstood, that incorrect assumptions are attached to them and/or that they are speaking at crossed-purposes. This may even lead to a sense of stigma or self-stigma (Goffman, 1963).

It has therefore been argued that different constructions and interpretations make it impossible to simply 'read off' people's propensities towards particular roles, attitudes and behaviours from nomenclature alone (Barnes & Cotterell, 2012); people may accept, reject or contest these various labels, with the meanings to which they are assigned (McGarty et al, 2002). For Bender (1978), locating identities in people's lives instead requires openness and sensitivity to the texture of their 'social experience', in which individuals absorb and process complex social forces such as discourses, ideologies and structural positions (Craib, 1998). An example is mental health service users' reclaiming of the word 'mad', and reframing of themselves as 'survivors' (Beresford, 2009). For Fraser (1997), such 'counter-publics' have a twin function: as spaces for withdrawal and regrouping, and as bases for engagement with the wider public domain.

Service User Identities in Active Involvement and Participation

The way users configure their identities and the roles associated with them is important in their involvement and participation. *Role identity theory* suggests that people lose their disinterested stance in a particular role because their self-worth is at least partly constituted by it (Widdicombe, 1998). However, resource constraints mean that people must prioritise their affiliations - at least as they relate to *social action* such as user involvement and participation (Andrews, 1991). Hence, people have to decide: 'how much of myself am I prepared to invest in this role?' (Archer, 2003: 24-25).

For social identities, s*ocial identity theory* and *social categorization theory* (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al, 1987) suggest two important factors in role adoption:

(i)   categorizations that divide the world into 'us' (the 'in-group') and 'them' ('out-groups')

(ii)   social identification (or lack of identification) with the 'in-group'

The influence of social identity therefore goes beyond people simply acknowledging their in-group membership. The extent of the emotional bond they feel toward their group is also important (Ellemers et al, 1999; Tyler & Degoey, 1995). This may be expressed in four ways. First, some identities may be so central to the person that they become 'chronically salient' (Ellemers et al, 2002), so that involvement and participation becomes a clearly-identifiable 'life sphere' (Passy & Giugni, 2000). Such 'high identifiers' are often active on behalf of their group, even when it is personally disadvantageous to them (Doosje et al, 2002; Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). Second, for others, different life spheres may chronically compete, leaving them aligned 'symbolically' rather than 'concretely' (Snow & Benford, 1988). These people's *inactivity* does not indicate a lack of salience of their 'public service user' identity; rather a reluctant inability to pursue activity in this life sphere at the expense of another (Cress et al, 1997). Third, other people may willingly (rather than reluctantly) minimize certain identities in their self-definition, shifting them to a low position in their identity hierarchy (Deaux, 2000). Such 'low identifiers' tend to be more instrumental and strategic in their choice of which battles to fight (Doosje et al, 1999; Veenstra & Haslam, 2000). Finally, 'non-identifiers' may resist or deny certain identities to the point they do not form a reference point in their social action.

Such insights fit well with those of PUBLICATION 1, which uses cluster analysis to provide a more fine-grained typology of in-group members. Based on respondents' key motivations and patterns of engagement, these clusters each demonstrate different levels of group identification.

4.3.2   The Enactment of Identity in Involvement and Participation

If roles *are* internalised as identities that people enact (Widdicombe, 1998), different identities may be summoned and mobilised for different purposes. Beresford and Croft (1993: 114) consider two major options for user involvement and participation: (i) 'Try on your own' (individual action); (ii) 'Join forces with others' (collective action):

	Advantages	**Disadvantages**
Individual Action	- Primarily concerned with the individual's own needs and interests - Can be under the individual's direct control - Can often achieve small changes successfully for individuals - Individuals can speak specifically for themselves - Individuals do not have to forge new links or negotiate with others	- Can undermine equity – whether people get their rights and say depends on their individual ability to secure them - Can individualise issues, obscuring the common causes of people's problems and depoliticising them - Can be divisive – whether one person gets something may depend on somebody else not - Can provide a patchy and piecemeal basis for developing policy and practice
Collective Action	- People may be more powerful together than on their own - Can bring benefits of working with other people – pooling skills, providing support, reducing stress and isolation - Offers an effective alternative for people with less individual choice - Offers an effective way of bringing about wider change	- May be unfamiliar to users - Requires new skills - Is time-consuming - May undermine privacy by bringing personal issues into public view

Figure 5: *Some Advantages and Disadvantages of Individual and Collective Action*
(Source: Beresford and Croft, 1993: 114-116)

Purported advantages and disadvantages of each option are shown in Figure 5. Enactments of individual identity are clearly important - e.g. through complaints (Simmons & Brennan, 2013), or what Thomas (1995) calls 'citizen contacting' (cf. Thomas & Melkers, 2001; Thomas & Streib, 2005). Here, Beresford and Croft (1993: 114) assert that 'people often seek to safeguard their welfare by securing their individual rights'.

Enacting identities through collective action can add further value: for example, providing *information* about policies and actions affecting people's lives, and developing *awareness* of particular issues and opportunities for action (Parry et al, 1992; Whiteley & Seyd, 1998). However, as Popkin (1994**:** 46) argues, information-gathering and greater awareness constitute only an

initial stage of engagement; their full effects are only felt once things have been 'checked with others and validated'. Groups therefore also provide mutual *reinforcement*, particularly where members share a sense of belonging and emotional connection (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). Nevertheless, the above benefits may not always accrue. This may be due to negative group dynamics (e.g. during the widely-cited 'forming, storming, norming, and conforming/performing' process; e.g. Baron et al, 1992). It may also be due to insufficient confidence in other group members, whereby *incompetence*, a *lack of fairness,* or *lack of probity,* may be felt to exclude certain members from accessing the group's resources or to privilege vested interests (e.g. Messick et al, 1983; Brann & Foddy, 1987).

Another key question concerns the extent to which service users are able to achieve recognition of their identities. Recognition is a key issue (e.g. Fraser, 1995, 1997; 2000; 2001; Fraser & Honneth, 2003). Fraser identifies two major variants: *'non-recognition'* (or being rendered invisible; Fraser, 1995: 71) and *'disrespect'* (or being routinely maligned or disparaged; Fraser, 1997: 14). Newman and Clarke (2009a: 179/183) therefore assert that 'participation processes often sift populations into 'subjects of value', 'potential subjects of value' and 'subjects of no value', whereby those that are excluded/marginalised face denial of the very *possibility* of agency (Newman, 2012: 135). In the public services, for example, certain groups and categories are regularly termed 'hard to reach' (Cook, 2002). However, the experience of being distanced as 'subjects of no value' means that, for these groups, it is the providers who are 'hard to reach' (cf. Brackertz & Meredyth, 2009). As Jovchelovitch (2007: 169) observes, this 'unequal arena either *enables* or *disables* communities from having their identities, knowledge, projects and needs recognised and worked upon'. Hence, as Lister (2001: 101) puts it for one group of public service users: 'One of the achievements of the disabled people's movement has been to win recognition of disabled people as *subjects or agents* in welfare policy-making and implementation, as opposed to their more traditional construction as simply the *objects* of policy' *(emphasis added)*. Lister's quote is particularly helpful in showing (i) that *recognition as a subject* is an achievement, (ii) that *subjects/agents are constructed* both by themselves and others.

This reflects the competing legitimacies of different voices, in which a key issue is *representation*. As Contandriopoulos (2004: 327) observes, 'public participation cannot be meaningfully conceived of as a way to escape from the political dilemmas of representation'. However, as Newman (2001: 135) points out, 'trying to ensure 'representativeness' in a forum is problematic'. First, conditions of 'statistical representativeness' require all groups and categories within the community to be represented proportionally (Davis & Daly, 2004; Cole 2004). However, questions remain as to how finely-grained a distinction is needed to ensure that no legitimate voice is excluded. Second,

statistical representativeness is itself often insufficient. People's 'true representativeness' of a constituency (i.e. whether they are directly informed by the group and/or able to speak authoritatively on their behalf) may also be questioned (Richardson 1983; Barnes et al, 2008; Martin 2008). True representativeness may therefore be difficult to sustain, even where representatives emerge through some process of group nomination or election (cf. PUBLICATION 2). Each of these issues is considerable. However, some have questioned whether they are any more significant than the 'statistical representativeness' of service provider representatives in reflecting the composition of the local community, or the 'true representativeness' of elected officials (even if this is based on turnout and share of vote) (Potter, 1988; Richardson, 1983).

4.3.3 Implications and Questions for this Thesis

The above analysis suggests a need to develop a more integrated understanding of roles that reflexivity, group dynamics and agency play in the emergent construction of participants' sense of self. Identity therefore emerges as an important concept for understanding the engagement, indifference or resistance of users to opportunities for participation (Passy & Giugni, 2000; Hunter, 2003; Davies et al, 2006). Users' ability and desire to activate particular identities may vary. Not only do people feel more strongly committed to some groups than others, but the strength of their identification with the same group may also vary over time (Ouwerkerk et al, 1999). Thus, instead of simply asking about people's 'biographical orientation' toward participation (McAdam, 1996), there is a need to examine whether, when, and how service user identities are activated in people's lives (Widdicombe, 1998) – as well as how these self-representations are recognised and responded to by others. In particular, this leads us to ask the following question:

Q4. To what extent do public service users' identities structure their expectations and experiences of involvement and participation?

[These issues are addressed particularly in this thesis in PUBLICATIONS 1, 2, 3, *and* 5. *See Figure 13 (p.229) and Section 6.2.4]*

4.4 Motivational Explanations for Participation

While involvement and participation are related to people's *identities*, they are clearly also related to people's *interests* (Simmons & Birchall, 2009). These include the satisfaction of *'needs'* and the pursuit of *'incentives'*. *Needs-based* motivational explanations for participation assume that people are motivated to act in order to reduce internal tensions caused by unmet needs (Jones et al, 1977; Thomas, 1982; Sharp, 1984); for example *deficiency needs* (e.g. physiological, security, social) that arise due to deprivation, and *growth needs* that do not stem from a lack of something,

but from the desire to grow as a person (cf. Maslow, 1943). PUBLICATION 1 acknowledges the duration and/or intensity of such needs as important 'pre-conditions' for participation.

However, PUBLICATION 1 also moves on to examine *incentive-based* motivational explanations. Here, in general, people are pulled toward behaviours that offer positive incentives and pushed away from behaviours associated with negative incentives. However, as the work of Kahneman and Tversky makes clear, positive incentives (including averting a loss) have to be obtainable in order to be motivating, and incentives only become powerful if the individual places importance on them (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Tversky & Kahneman, 1992). Motivation, then - as the force that drives goal-oriented behaviours toward people's interests - is concerned with:

- *Direction* (i.e. the choices and decisions people make in orienting their behaviour, including whether people act intentionally to achieve certain outcomes, whether people expect to achieve that outcome, and how highly people value that outcome).

- *Maintenance* (i.e. the persistence people demonstrate in relation to certain behaviours, guided by their ability to reliably generate the desired outcomes, their level of interest and enjoyment in the activity, the extent to which the activity adds to a sense of homeostasis and growth, and their level of commitment)

4.4.1 Involvement and Participation: The Role of Self-Interest

Many popular theories of motivation assume self-interest to be the key driver of behaviour (e.g. Schwarz, 1986; Deci & Ryan, 2000; Miller, 1999). Here, individuals' decisions in relation to a specific goal involve a 'rational' choice between alternatives, determined through a calculation of expected utility (e.g. Buchanan & Tullock, 1962; Muller et al, 1991), taking account of the available information and probability of events (e.g. Simon, 1957; March, 1994). Such insights are broadly discussed in PUBLICATION 1, which uses George Homans' more general, social-psychological 'social exchange theory' (Homans, 1961; 1974; see also Molm, 2000; 2003) to assess the individualistic costs and benefits of participation.

Such perspectives inform Mancur Olson's seminal contribution, 'The Logic of Collective Action' (1965; 1971), which argues that:

> *'Unless the number of individuals in a group is quite small, or unless there is coercion or some other special device to make individuals act in their common interest, rational, self-interested individuals will not act to achieve their common or group interests'* (Olson, 1971: 2).

For Olsonian rational choice theorists, involvement and participation activities are therefore subject to the objection that, as rational individuals, they will either (i) 'free-ride' on others'

contributions, or (ii) remain inactive to avoid being 'suckered' into doing all the work on other actors' behalf (Simpson, 2006).

Self-interest and rational choice remain important and widely-held motivational explanations. However, this is not to say that these perspectives have not been subject to a number of criticisms (Green & Shapiro, 1994; Etzioni, 1988; Mansbridge, 1990; Douglas, 1986). For this thesis, perhaps the most important of these is the empirical paradox that *some people do participate*. Baron et al (1992, 114-116) sum this up:

> *'In almost every setting, behaviour is multiply determined. The most obvious motive is self-interest; all other things being equal, you are likely to choose that alternative which yields the most positive tangible outcomes to you. However, that cannot be the only alternative at work. If it was, people would rarely if ever cooperate in social situations… Yet we know that people often do cooperate. Clearly other motives also come into play'.*

For Finkel et al (1989), narrow rational choice explanations therefore predict excessive abstention, and are better in explaining why individuals *do not* participate rather than why they do. Nevertheless, attempts to 'broaden' rational choice to accommodate variables such as *'expressive incentives'* and *'altruism'* (e.g. Muller & Opp, 1986; 1987; Whiteley & Seyd, 1996) are widely considered to stretch the individualism underpinning Olson's model beyond its natural breaking point (e.g. Finkel & Muller, 1998; Margolis, 1987). This suggests a need to engage a wider set of perspectives to consider what motivates people's involvement and participation.

4.4.2 Involvement and Participation: the Roles of 'Collective Self-Interest' and 'Collective Interest'

In moving 'beyond self-interest' (Mansbridge, 1990), the focus shifts to people's connections with a wider group. Social motivation theories accept that social relationships may shape the direction in which individuals pursue their activities (Geen, 1991); for example, 'social learning theory' (which asserts that behaviour is 'encoded' through the observation of others, particularly those with whom people most closely relate; Bandura, 1977) and 'social comparison theory' (which argues that individuals seek to corroborate their views and opinions with trusted others about what 'seems right'; Festinger, 1954). Such processes are argued to help individuals establish how their self-interest 'fits into the bigger picture' (Baron et al, 1992).

Further beyond self-interest, however, recent theories of social co-operation show how an individual's outcomes often depend on what Kurt Lewin (1948: 165) calls an 'interdependence of fate'. While competition rather than co-operation is often expected in zero-sum interactions, many interactions are 'non-zero-sum' (whereby gains by one person do not entail an equivalent loss by another). Here people's interdependence often leads them to co-operate in optimizing

their joint welfare. In this way, people's behaviour may be governed either by their *'collective self-interest'* (where individuals gain more by acting together than alone), or their *'collective interest'* (where the outcomes from co-operation serve to promote the 'collective good' of a wider community/society) (Streeck & Schmitter, 1985).

For Baron et al (1992: 110), human life therefore presents 'a variety of interesting 'mixed motive' situations'. This includes situations in which people co-operate to optimise their collective interests, even if this means accepting less than their own personal maximum return (Van Lange et al, 2014). Indeed, insights from game theory such as 'the tragedy of the commons' (Hardin, 1968; Ostrom, 1990) and 'prisoner's dilemma' (e.g. Poundstone, 1992) show that co-operative strategies can often be more effective than non-co-operative strategies over time (e.g. Axelrod, 1984; 1997; Bowles & Gintis, 2011; Nowak, 2011). Moreover, Dawes and his colleagues have shown how people may come to care more about their group's collective outcomes than their personal outcomes (e.g. Dawes, 1980; Dawes et al, 1986; 1988; Dawes & Thaler, 1988), and Tyler and his colleagues have shown how people often care more about collective social fairness than individual material gain (e.g. Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler, 2010). In contrast with rational choice, social co-operation theories therefore establish a firm basis for people acting together.

4.4.3 Implications and Questions for this Thesis

Motivational explanations for participation are important in the extent to which they reflect the pursuit of (i) a highly individuated perspective in which others' concerns are either secondary or simply unconsidered, or (ii) a more inclusive perspective in which personal concerns are sufficiently overlapping to be either concurrent or indistinguishable with those of the wider group (Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996). In particular, this leads us to ask the following question:

Q5. What are the motivations of service users to participate?

[These issues are addressed particularly in this thesis in PUBLICATIONS 1, 2, *and* 5. *See Figure 13 (p.229) and Section 6.2.5]*

4.5 Activational Explanations for Participation

People's motivations provide direction for their involvement and participation and help explain whether or not they maintain these behaviours over time. However, there is a need to consider several important factors that influence why they 'get started'. These include: (i) the catalysing role of service *issues* that are important to people; (ii) whether people have confidence in the *opportunities* for involvement and participation with which they are provided; and (iii) the importance of '*mobilisation attempts*' (or 'being asked').

4.5.1 Issue Relevance /Issue Framing

The presence of service issues is often an important precursor for participation. Sharp (1984: 667/661) observes that 'for citizens who see no major problems, participation is a discretionary act, keyed to tastes, expectations, civic orientations and political resource differences'. Parry et al (1992: 63) concur: 'some individuals feel unable to identify any problems or needs that might lead to personal intervention in the public domain. Others, by contrast, have a number of burning questions about which they feel impelled to take action'. 'Issue relevance' is widely identified as important in engaging potential participants. Oliver (1984) identifies such issues as 'concerns about problems' and/or 'an interest in the common good'. Thus, for Klandermans and Oegema (1987: 519) a 'mobilization potential' is created by a sense that 'certain states of affairs are unacceptable'.

For Barkan et al (1995), the salience of an issue may be related to a sense of 'relative deprivation' (i.e. 'the perception that one's membership group is in a disadvantageous position, relative to some other group'; McAdam, 1996: 35), or to an 'ideological concern'. Hirschman (1991) outlines how such concerns may arise as a result of 'reactionary' forces (e.g. in response to perceived 'perversity' or 'jeopardy'), or more 'progressive' ones (e.g. the pursuit of 'synergies'). Yet perceptions and representations of such 'issues' may lead to alternative framings by different stakeholders (e.g. as 'technical' rather than 'political'). Users' issues may therefore be 'depoliticised', or simply 'excluded or marginalised' (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 149-150). It is therefore an achievement for service users to have their issues recognised and accepted for debate.

4.5.2 Opportunities and Constraints

The identification and representation of issues is important. However, this cannot happen unless opportunities exist to do so (Jackson & Rucks, 1993). As Franklin (2001: 126) observes, 'access points have been created to give the average person opportunities to interact with government. These access points are designed to ensure that politicians and administrators are responsive to individual citizens, the general public and the sub-publics they serve'. This includes online opportunities (such as FixMyStreet and Patient Opinion; cf. Lupton, 2014).

Potential participants need to be aware of these opportunities (Richardson, 1983). As discussed above, people's integration into networks facilitates mobilization attempts via 'recruitment agents' (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Snow et al, 1986). Recruitment through more indirect and impersonal methods (e.g. mailings; telephone; leafleting) is generally considered to be less

effective (Whiteley & Seyd, 1998). Yet in either case, the extent and reach of 'publicity' can often be sub-optimal (Newman & Clarke, 2009a).

A lack of awareness provides one barrier to participation. Others include practical obstacles, such as the timing of meetings, accessibility of meeting venues, availability of childcare facilities, and so on (Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; McAdam, 1986). However, as Kelly and Breinlinger (1996: 146) point out, 'the removal of practical obstacles to participation does not of itself provide a positive reason for participation'. Positive reasons are provided by 'good' opportunities to participate (Richardson, 1983), for example, making participation an 'enjoyable' process (e.g. balancing an instrumental 'task focus' with a more integrative 'social focus'; Wilcox, 1994), or by ensuring that 'due process' is followed. Hence, Webler et al (2001) suggest five general underpinning principles: that the process should be legitimate, promote a search for common values, realize democratic principles of fairness and equality, promote equal power among all participants and viewpoints, and foster responsible leadership.

Yet acceptance of these general principles does not imply agreement in the literature over the particular form the process should take, or that this should be restricted to a single communication channel. As Newman and Clarke (2009a: 146) observe: 'participation initiatives produce a series of unstable encounters and unpredictable outcomes. Such tensions cannot be resolved by simply choosing the 'right' set of techniques for a particular purpose'. In common with PUBLICATION 5, Lowndes et al (1998: 4) therefore observe that 'developing a range of participation methods to reach different citizens may, in many instances, be more important than seeking the elusive goal of 'representativeness' within a specific initiative'. Similarly, Barnes and Cotterell (2012: 233) assert that 'different voices are expressed in different ways and it is important not to mute such differences to conform to some presumed deliberative or stylistic norm'.

4.5.3 Mobilisation and 'Becoming Active'

Newman and Clarke (2009a: 152) express enthusiasm for the ability for different voices and experiences to be accommodated in the new and emerging sites and spaces of participation. Yet they also remain sceptical about these spaces' transformative potential, to the extent that they may be depoliticised, technicised and managerialised, and thereby framed in ways that offer only 'thin' forms of engagement.

One perspective here envisages mobilisation within a consumerist frame. Hence, Wensley (1990) presents visions of 'active consumers', both specifying the problem and participating in the delivery process by a 'supplier', in an attempt to maximise their personal utility (cf. Shackley &

Ryan, 1987). However, other perspectives move beyond notions of public service users as simply 'active choosing agents' (Simmons & Powell, 2009; Gabriel & Lang, 2006), who may nevertheless be 'nudged' into making better choices (John et al, 2009; Jones et al, 2013a; b; Wilkins, 2013).

Such perspectives frame public service users as 'active citizens' (activated by the responsibilities of 'good citizenship'; e.g. Clarke, 2005; Newman & Tonkens, 2011) or 'active communities' (activated by shared norms and goals; e.g. Newman & Clarke, 2009a; Osborne et al, 2016). For example, Alford (2002: 344) observes that 'in some of the contributions a government agency seeks from clients, they are not simply consuming goods or services but contributing by positive actions to collective purposes as 'co-producers''. Hence, for Keat et al (1994: 15):

> *'One cannot simply assume that the preferences of individual users are sacrosanct (i.e. consumer authority): questions of value and policy inevitably arise, which should be debated and decided by people acting collectively as citizens in the democratic, political domain, rather than as individual consumers in a quasi-economic one.'*

People may therefore refuse to be boxed in to the roles that are intended for them within the provided sites and spaces of participation. Users may seek to co-produce rather than simply *choose* (Osborne & Strokosch, 2013; Radnor et al, 2014; Bovaird, 2007; Simmons & Powell, 2009). Or they may seek to involve themselves in whether providers are 'doing the right things' rather than 'doing things right' (Skelcher, 1993; Stewart, 1996), thereby (re-)politicising matters deliberately framed by providers in exclusively 'technical' or 'managerial' terms. Hence, as people become active, many become 'enthusiasts':

> *'They want to make a difference; are willing to spend their time and energies in helping to make a difference; and the difference that they want to make is usually one that will, they hope, be of benefit to others'* (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 152; cf. Seargeant & Steele, 1998; 1999).

In doing so, they may position themselves as *insiders* or *outsiders* (e.g. Maloney et al, 1994; Taylor, 2007), or as *defenders* or *protestors* (Piette, 1990). Indeed, some may become 'radicalised'. In another seminal text, Saul Alinsky (1969: 23) identifies 'radicals' as those: *'concerned with fundamental causes, who face the issues squarely, completely identify with their people, give themselves completely to the cause, dream of a better world and, finally, rebel against authority'*. The mobilisation by service providers of service users from passive to active roles and positions can therefore be unpredictable, creating new sets of expectations and demands that may exceed the intentions and terms of the mobilisers.

Indeed, PUBLICATION 3 points out that mobilising people through opportunities that fail to meet their expectations is likely to be counterproductive. First, it can turn people's attitudes from

positive to negative. Second, it can make it very difficult to mobilise them again in the future. Hence, as Newman and Clarke (2009a: 182) put it:

> *'Once imagined and summoned, we should not be surprised if publics don't turn up (or don't return), if they think they are someone else, or if they find another 'we' that enthuses, enthrals or engages them more'.*

4.5.4 Implications and Questions for this Thesis

Activational explanations for participation are important. Unless an adequate and attractive opportunity structure for user voice is created, there are no spaces within which the contest between interests and ideas can take place. An adequate and attractive opportunity structure connects with the issues that matter most to service users, and allows participation and involvement to take place in ways that meet their expectations. In practice, various mechanisms exist within the public services for the expression of user voice, but as PUBLICATION 5 makes clear, rarely are they considered together or users consulted about how they become mobilised. This leads to the following questions:

Q6. What mechanisms for participation and involvement are made available to public service users? How do users choose between/become mobilised into these alternative mechanisms? Once mobilised, how do they experience and evaluate them?

[These issues are addressed particularly in this thesis in PUBLICATIONS 1, 2, *and* 5. *See Figure 13 (p.229) and Section 6.2.6]*

4.6 Subject-Object Relational Explanations for Participation

The existence of service 'issues', and nature of the opportunities for users to voice their views about them, further requires the examination of two sets of relationships. First, users' relationships with the 'object' of those issues – the service itself. Second, users' relationships with 'others' with whom it is necessary to engage if change is to be made. This section addresses the first of these sets of relationships. Section 4.7 addresses the second.

4.6.1 The Representation of 'Objects'

Within public services, Rugge (2013: 44) suggests that a place needs to be reserved for the *'contexted object'* (an object that is or has to be put in a context). This object may be the service as a whole, or some more specific aspect of it. Objects may be both tangible (e.g. buildings, reports, processes, systems) and intangible (e.g. narratives, concepts, common ideologies) (Thomas and Hardy, 2007: 6). For Dowding and John (2012: 21), 'we identify with objects to the

extent that they are tied to our personal history… to the extent that they form part of us'. Campbell (1995: 114) concurs: 'objects have meaning to their owners because of the part that they have played (or still play) in their life experiences'. Holt (1997: 335) therefore argues that research needs to focus on how people 'understand, evaluate and appreciate objects'. For public service users, this 'meaning' may in part be constructed by 'the anxieties and desires that connect and mobilise them' (Hoggett, 2003: 9) - such as challenging inequalities, or 'enacting principles of open access, fairness and equitable treatment' (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 185).

Similarly, for public service *providers*, Knorr-Cetina (1997: 13) argues that: 'object worlds make up the embedding environments in which expert work is carried out' and that 'objects of knowledge are the goal of expert work'. Importantly, PUBLICATION 4 suggests that public service providers and users occupy similar 'object worlds' and pursue similar 'objects of knowledge'. Indeed, it can be claimed such objects represent 'boundary objects', whose meanings are dynamic, and over which actors need to engage in constant negotiation (Star & Griesemer, 1989; Sullivan & Williams, 2012).

These objects form important elements of the 'fields of relationships' that are created in the public services (Newman & Clarke, 2009b). Wagner et al (1999: 95) sum this up:

> 'It is presupposed that an object is social not by virtue of some immanent characteristics, but by virtue of the way people <u>relate</u> to it. People attribute features and meanings to an object which make it a part of their social world. <u>Talk</u> and <u>overt action</u> provide the frame of description within which the relationship between objects and subjects is defined''. (emphasis added)

Talk and *overt action* are clearly fundamental to user involvement and participation. However, their place in the relationship between 'subjects' (such as sevice users and providers) and 'objects' (public services) is also fundamental to understanding their potential. For example, while Star and Griesemer (1989) identify boundary objects as productive and synthetic, functioning as 'anchors' and 'bridges', this conceptualisation has been challenged by critics, who argue that boundary objects may also act as 'barricades and mazes' generating conflict and reinforcing boundaries and existing power relations by protecting or privileging different interests, frames of reference or occupational positions rather than creating new shared understandings (Sullivan & Williams, 2012: 701; cf. Oswick & Robertson, 2009).

This raises two issues, each of which will be considered in turn. First, the way that different representations of objects serve to condition public service fields of relationships. Second, the way

that this may be mediated by different subjects' depth of connection with and/or extent of investment in an object in a particular context.

<u>Differing Representations of Objects</u>

In another seminal text in its field, Laaksonen (1994) identifies three levels of connection between 'subjects' and 'objects' (see Figure 6).

'OWNERSHIP' SYSTEM
(the outermost triangle)

USAGE SYSTEM
(the middle triangle)

PERFORMANCE SYSTEM
(the innermost triangle)
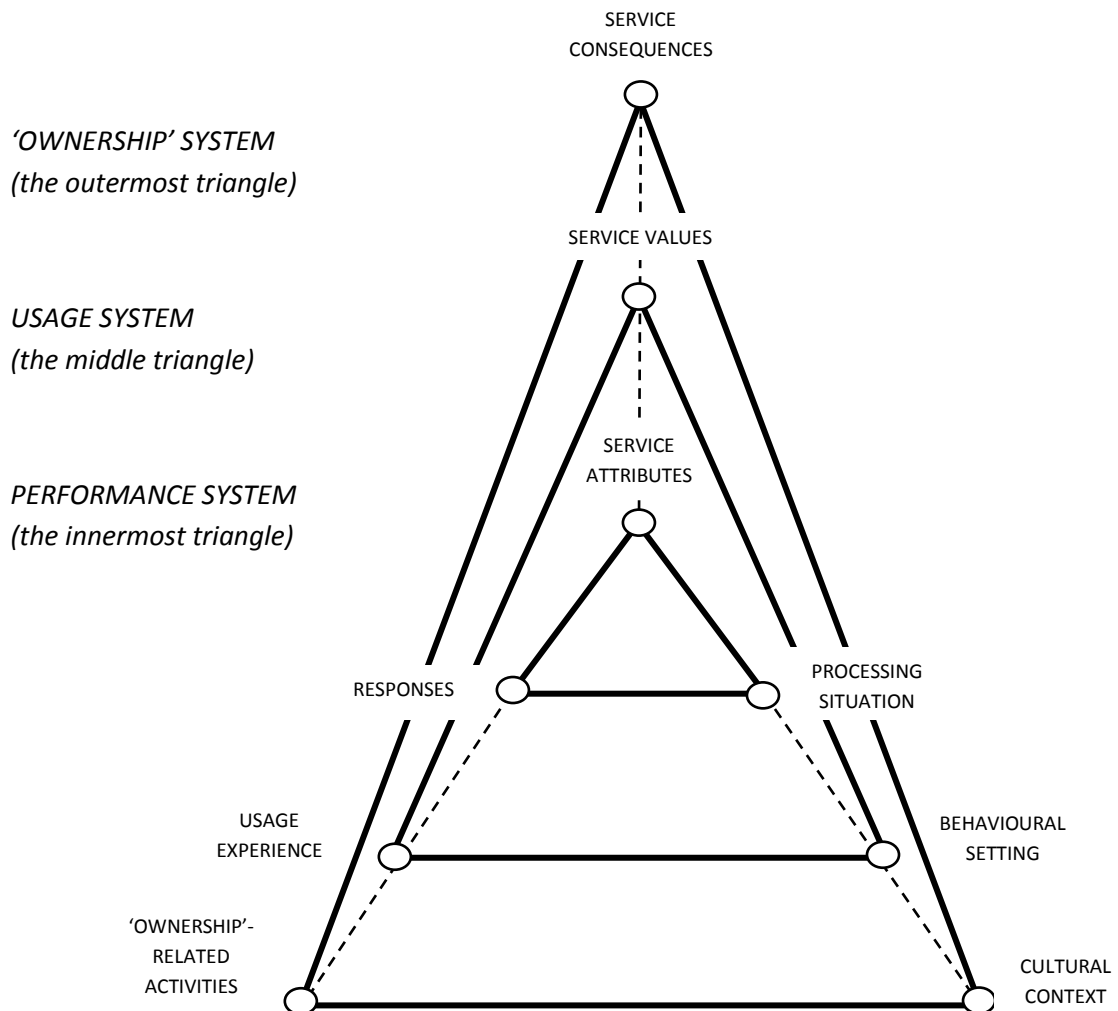
Figure 6: *Levels of Connection Between Subjects and Objects in Particular Service Contexts*
(Source: adapted from Rajaniemi & Laaksonen, 1989; Laaksonen, 1994)

At the first and most immediate level (the 'performance system'), the perceived quality of service attributes at the point of delivery defines the subject-object relationship. At the second, slightly less tangible level (the 'usage system'), the subject-object relationship is defined by the emergent consequences created by the service. At the third, least tangible level (the 'ownership system'), the subject-object relationship focuses on the values and responsibilities associated with 'ownership' of the object.

At each level, the representation of objects may be different for different subjects such as service providers and users (but also elected officials, regulators, ombudsmen, and so on). This may or may not be important. If each subject is satisfied that an object they *'care about'* is being *'cared for'* satisfactorily (i.e. so that its attributes are optimised to generate valued consequences), significant concern is unlikely. If not, however, things may be considered sub-optimal. This is exemplified in Figure 7. Here, the relationship providers have with the service (in terms of 'talk' in the 'ownership system') ('O') lead to 'overt actions' in the 'performance system' ('P'), with perverse consequences for the end-user in the 'usage system' ('U').
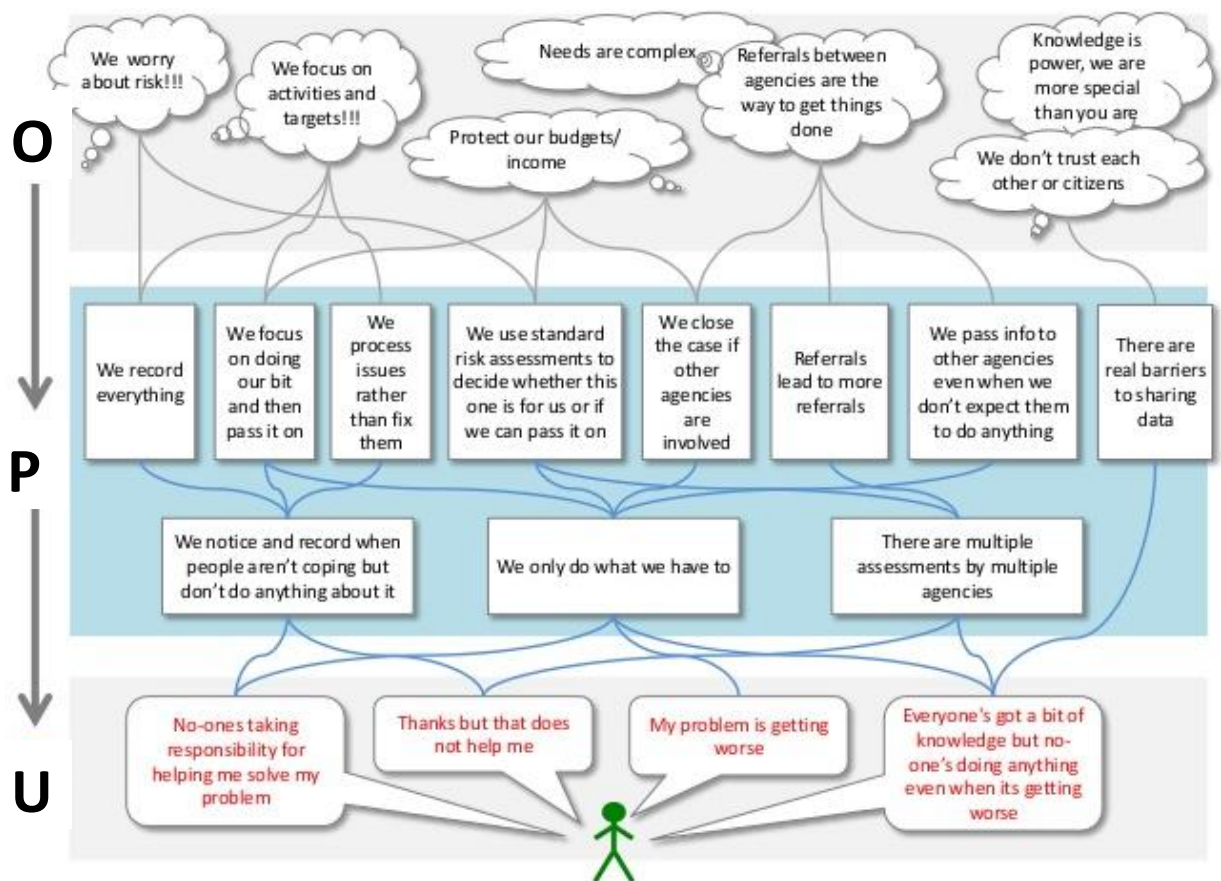
Figure 7: *Talk, Overt Action and Consequences in Public Service Systems*
(Source: *Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive of Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils.
Presentation at SCVO's 'Putting the Public into Public Services' event, Edinburgh, 25th July 2014)*

Pellizzoni (2001: 59) observes that, between subjects, 'sometimes principles and factual descriptions are profoundly different and conflicts are deep-lying', but that 'seemingly intractable controversies may be faced at the level of practices, looking for local, contextual answers'. This may be easier at the frontline, where not only do staff tend to be closer to the end-user, but their position in the service system means their representations of the service (as 'object') may also be more congruent with those of users (Hoggett et al, 2006; Mayo et al, 2007). In this way, as long-

standing arguments have claimed, enlightened street-level bureaucrats may use their discretion to extend the limits of accepted service norms (e.g. Lipsky, 1980; 2010; Hupe & Hill 2007).

Depth of Connection

The depth of connection with an object is also important. For Dowding and John (2012: 21) there are two components to this: 'one's identification with the object, and the amount one has invested in that object'. This investment may not be financial, but cathectic (i.e. involving the investment of mental or emotional energy). As a result, the extent of different stakeholders' identification with and/or investment in an object in a particular context may be high, medium, low – or non-existent.

Users' 'disconnection' may be dangerous here, presenting the risk of 'manipulation by elites' who seek to exploit this lacuna (Manza & Cook, 2002: 644; cf. PUBLICATION 3). Where users are 'connected', but not deeply, Laaksonen (1994) asserts that the 'performance system' at the lowest level of connection has a relatively strong influence, with considerable attenuation or absence of involvement in the 'usage' and 'ownership' systems. At this low level of connection, users' active involvement and participation projects predominantly focus on the material and technical characteristics of a service situation.

Finally, for those service users that are more deeply connected with the service, Laaksonen's (1994) three systems interact to a much greater extent. Here, it is not only the service's attributes, but its consequences and associated values that are influential in guiding users' relationship with the service. At this higher level, users' active involvement and participation projects may seek to re-orientate or rebalance the values of the service – despite the fact this may not be on the agenda in some of the depoliticised, technicised and managerialised spaces for involvement and participation in the current public service environment. Hence, as Denhardt (1981: 631-33) points out, policymakers too often apply 'technical rules to the solution of immediate problems, whereby technical concerns displace political and ethical concerns as the basis for public decision making…. The result is a new consciousness in which the world is viewed in terms of technique'. For Newman and Clarke (2009a: 184), 'any project of re-politicisation must have therefore a double character: one aspect is political struggle, the other is recognition that making things public involves conflicts of politics and power' (emphasis added).

4.6.2 Projectivity

The notion of users' 'active involvement projects' is important. For Archer (2003: 6): *'A project is a human device, be it individual or collective…it involves an end that is desired, however tentatively*

or nebulously, and also some notion, however imprecise, of the course of action through which to achieve it'. For Archer, such 'projectivity' is an inherent component of human agency (cf. Emirbayer & Mische, 1998). In yet another seminal contribution, Bauer and Gaskell (1999: 167-168) suggest that <u>subjects</u>, <u>objects</u> and <u>projects</u> form 'a system of mutual constitution', whereby 'projects' are constructed by the relations (or attempted relations) between different subjects with regard to an object of common concern. Jovchelovitch (2007: 35; see Figure 8) shows how communication and action can take place between these different elements.
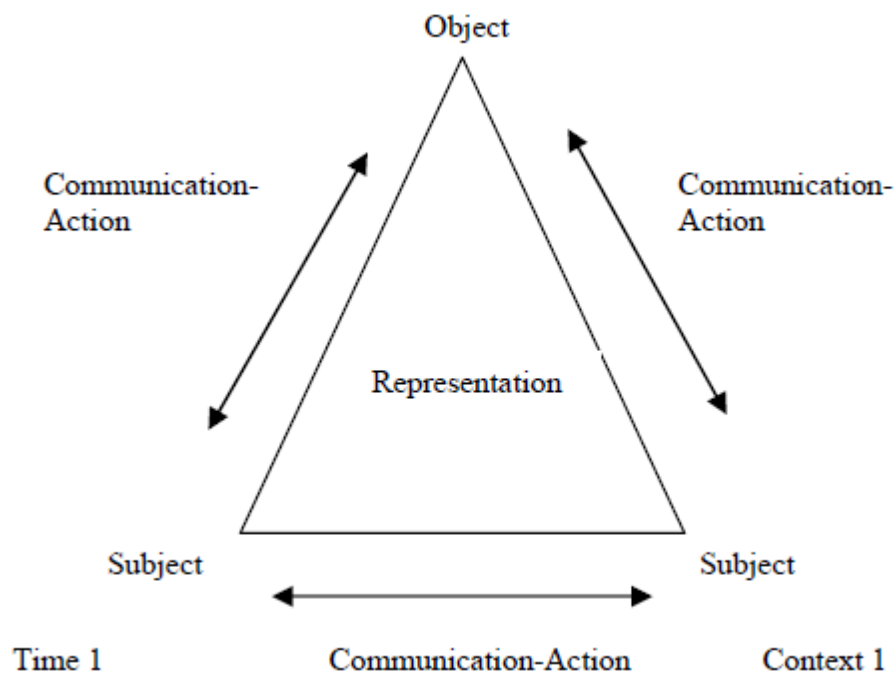
Figure 8: *Communication and Action between Subjects in Relation to a Common Object*
(Source: Jovchelovitch, 2002; 2007)

Public service users' 'projectivity' encompasses the pursuit of 'specific political-cultural projects that aim to either fix or change aspects of social formations' (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 8). Indeed, Newman and Clarke (2009a: 7) advance the view that:

> *'the proliferation of projects, innovations and contestations around publics and public services makes us wary of announcements of the death or decline of the public. Publicness remains a site of significance: the focus of material and symbolic investments'.*

Yet as Newman and Clarke (2009a: 8) point out, 'such projects are usually contested'. This resonates with Holt's (1997) characterisation of objects as 'symbolic resources' that allow for significant variation in interpretation and use, depending on people's cultural-institutional

perspectives. Hence, Newman and Clarke (2009a: 8) recognise 'the political-cultural work that has to be done to mobilise both meanings and people in order to realise a project'. However, it is not always possible to foresee the impediments that certain projects would encounter. As Newman and Clarke (2009a: 179) point out: 'participation initiatives oscillate – unpredictably – between being enabling/empowering and being constraining/controlling'. In this way, 'the transformative potential of public participation is _shaped_ through the interaction of different political orientations and practices in different contexts… [and] _conditioned_ by the way in which a series of political and policy tensions are negotiated' (Newman & Clarke, 2009a: 139/152; emphasis added).

4.6.3 Implications and Questions for this Thesis

Subject-object relational explanations for participation are important. The extent to which people 'care about' an object can affect how they wish to see it 'cared for', in order to optimise its ability to generate the desired consequences. However, different levels of connection and representations of the object by different 'subjects' can lead to differences in the 'projects' that they each pursue in relation to it. As such, subject-object relations form an essential part of the 'fields of relationships' within which the talk and action of involvement and participation take place. This leads us to ask the following questions:

Q7. How important is the 'depth of connection' to a public service for service users' participation and involvement? Does this influence the 'projects' they seek to pursue in relation to such services?

[These issues are addressed particularly in this thesis in PUBLICATIONS 3, 4, 5 *and* 6. *See Figure 13 (p.229) and Section 6.2.7]*

4.7 Subject-'Other' Relational Explanations for Participation

Subject-object relationships are not the only essential part of public service 'fields of relationships'. These also include users' relationships with various 'others' with whom it is necessary to engage in pursuit of their projects.

4.7.1 The Articulation of Relations between Actors

The Problem of Articulation

For Newman and Clarke (2009a: 45), the question of people's relationships with the state remains a critical issue. Tovey et al (2001) and Dean (2003) take a citizenship perspective, directly linking voice in public services to citizens' ability to have their needs-based claims recognised and assert their political and social rights. Potter (1988: 162), meanwhile, takes a 'consumerist' perspective:

'[Public service] consumerism … demands a searching review of the <u>relationship</u> between providers and those for whom services are provided, and a fundamental shift in perspective that places the interest of consumers and the wider public at the heart of the way services are planned, delivered and evaluated'

Yet whether users' projects involve the 'recognition of claims', the 'assertion of rights' or the 'interests of consumers', they necessarily take place within an overlapping series of other (potentially) contentious relationships; for example, between the local and the national; between agencies; and between conflicting policy objectives (Newman & Clarke, 2009a). For Newman and Clarke (2009a: 8), therefore: 'articulation denotes the political-cultural work that has to be done to mobilise both meanings and people in order to realise a project'. Given such conditions, it is not difficult to see how users' projects might get sidelined.

However, as distance grows beyond a certain point between service users and providers, this can become problematic. In particular, as Hoggett (2003: 3) points out, 'failure to recognise value pluralism and welcome rather than fear conflict' is likely to result in greater negativity and disconnection. This has left authorities at both the national and local level 'increasingly concerned about the gap between citizens on the one hand and elected politicians and civil service on the other' (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000: 366).

<u>Competing Legitimacies</u>

This 'complex' of contentious relationships builds on a number of factors: for example, the legitimacy of inequalities between groups, the existence of cognitive alternatives to the status quo, practical constraints on claiming valued resources, the actions of dominant group members, and the issue of power (Reicher, 2004). Resolving these issues requires careful negotiation. In this way, Barnes and Prior (2009: 206) observe that 'officials and citizens are actively engaged in a process of working out what is the 'right thing to do' in particular contexts…It is this process of 'working out' that we mean by *<u>agency</u>*" (emphasis added). Users' sense of agency (or lack of agency) is therefore at least partly explained by the ways these relational issues are resolved (or remain unresolved).

Potter (1988: 162) contends that: 'Politicians and professionals need constantly to test their assumptions against the views and experiences of those whose interests they serve'. For DeLeon and DeLeon (2002: 244) this is particularly applicable 'in settings where goals are ambiguous and conflicting and means are uncertain'. Yet Potter (1988: 163) argues that 'it requires an imaginative leap to consider consumers as <u>equals</u> in a three-cornered exchange with politicians (who possess the power) and professionals (who possess the skills and expertise, and any delegated or assumed

power as well)'. She therefore asks: 'How far does public administration *want* to redress the imbalance of power that exists between providers and users or citizens?' (Potter, 1988: 163; cf. Hoggett, 1995).

'User Empowerment'

Work in the empowerment tradition has developed a more nuanced analysis of power relationships in public services. For example, Skelcher (1993; Skelcher et al, 2005) shows how providers' ability to control the dialogic agenda means they may reserve to themselves 'higher order' issues at the 'discursive core' (e.g. values, beliefs, attitudes), including users only at 'lower orders' of discourse (e.g. organisational policy and practice). Similarly, Barnes et al (2003: 396) highlight how public officials' power in setting the agenda and defining the formal rules of dialogue may serve to marginalize the voices of 'counter-publics'. Participation and involvement processes therefore may be subject to patterns of inclusion and exclusion, centrality and marginalisation, and/or domination and subordination (Newman and Clarke (2009b: 67-81), allowing some voices to be heard (and their experience made visible) whilst others are rendered silent or invisible (Newman, 2011: 481).

In another seminal contribution to the participation literature, Arnstein's (1969; 1971) 'ladder of participation' encapsulates these ideas in a framework that seeks to capture the extent to which citizens and public service users can get involved and influence the services they receive. For Arnstein, the lower rungs on the ladder are not about empowerment at all, but simply 'therapy' or 'manipulation'; higher rungs of the ladder allowed information-giving, consultation, negotiation, and citizen self-determination (see Figure 9). This work has led to some notable developments in theory and application in a range of fields (e.g. Thompson, 2007; Jackson, 2001; White 1996). While it has been criticised in various ways, for example, in various 'missing rungs', the conflation of means and ends, and the representation of higher rungs on the ladder as progressively more appropriate for citizens and service users (e.g. Burns et al, 1994; Tritter & McCallum, 2006), it continues to have resonance and remains widely cited in the public service environment.
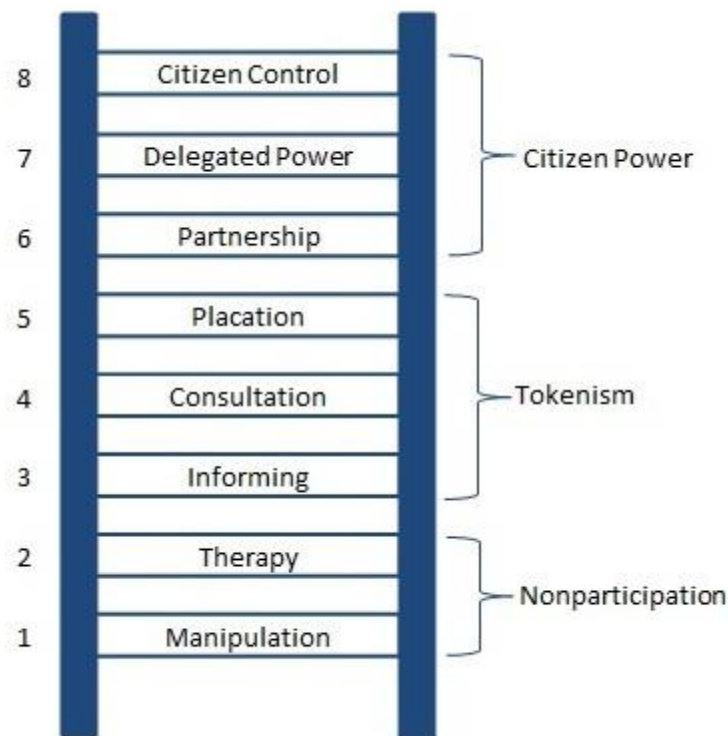
Figure 9: *Arnstein's 'Ladder of Participation'*

4.7.2 Dynamics of Intersubjectivity

Another seminal social science contribution is potentially informative here; Fiske's (1991) widely-cited typology of 'intersubjective dynamics' (see Figure 10). This may be linked with different characterisations of how power is assembled and reproduced (as either 'power over', 'power with', or 'power to') help to illuminate authority structures within the confined space of public service fields of relationships.

- *Authority Ranking* (based on legitimate asymmetries)
- *Communal Sharing* (based on stakeholder equivalence)
- *Equality Matching* (based on balancing differences), and
- *Market Pricing* (based on socially meaningful ratios or rates of exchange, in which money need not be the medium)

Figure 10: *Typology of Intersubjective Dynamics* **(Fiske, 1991)**

'Power over', linked with 'authority ranking', represents the ability of relatively powerful actors to affect the actions and thought of the relatively powerless. At an extreme, this can result in coercive and totalitarian regimes. Yet even where authority ranking is supposedly more benign and beneficent, it tends towards a paternalistic view of 'subordinates' as 'hapless, hopeless or helpless' (cf. Bauman, 2007), and therefore in need of authoritative interventions.

'Power to' may be linked with <u>'market pricing'</u>, whereby rights to participate are enjoyed by individuals and groups who are able to exchange valuable resources. 'Power to' may also be based on <u>'equality matching'</u>, whereby those who lack the resources to participate are otherwise enabled to do so. This can result in greater subsidiarity and self-determination, with the aspiration to put people in command of how resources are used 'efficiently' in ways that make sense to them.

'Power with' is instead linked with <u>'communal sharing'</u>. The focus here is on finding common ground among different interests and building mutual support, solidarity and collaboration. This can bring more co-productive relationships, in which stakeholders' talents and knowledges are multiplied in order to reduce conflict and promote innovation. This may be particularly helpful where providers *themselves* feel 'hapless, helpless or hopeless' - perhaps in the face of 'wicked problems'; e.g. Furnham, 2000; Grint, 2010).

In combination, these different forms of intersubjective dynamics within public service fields of relationships produce complex authority structures and unpredictable outcomes (Newman & Clarke, 2009a; Barnes et al, 2003; 2007). For example, where ostensibly powerful actors push for the maximum amount of control within public service fields of relationships ('power over'), this has often been shown to have perverse effects (e.g. Sieber, 1981; Hood, 1995). Such matters may be further compounded if self-interested provider opportunism (or 'knavish' behaviour; Le Grand, 2003; 2010) prompts the kind of user scepticism/cynicism implied on the widely-cited 1960s French poster: '*Je participe, tu participes, il participe, nous participons, vous participez, ils profitent'* (see Figure 11).

However, as Newman and Clarke (2009a: 140-141) observe, users' 'democratic' expectations of legitimacy, fairness, common values, equality and responsible leadership [i.e. 'power with'] may exceed the imaginings of providers', who may be unready to work inter-subjectively in this way. Accordingly, Newman and Clarke (2009a: 153) suggest that: 'those invited to encounters with power in its many forms may go away disheartened – perhaps power did not listen, or listened but took no notice'. This has clear implications for the important notion of 'perceived justice' around both *structural* aspects of decision-making (e.g. giving people a say, correcting errors, applying rules consistently, making unbiased decisions) and its *social* aspects (a more person-centred perspective, in which people are not only trusted with information, but also treated with dignity and respect) (Bies, 1987; Bies & Shapiro, 1987; 1988; Tyler & Bies, 1990; Tyler & Degoey, 1995; Cropanzano et al, 2001; Folger & Cropanzano, 2001).

Figure 11: *Popular 1960s French Political Poster*

Contandriopoulos (2004: 328) therefore suggests that 'appeals for more participation should be understood as pleas for the transformation of existing power relations'. Rowlands (1995) identifies a further useful classification of 'power' here; *power from within*. This involves changes in individuals' or groups' 'consciousness'. This suggests the availability of interpretive resources to help users understand the value positions and cultural context they encounter (cf. Bebbington et al, 2007). It also suggests an ability to recognise (and possibly mobilise against) the undesired effects of hegemonic power relations, especially those emerging at deeper structural levels and/or intermediate institutional levels in public service systems (cf. Kabeer, 2003).

Changing the Dynamics: a 'New Relationalism'?

Notions of 'person-centredness' are growing in importance (e.g. Bate & Robert, 2007; Murphy et al, 2013; Entwistle & Watt, 2013). This perspective has seen calls for a more 'relational state' that prioritises 'deeper' service relationships rather than 'shallow transactions', and a 'need for human relationships to be given a greater priority as a goal of policy' (Cooke & Muir, 2012; Muir & Parker, 2014). It is therefore claimed in PUBLICATION 5 that 'it is the lack of connection with service users' hopes, fears, expectations, dilemmas, and so on (indeed all the elements of the human condition) that marks the current lack of 'institutional responsiveness'. For Newman and Clarke (2009a: 185), this is all about 'how people experience their encounters and relationships with public services - being treated as a person, with respect, and as a partner in the business of trying to solve the problem'.

Individually, this form of relationship is contingent on 'a person in an authority role taking the other's perspective, minimizing the use of pressure and control and acknowledging the other's

feelings and perceptions' (Williams & Deci, 1996: 767; cf. Deci & Ryan, 1985; Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000). Collectively, it is contingent on a greater sense of togetherness, accommodative independence and a like-minded community (Archer, 2003). This can have a number of positive effects for involvement and participation. For leading motivational psychologists Deci and Ryan (2000: 128), when this form of relationship is supported people tend to be 'more creative, more trusting and more positive in emotional tone; they tend to have higher self-esteem and perceived competence; their behaviour tends to be appropriately persistent and they project less aggression'.

Personal service relationships between users and provider representatives at the _frontline_ are clearly important here (e.g. Needham, 2008; Mayo et al, 2007; Thompson, 2003), and there have recently been efforts to improve these - for example, in the 'creation of trust relationships, coalition building activities, and open communication through dialogue and feedback' (Franklin, 2001: 137). However, the 'new relationalism' remains less evident in the less-immediate relationship between users and public service _institutions_, where trust is in decline (e.g. Marquand 2004; Power Inquiry 2006; Lee & Young 2013), and a common perception is that senior managers and 'policy elites' beyond the frontline lack sufficient connection with the day-to-day reality of services and their users (e.g. Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000).

4.7.3 Implications and Questions for this Thesis

Subject-other relational explanations for participation are important because the work of 'articulation' in realising users' projects is often dependent upon mobilising 'others' – particularly provider representatives. In the face of competing legitimacies and adverse power relations, this can be challenging for users. However, the use of power can itself become problematic within public service 'fields of relationships', depending on the extent to which relational dynamics lead to a sense of perceived justice (or injustice) in particular contexts. For example, there are questions about whether transactional relations (e.g. based on resource dependencies) are sufficient to maintain the relationship, or whether more explicitly 'relational' (e.g. 'person-centred') strategies are important. This leads us to ask the following questions:

Q8. To what extent might users' relations with service providers be perceived as co-operative or conflictual, and with what effects? How is this mediated by prevailing patterns of power relations?

[These issues are addressed in ALL PUBLICATIONS *in this thesis. See Figure 13 (p.229) and Section 6.2.8]*

4.8 Cultural-Institutional Explanations for Participation

Intersubjective relationships are, at least in part, conditioned by the expectations of particular forms of conduct. Hence, for Fiske and Hartley (1978: 38), it is a '*culturally-determined inter-subjectivity*' which provides 'the broad principles by which people organise and interpret the reality with which they have to cope'.

Similarly, Vidaver-Cohen (1998) asserts that the work of service organizations involves '**technical'** processes (e.g. producing goods or services, structuring organizational activities) '**political'** processes (e.g. power distribution, strategy formation); and '**cultural'** processes (e.g. formal socialization practices, informal rituals, role models and language. Whilst clearly interlinked in practice, the contribution of cultural understandings to the public service environment is becoming increasingly widely-recognised (see Hood, 1998; Peck & 6, 2006). Indeed, 'culture change' is now commonly claimed as a key factor in promoting involvement and participation (e.g. Newman et al, 2004); perhaps within a 'public service-dominant approach' (Osborne, 2010; Osborne et al, 2012; 2015).

4.8.1 The Role of Culture and Institutions

Robert Hoppe (2011: 94) distinguishes between 'attitudinal' and 'inclusive' approaches to the study of culture. *Attitudinal* approaches define culture as 'a mental product of individuals', held in values, beliefs, norms and so on. To accommodate differences and generate congruence and order, there is an assumption that a 'unifying' governance culture is possible. *Inclusive* approaches assume 'multiple equilibriums' are possible, in which conceptual order is created in different cultural contexts 'through labels, categories and other principles of vision and division' (Hoppe, 2011: 94). These different cultural contexts have different effects on the thought and actions of individuals, who are engaged in a process of 'world-making' (Grendstad & Selle, 1999).

The Basis of 'Attitudinal' Approaches: Values, Beliefs and Norms in a 'Unifying' Culture

Attitudinal approaches and the mission to understand the basis of a 'unifying' governance culture have received attention in the participation literature since the seminal work on *The Civic Culture* by Almond and Verba (1963). Geertz's (1973) widely-used definition defines culture as 'a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life'. Kuper (1999) is more succinct, defining culture simply as 'a system of ideas and values'. Parsons (1991) argues that values in particular have a very central place in the interpenetration and social and cultural systems, directing attention to what is more and less important.

In this way, Brett (2000; 99) observes that cultural values and norms 'provide the philosophy underlying the society's institutions. At the same time, cultural institutions preserve cultural values and norms, give them authority, and provide a context for social interaction'. For Goodin (1996: 19), this results in 'organized patterns of socially constructed norms and roles, and socially prescribed behaviours expected of occupants of those roles, which are created and re-created over time'. The assumption here is that 'organizations tend to develop a dominant orientation and value set over time as they adapt and respond to challenges and changes in the environment' (Cameron, 2008: 433).

Values underpinning the governance, delivery and consumption of public services are undoubtedly important. Service providers have *values* that provide direction to their work and help them to make sense of what they are doing. Service users do, too, but their values only count when they are able to put them into practice. In relation to participation, Davies (1998: 263; emphasis added) points out that:

> *'Policy gives repeated emphasis on participation as a value to be understood and internalised. On one hand this can be lauded as an appropriate recognition of the importance of the cultural dimension to stimulating social and organisational change, especially in a context where hierarchical conceptions of relationships are embedded. However, on its own, unlinked to changed behaviour, this emphasis on participation as a value takes on the appearance of rhetoric'.*

In this way, values lead to more-or-less deeply-held, more-or-less articulate *beliefs* (about what is important and how we should measure success) and *norms* (which define what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour). In turn, cultural constellations of ideas and values find their expression in different public service settings in *structures* (such as organizations or bureaucratic sub-units) *systems* (such as operating systems, information systems, communications systems, maintenance systems, reward systems), *policies* (which codify principal goals and work methods), and *practices* (actual actions and behaviours). The prevailing organisational culture has therefore been implicated an important variable in the efficiency, effectiveness and equity of public service organisations (e.g. Jung et al, 2009).

Inclusive Approaches: Comparing, Contrasting and Combining Cultures

By contrast, inclusive approaches do not assume one homogeneous culture - nor do they see this as desirable. As Flemming (2004: 72) puts it, monocultures are widely recognised as being inherently unstable:

'Nature abhors monocultures. Forests with only one species of trees are sitting targets for devastating diseases. Institutions are also threatened by a monocultural environment. When monocultures occur, natural forces usually conspire to cause diversity to come about'

In this way, it is not clear that 'institutions think' only in one way (Douglas, 1986). Inclusive approaches suggest a plurality of cultural perspectives that social actors must negotiate in different contexts.

One inclusive approach that is becoming increasingly prominent is 'grid-group cultural theory' (CT) (Douglas 1970; 1982; 1992; Thompson et al 1990). In line with claims that the theory's two dimensions of 'grid' and 'group' 'grasp the fundamental nature of sociality' (Mamadouh, 1999: 396), CT has been argued to provide a simplifying model which reduces the complexity of the world but is still congruent with real world processes and actors' objectives (Jessop, 2003; cf. Simmons, 2016). The basic tenets of CT are outlined in PUBLICATION 5. 'High grid' cultures are heavily constrained by rules and ascribed behaviour, 'low grid' cultures much less so. Meanwhile, in 'high group' cultures, group membership is strong; in 'low group' cultures it is much weaker (see Figure 12).

	Low Group	High Group
High Grid	**'Fatalism'**	**'Hierarchy'**
Low Grid	**'Individualism'**	**'Egalitarianism'**

Figure 12: *The Grid-Group Matrix*

CT allows a more inclusive approach to the study of culture through the identification of the four 'cultural worldviews' in Figure 12, and in a further set of theoretical propositions. First, the *'requisite variety condition'* states that the four cultural biases need each other to be viable: each needs its rivals to define itself against (Thompson et al, 1990). In this way, the four different worldviews exist with one another in a state of permanent disequilibrium, tension and flux (Thompson et al, 1990). Second, the *'compatibility condition'* states that different and mutually irreconcilable value positions nevertheless need to be accommodated to maintain system viability (6, 2003). In this way, viable patterns arise when social relations and cultural worldviews are mutually supportive of each other. Acceptance of this condition supports the idea that rather than eliminating conflict altogether, a key task for the governance and delivery of public services is to successfully manage contradictions and incongruences.

Pierre and Peters (2000: 15) point out that each of GGCT's cultural worldviews 'addresses the problem of providing direction to social interactions in its own way…Each appears effective in solving some parts of the governance problem, but each also has its weaknesses'. However, the simultaneous recognition of all four worldviews, or 'biases', has advantages. As Thompson et al (1990: 96) put it, 'regimes that have largely excluded a cultural bias lose the wisdom attached to that bias'. If user voice is seen as a 'transfer' of knowledge/wisdom, then its expression from each of these worldviews must be seen as important. These issues are discussed at length in PUBLICATIONS 4 and 5. It is worth noting, however, that meeting people's varied expectations here can be challenging and, as Newman and Clarke (2009a: 62) observe, the 'contact zones' where providers and users meet can be 'profoundly unstable places'.

4.8.2 Negotiating Public Service Culture(s)

In sum, the huge literature on the construct of 'organizational culture' finds no fixed agreement as to its constituent components. For example, Holt (1997: 334) observes that 'a given object can be consumed in a variety of ways, depending on the cultural frameworks people apply when they interact with that object'. However, patterns of social relations in public services are often dependent on an 'inevitable instability' between a plurality of cultural perspectives (6, 2003). Hence, there is no guarantee of a match in the values, rules and roles that are internalised in service users those that are institutionalised in public service providers. If these are compatible there is 'cultural congruence'; if they are incompatible, there are 'culture clashes'.

Although she acknowledges there may be opportunity (or 'integrative potential') in differences, Brett (2000: 103) posits that where there are clashes, 'negotiations are likely to be less efficient, and agreements are likely to be suboptimal'. Jenkins and Gray (1992: 296) therefore recognise that 'change often requires a shift in values', but that 'such changes can involve considerable risk [and]… it must remain in doubt whether the will to take such risks exists'.

Cultural factors are therefore fundamental in the way public service users organise and interpret the 'reality' with which they have to cope. As Newman (2001) points out, how they negotiate this process impacts in important ways on the construction of conditions for, practices of, and outcomes from participation and involvement (cf. Barnes & Prior, 2009). Hence, for Richardson (1983: 115/94), 'participation can be seen as, in itself, a kind of institutional bargain between service providers and consumers…The two groups approach each other neither as friendly colleagues nor as hostile adversaries, but as some combination of the two; new alliances and cleavages develop over different issues and over time'.

4.8.3 Implications and Questions for this Thesis

Cultural explanations for participation are important because of the effects of culture on the thought and actions of individuals as they engage in the process of sense-making in particular public service contexts. Such effects relate to the values, beliefs and norms that influence the nature of institutional development. However, unless there is strong cultural congruence, there is no guarantee that these values, beliefs and norms are compatible with those that are 'internalised' by service users (cf. Goodin, 2000). This makes it important to have spaces for negotiating the way that public services are represented and reproduced within particular cultural formations - and (perhaps) for challenging those formations in the face of cultural conflict - as part of the processes of institutional design (Goodin, 1996; Skelcher & Torfing, 2010) and the ongoing 'institutional work' (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Cloutier et al, 2015) of public services. This leads us to ask the following questions:

Q9. How do cultural explanations help explain how the context for interaction between public service users and providers might be better understood? What are the implications of this for institutional design and/or the commitment of institutional effort?

[These issues are addressed particularly in this thesis in PUBLICATIONS 3, 4, 5 *and* 6. *See Figure 13 (p.229) and Section 6.2.9]*

4.9 Summary of Overarching Questions

The study of participation and involvement draws on a considerable range of conceptual and analytical resources. The seminal work in this field of, for example, Hirschman, Almond and Verba, Olson and Arnstein has been extensively developed over the last forty years. Seminal works from other fields (e.g. Tajfel & Turner, Fiske, Laaksonen, Bauer and Gaskell, Douglas) are added here with the aim of capturing greater diversity in the underpinning issues for participation and involvement in this thesis. It is argued that each of these strands of work has an enduring resonance for participation and involvement across a range of public service contexts. To recap, the key questions identified above are as follows:

Q1. On what basis is user/consumer involvement sought in different public service contexts and environments

Q2. How might the range of users' involvement and participation behaviours be characterised?

Q3. To what extent do resources act to support the effectiveness of user involvement and participation on an individual and a collective level?

Q4. To what extent do public service users' identities structure their expectations and experiences of involvement and participation?

Q5. What are the motivations of service users to participate?

Q6. What mechanisms for participation and involvement are made available to public service users? How do users choose between/become mobilised into these alternative mechanisms? And once mobilised/active, how do they experience and evaluate them?

Q7. How important is the 'depth of connection' to a public service for service users' participation and involvement? Does this influence the 'projects' they seek to pursue in relation to such services?

Q8. To what extent might users' relations with service providers be perceived as co-operative or conflictual, and with what effects? How is this mediated by prevailing patterns of power relations?

Q9. How do cultural explanations help explain how the context for interaction between public service users and providers might be better understood? What are the implications of this for institutional design and/or the commitment of institutional effort/institutional work?

5.0 Commentary on the Published Work

This chapter provides further, more detailed commentary on the published work in relation to the above. Figure 13 indicates where there are links between the six publications included in this thesis and the contextualising literatures. Section 5.1 then provides a brief synopsis of each of the six published papers, with a summary of their particular contributions to these literatures.
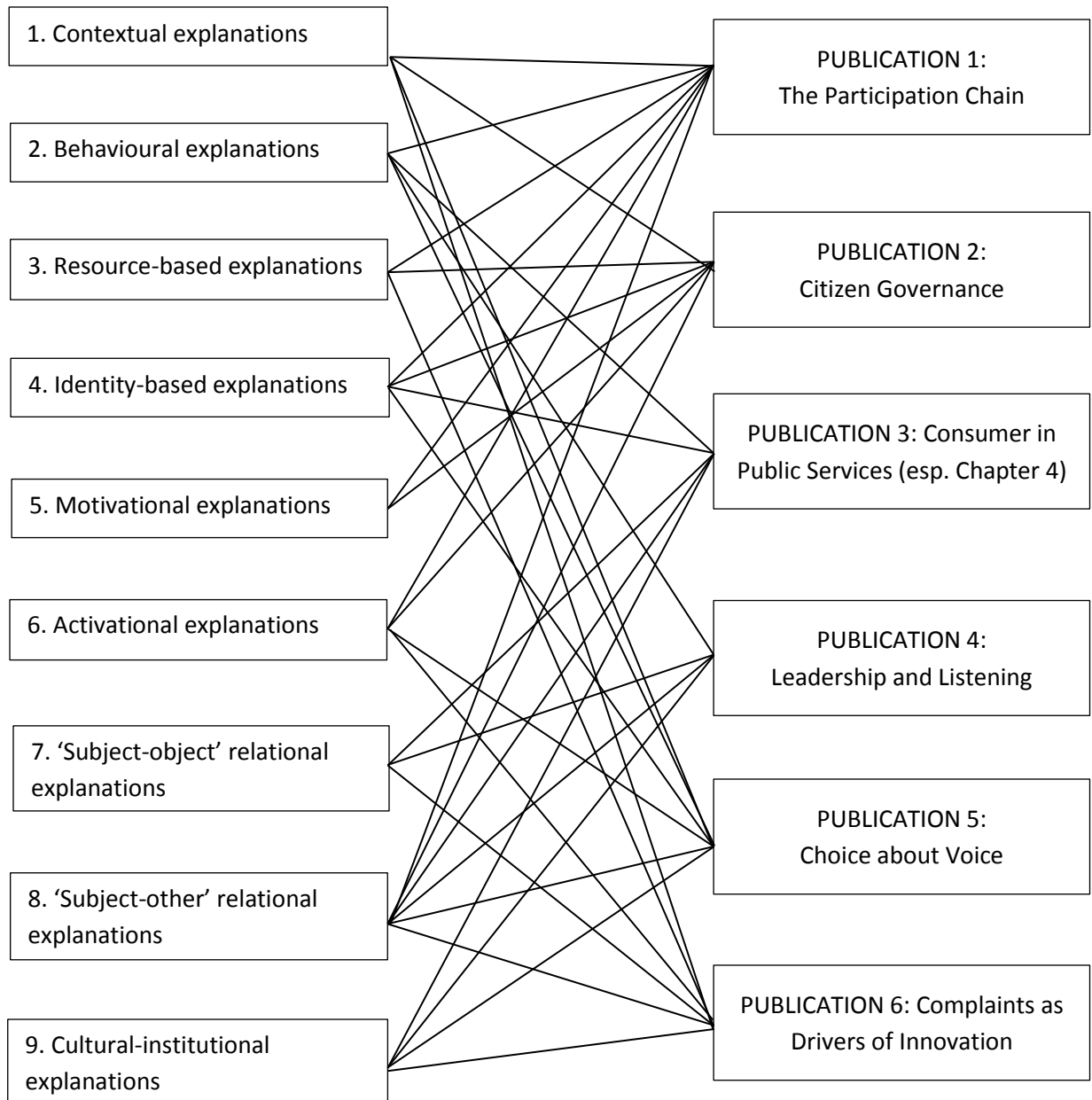
Figure 13: *Links between Thesis Publications and Contextualising Literatures*

5.1 Synopses and Contributions of the Published Works

In this Section, each of the publications in this thesis is briefly summarised in relation to the research project from which it emerged, its aims and objectives, methodology and methods, and

key results. The contribution of each publication to the literatures identified in Section 4 is then identified.

5.1.1 Publication 1: *'A Joined-up Approach to User Participation in Public Services: Strengthening the 'Participation Chain'' Social Policy and Administration,* **39 (3): 260-283**

This article brings together a number of key insights developed during the ESRC-funded research project entitled: *'A Theoretical Model of What Motivates Public Service Users to Participate'.*

Aim

To build understanding of why service users begin to participate, continue to participate over time and sometimes cease to participate in groups that aim to have some influence over the way in which public services are planned and delivered.

Objectives

- To provide a systematic framework that includes both 'demand-side', incentive-based explanations and 'supply-side' resource- and opportunity-based explanations for collective service user participation.

- To provide a more powerful theoretical explanation of why some people are involved while others are not, and so to contribute to the debate about how participatory democracy can be strengthened.

- To help service users and providers plan for more effective methods that fit better with the needs and aspirations of those who are being asked to give up their time.

Methodology and Methods

Primary research was conducted in each of three UK locations with each of two public services: housing and community care. This included surveys (conducted face-to-face) and semi-structured interviews with key informants. The participant survey included participants in both user-led groups and structures set up at the 'interface' between service users and providers (e.g. strategic review groups, area committees) (N=392). A comparison sample of non-participants was also surveyed (N=106). Key informant interviews were conducted with elected members, senior officers, frontline staff, voluntary organization workers and service users (N=63).

Key Results

Overall, the article reflects that little is known about at least three important things:

1. The interaction between resources, mobilisation and motivations as influences on participation. This is often underplayed in existing research, which tends to emphasise one or other element as the key explanation for participation.

2. 'Collectivistic' motivations to participate. This helps counter a prominent trend in the participation literature to subsume these as 'selective incentives' within more individualistic frameworks.

3. The extent of heterogeneity amongst participants (and non-participants). People participate in different ways and for different reasons, but there have been few attempts in the existing literature to capture this variety.

Contribution of this Article to the Participation Literature

There are some clear links between this article and the contextualising literatures discussed above. *Resource-based explanations* for participation are prominent. This text considers the effects of the distributions of key resource categories such as time, money, skills and confidence on user participation in two UK public service contexts - housing and social care -selected on the basis of being complex human services allocated on the basis of need. Users' resources of skills and confidence show as particularly important, with even those low in SES able to develop them either tacitly through the active practice of performative roles, or through explicit training opportunities. The article also considers knowledge resource dependencies between users and providers, problematising the reception that providers sometimes give to user knowledge.

Activational explanations for participation are also a key feature of this article. The article considers service users' 'mobilization potential'. It shows that people are recruited into participation through their social networks, particularly by trusted group members or trusted professionals in the field. People's social resources and network connectedness are important in being asked to participate, and being asked is an important way in which people become active. Certain key issues also serve to catalyse people's participation, and the article delimits the most important of these (such as not being listened to, or change not happening quickly enough). The combined stimuli of a service context requiring attention and demonstrable support from others to engage in collective action are shown to make it more likely that users' 'mobilisation potential' will be activated. The need for 'good opportunities', through which to realise that potential, are also considered.

This article makes a particularly significant contribution to *motivational explanations* for participation. Through 'mutual incentives theory', it calls the dominance of individualistic motivational explanations into question. Rational choice continues to provide an elegant theory

for the logic of collective action. However, this article's finding that 'collectivistic' incentives are at least as important as individualistic incentives offers support for the contention that rational choice theory provides only a partial view, and may be better at explaining why people do not participate rather than why they do. Beyond this, the article makes a distinctive contribution to the literature in defining how such collectivistic incentives may be better understood (in terms of sense of community, shared values and shared goals), and providing a reliable research instrument for their measurement.

With regard to *behavioural explanations*, variations between participants and non-participants are considered. The section on dynamics further utilises qualitative data to help define how different voice strategies (e.g. individual or collective) and participation styles (e.g. as 'defenders' or 'protestors') emerge and evolve during participation. As users assess the effects of different behavioural strategies, this may have an effect on their ongoing decision to participate. This raises another important point. The emphasis on collective action in this article is important, but it fails in some sense to acknowledge that 'voice' behaviour may take place through other mechanisms (such as complaint and redress, contacting elected officials, and so on). Recognition that these other mechanisms might be seen by users as a parallel or alternative opportunity to express their views led the author to construct a further research project (funded as part of the ESRC/AHRC Cultures of Consumption Programme) (cf. PUBLICATION 5).

In terms of participant *identities*, the article distinguishes between different types of participant and non-participant. These ideal-types emerge through cluster analysis, rather than people's self-categorisations. They show the different roles that people play within user-controlled/user-led groups. This adds significantly to our knowledge of how participants enact their social identities within such groups. The typology also suggests that only twenty per cent of non-participants are apathetic. For the remaining eighty per cent, it may be that the Participation Chain holds the answers to their non-participation, or (as noted above) that they choose to express their voice through other channels. Indeed, PUBLICATION 5 provides independent support for the extent of apathy amongst public service users, showing that almost eighty per cent had expressed their views at some time or another through one channel or another. This evidence provides an important challenge to some persistent stereotypes of user apathy in the public services.

The section on dynamics engages more specifically with *subject-other relational explanations*. Examination of the interactions between service users and service providers shows how different senses of 'listening' emerge, and how influence over decision-making is often hard-won. Notions of procedural and relational justice also underpin the nature of different actors' perceptions of

these dynamics. The article therefore supports the findings of a good deal of participation research that there are power imbalances that limit the scope for user action. However, it also goes further than this to suggest there may be *cultural* incompatibilities that constrain the outputs from participatory processes in gaining traction in decision making and resource allocation; themes that were expanded considerably in the second large ESRC/AHRC-funded 'Cultures of Consumption' project (cf. PUBLICATIONS 3, 4 and 5).

5.1.2 Publication 2: 'Citizen Governance': opportunities for inclusivity in policy and policy making? *Policy and Politics*, **35 (3): 455-475**

This article reports on a research project commissioned by the National Consumer Council entitled: *'Citizen Governance in Public Services'*. The article examines governance structures in which citizens and service users are able to move from 'assertive consumers' (e.g. through the mechanisms of choice and voice), to 'active participants' (e.g. through participation on the Boards of public service delivery organisations).

Aim

To build understanding of the different dimensions of citizen governance in public services and how different structures and processes serve to support or constrain 'good governance'.

Objectives

- To provide a framework for analysing different citizen governance contexts that includes both the nature of governance structures and the basis for membership of them by citizen governors.

- To provide an overview of the inherent tensions within citizen governance and suggest ways in which these might be eased.

Methodology and Methods

A novel theoretical framework was devised, from which desk-based case studies were conducted to illuminate each of the six identified theoretical contexts. Synthesis of the cases and critical commentary allowed the development of further key insights.

Key Results

Overall, the article reflects that:

1. A number of government statutory bodies have identified the problem of citizen disengagement and have developed a variety of ways of tackling this.
2. Various roles have been established for citizens to be involved/activated/empowered in the decision-making/scrutiny process.
3. There have been few attempts in the existing literature to comprehensively capture this variety, and little is known about where different models do and do not work, or why.

Contribution of this Article to the Participation Literature

This article connects in various ways with the research identified in Section 4. Links to *resource-based explanations* focus largely on the nature of the resources citizens and service users bring to citizen governance. The interaction of different knowledge types and other resources (e.g. legitimacy, support) is brought the fore between citizens and other stakeholders (such as local authorities and other service provider representatives). The article considers how judgements about the basis for membership on governing bodies reflect variations in the value placed on these different resources, both in principle/policy rhetoric and in practice.

Activational explanations for participation are also a key underpinning feature of this article. The article shows how the policy context has sought to provide various touch-points for active participation. It outlines some of the policy goals associated with these developments. The notion that voting is too blunt an instrument upon which to base policy development is seen as influential in opening new horizons for direct citizen input. However, there is also an undercurrent of concern about potential depoliticisation/managerialisation within citizen governance structures that may undermine some users' ability and willingness to contribute.

Hence, in terms of *motivational explanations* for participation, the article draws an implicit distinction between more instrumental motivations and more expressive and/or democratic ones. An overly-instrumental focus risks neglecting some other important motivations. For example, citizen governors for whom representation is a key focus may find that motivations such as a 'sense of community' are less well accommodated within governing structures. Notions of shared values may also be difficult where tensions exist between stakeholders in relation to values such as efficiency and democracy.

In this sense, the article also engages with issues of *identity*. Governing bodies of public service organisations represent a particular type of participatory environment. Is the governing body a political forum or a strategic management forum - or are these perspectives conflated in citizen governance? This can create a rather confusing, hybrid space, in which the 'hat' being worn by

citizen governors may not always be clear. Such confusion may be particularly acute where user representatives are legally required to put the needs of the organisation, rather than their own constituencies, uppermost in their considerations.

Subject-other relational explanations appear to be as important in citizen governance as in other forms of participation. This leaves scope for relationships between different parties to become strained if competing values make communication difficult, or power imbalances allow certain stakeholders to exercise disproportionate influence. Making such issues explicit, this article contributes both potential structural solutions (e.g. more complex governance structures) and procedural solutions (e.g. stronger links of the 'sphere of governance' with the spheres of both wider participation and executive management).

Perhaps more implicit in the article is the notion that *cultural* explanations may be important. An emphasis on either steering or representation may represent varying levels of commitment to competing organisational values and norms. The notion that 'governance design' is important implicitly rests on the notion that structural considerations can be used to help resolve these competing values more effectively in public service organisations.

5.1.3 PUBLICATION 3: *'Understanding the Differentiated Consumer in Public Services', Chapter 4, in Simmons, R., Powell, M. & Greener, I. (eds.), The Consumer in Public Services*, Bristol: Policy Press

The book in which this chapter is contained arose out of research conducted within the ESRC/AHRC *'Cultures of Consumption'* Programme, from which a conference was organised in Oxford by the author and Prof. Martin Powell. A number of leading scholars prepared papers for this inter-disciplinary event, spanning politics, public management, social policy and sociology.

Aim

To build a more sophisticated understanding of consumers, examining their place and role as users of public services.

Objectives

- To consider the 'subjects' of consumption within the public services, or who it is that presents themselves when they come to use public services.

- To consider consumer 'mechanisms', or the ways in which public services try to relate to these people, both in policy and practice.

- To provide information and guidance for those responsible for promoting or implementing user-focused public service reforms.

Methodology and Methods

This publication details a framework for differentiating between various ideal types of consumer in public services. It is based on empirical material from the second large ESRC/AHRC project, in which in-depth interviews and detailed surveys were conducted in two UK locations for each of three public services: housing, social care and leisure services.

Key Results

The chapter examines different kinds of users who may have different things to say, and wish to say them in different ways. Specifically, it devises a typology of users, suggesting how each perceives the opportunities and barriers to their expression of choice and voice. It goes on to suggest the kinds of prescriptions that might follow on from this for public services.

Overall, the chapter reflects that:

1. It is difficult (and may be counter-productive) to pigeonhole people according to many of the terms that are often applied to service users: citizens, consumers, customers, clients, members of the public, members of the community and so on.

2. Public service users differ in a number of important ways. Aside from their levels of personal resources, these include what are termed 'subjective' and 'objective' factors. Subjective factors concern how people see themselves as public service users. The chapter identifies two key criteria here; whether users hold individual or collective identifications of themselves, and whether these identifications are positive or negative. Positive identifications are associated with being able to have a say and make a difference, and vice-versa. Objective factors concern how 'connected' people feel to the service itself. This reflects the extent to which they see public services as being important and care about them being done well.

3. If public service users are to assume more active and vocal (rather than passive) roles, it is important they (i) feel able to have a say and make a difference, and (ii) do not become 'disconnected' from the service. Combining objective and subjective factors creates a set of categorisations about how people relate to public services, and provides new perspectives about how to respond effectively.

Contribution of this Publication to the Participation Literature

There are a number of links with the key themes identified in Section 4 of this narrative. Links to *resource-based explanations* for participation concern the extent to which people's personal resources are important in their sense of agency; for example, in their ability to 'have a say and make a difference'. However, while this is acknowledged as an important background condition, it is not this chapter's major focus.

Activational explanations for participation are explored with regard to policies seeking to promote the more active categories of 'rational actors' and 'co-producers'. The chapter observes that such policies have not been universally successful, with many users instead occupying more passive positions where they either choose not to participate or feel they lack sufficient agency to do so. Activation is claimed to be a function of both connectedness and positive identifications associated with a sense of individual or collective agency.

The chapter engages extensively with issues of *identity,* showing how this is complex in public services, and that the meanings of 'nominal' categories such as citizen, consumer and client are not always clear or useful in defining people's relationships with public services. The chapter proposes a novel framework, based on empirical data. This framework distinguishes between different ways that public service users see themselves. These distinctions are not intended as 'labels' to be assigned to particular individuals; each individual has the ability to hold different identifications (individual/collective, positive/negative) at different times or in relation to different public service contexts. Rather, this framework seeks to more clearly define the field of users' possible identifications, so that (i) they might be more easily recognised as they occur within public services and (ii) appropriate organisational strategies might be designed in response.

Subject-object relational explanations for participation are associated here with the level of service users' 'connectedness'. A low level of connectedness (even in those with positive identifications) serves to reduce people's likelihood of involvement. For those who are connected, their identifications (either individual or collective) will help determine whether individualistic or collectivistic *motivational explanations* (e.g. as 'rational actors' or 'co-producers') are dominant.

The chapter also engages critically with *behavioural explanations* for participation. Different behavioural strategies (however active or passive) emerge as 'rational' within a framework that allows for different levels of connectedness and agency. Yet some of these are unlikely to produce certain behaviours that are desired or envisaged by policymakers and/or practitioners. In

response, the chapter suggests a range of interventions designed to acknowledge diversity, reconnect the disconnected and turn negative user identifications into positive ones.

This reinforces the importance of *subject-other relational explanations* for participation. It is claimed that failure to recognise the nature of people's identifications as individual/collective and/or positive/negative may have clear relational repercussions. A range of 'prescriptions' follow as potential ways to avoid or ameliorate such repercussions, based on insights from the subjective-objective framework and supporting data presented in the chapter.

Finally, *cultural* explanations may be influential in users' perceptions of whether conditions allow them to have a say and make a difference. For example, connected but negative users ('alienated' or 'repressed') may perceive cultural 'incompatibilities' as a key factor in feeling excluded or ignored. (NB. The importance of such complementarities and incompatibilities is reinforced in Chapter 14 of the book, lead-written by the author, where a need is identified to identify and overcome service cultures in which firmly entrenched sets of values and forms of relationship may leave some consumers feeling estranged).

5.1.4 PUBLICATION 4: 'Leadership and Listening: The Reception of User Voice in Today's Public Services', *Social Policy and Administration,* 45 (5), 539–568

This article further extends some of the thinking developed during the ESRC/AHRC-funded project: *'Cultures of Consumption and Consumer Involvement in Public Services'*, providing a new conceptual frame through which to examine public service relationships. The article examines the considerable similarity between the scope of the 'projects' pursued by public service users and those pursued by public service leaders. It suggests this can result in either incompatibilities and dissonance, or complementarities and congruence, before exploring potential strategies for overcoming the former and maximising the latter.

Aim

To examine the relationship between 'leadership' and 'listening' and establish how a balance between them can be struck in public services.

Objectives

- To build understanding of the nature of users' 'projects' and how these compare with those of public service leaders.

- To identify to ways in which gaps between leadership and listening in the public services might be better understood and subsequently narrowed.

Methodology and Methods

Primary research was conducted in two UK locations for each of three public services: housing, social care and leisure services. A first data collection phase included in-depth semi-structured interviews with key informants and documentary analysis. Key informants included service users (N=80) and provider representatives (N=30). A second data collection phase involved detailed user surveys, conducted face-to-face with samples drawn at random from existing databases (Total N=543). The in-depth interviews helped to establish the range of users' views and experiences; the survey was undertaken to investigate something of the distribution of these views.

Key Results

Overall, the article reflects that little is known about at least three important things:

1. The nature of 'projectivity' in the public services.
2. The nature of congruence (or dissonance) between public service users' and public service leaders' projects.
3. The range and characteristics of the tools and approaches employed by public service users and public service leaders in their communicative practices, and how these may engender either conflictual or concordant relationships.

Contribution of this Article to the Participation Literature

This article can be linked in various ways to the body of research identified in Section 4. *Resource-based explanations* largely focus on the different types of knowledge resources that public service users make available through various channels for user voice, and the value that is placed on these resources by public service organisations.

With regard to *activational explanations*, the article suggests that voice is activated by either (or both) 'transactional' or 'transformative' issues, in the pursuit of either (or both) 'technical' or 'adaptive' solutions. For example, notions of the depoliticisation/managerialisation of micro-agendas within public service organisations are seen to close down or open up different possibilities. The article goes on to suggest that the viable activation of user voice depends on compatibility between the channels preferred by organisations as 'listening mechanisms' and those preferred by users as 'voice mechanisms' (or, at least, how far organisations accept and remain open to users' preferred channels as some form of contingency).

In terms of *subject-object relations*, the article reports high proportions of service users that 'care about' the service, and how this helps to promote their 'projectivity'. Purposes of either of 'maintenance' (to prevent deterioration of the service) or 'innovation' (to make necessary improvements) underpin the behavioural expression through voice of this connection/relationship. Providers' *subject-object relationships* and their own subsequent projectivity are compared. The insights from this are used to demonstrate the potential for both conflict and co-operation.

Motivational explanations are again reflected in users' desire for the right to speak as either (or both) individuals or members of a wider collectivity. This leads to detailed discussion of the implications of a lack of listening in undermining these motivations and promoting user withdrawal. Where users do not withdraw, however, *behavioural explanations* are employed to understand how at the voice-listening interface users and providers may seek to enforce a particular direction, stand in negotiation with one another, or find ways to integrate one another's views through deeper, more inclusive dialogue.

This connects directly with *subject-other relational explanations*, in that the choices desired by service users are not always those supplied by providers – and even if they are, the articulation of users' views through certain channels may be subject to different patterns of support, toleration or resistance. The notion of 'listening leadership' is unpacked further to discuss the various potential impacts of this, including potential prospects for new forms of 'relationalism' in the public services. In turn, this links to *cultural explanations*, in recognising the extent and importance of 'value pluralism', and how this might be linked to perceived 'cultural congruence' or 'culture clashes' in driving new institutional bargains.

5.1.5 PUBLICATION 5: 'User Involvement in Public Services: 'Choice about Voice'' *Public Policy and Administration,* 27 (1): 3-30

This article brings together key insights developed during the large ESRC/AHRC-funded research project entitled: *'Cultures of Consumption and Consumer Involvement in Public Services'*. The article examines the expression of 'user voice' through 'hierarchical' channels (e.g. contacting elected officials, regulators, ombudsmen); 'individualistic' channels (e.g. complaints procedures, direct personal communications); or 'group-based' channels (e.g. user groups, user forums, consultative committees).

Aims

To examine the several different, sometimes competing ways for consumers' views to be represented and provide a more comprehensive account of their involvement in a range of public service settings.

Objectives

- To establish a framework for understanding different channels for user voice.

- To assess how users make their 'choice about voice' and whether the alternatives available to consumers are appropriate and sufficient for their needs.

- To build a more detailed understanding of patterns of relations between producers and consumers.

Methodology and Methods

Primary research was conducted in two UK locations for each of three public services: housing, social care and leisure services. A first data collection phase included in-depth semi-structured interviews with key informants and documentary analysis. Key informants included service users (N=80) and provider representatives (N=30). A second data collection phase involved detailed user surveys, conducted face-to-face with samples drawn at random from existing databases (Total N=543). The in-depth interviews helped to establish the range of users' views and experiences; the survey was undertaken to investigate something of the distribution of these views.

Key Results

Overall, the article reflects that little is known about at least three important things:

1. The choices users make about the channels through which they express their views about public services.
2. Users' expectations and experiences in relation to expressing their views through different channels and how this affects their perceptions of 'agency'.
3. The extent to which users perceive the values underpinning public services in different contexts to be compatible with their own.

Contribution of this Article to the Participation Literature

This article picks up on several themes from existing research. *Resource-based explanations* consider the extent to which people's personal resources are important in helping to generate a sense of agency. The article also suggests that a variety of consumer knowledge resources are endowed through different voice mechanisms that, given the diversity of service users themselves, public service organisations cannot afford to eschew or ignore.

Activational explanations for participation also feature in this article. First, it observes that limits may be placed on the scope of user activation by public service organisations, with involvement more often offered at lower orders of discourse (e.g. 'are we doing things right?'), than at the 'discursive core' (e.g. 'are we doing the right things?'). Users may feel that 'lower order' involvement is sufficient, at least some of the time. However, they may also be surprised and disappointed if they are unable to extend their involvement to higher orders of discourse should they seek to do so. The article observes that user perceptions of 'good opportunities' to participate, spanning these levels of discourse, are important in activating different people at different times. The article further points out that, while it is important to ensure that all that want to participate can participate, 'maximum feasible participation' (cf. Alinsky, 1969) is not necessarily perceived to be a prerequisite for effective user involvement, as users often report considerable levels of trust in those of their number who do choose to speak up.

In terms of *subject-object explanations* for participation, the article suggests that while public service users may sometimes express their views on subjective, personal issues, a sense of attachment and perception of 'having a stake' also acts as an important stimulus for user voice. This feeds into an understanding of *motivational explanations.* The availability of hierarchical, individualised and group-based (and now online) voice mechanisms implicitly recognises users' right to speak as either (or both) individuals or members of a wider collectivity. The article suggests that maintaining this diversity of approaches is appropriate in giving expression to the full range of users' motivations - but warns that a failure to invest institutional effort in doing so risks undermining at least some of their motivations to speak.

Consideration of the choice that users make about how to express their views focuses particularly on *behavioural explanations* for involvement and participation. Various reasons for users' 'choice about voice' are explored; whether these are instrumental, expressive or conditioned by the institutionalised 'logic of appropriateness' in particular public service organisations. Other behavioural aspects explored in the article include 'persistence' (in which the same channel is used iteratively to express users' views on a particular issue) and 'strategy switching' (in which a

different channel is used if others are unsuccessful). In addition, the article explores two further dimensions of user behaviour in which voice is absent. 'Accommodation' represents users' preparedness to simply drop their issue with the service and move on. 'Withdrawal' represents a perceived lack of agency, whereby users feel they have something to say, but feel 'blocked' from saying it. Overall, the article concludes that users' 'choice about voice' is multi-dimensional, and that there is a need to take into account a range of supply-side, demand-side and contextual factors.

In terms of *identity*, the article distinguishes between four theoretically-driven constructions of service users. Two of these construct users as relatively active; either as rational, utility-maximising individuals, or as collective stakeholders. The others construct users as generally passive; either dependent on experts to define their needs and administrators to make sure an appropriate service is delivered, or fatalistic and lacking any sense of agency in relation to the service. While there is evidence that aspects of these theoretical constructions apply to different public service users at different times; they are not useful as empirical categories to assign users to. Instead, this framework defines a field of possible worldviews that is in constant dynamic tension. From this it is argued that certain patterns that shape the world of social relations in public services may be deduced, and any contradictions and incongruences between them resolved more effectively.

This links with *subject-other relational explanations* for participation. In 'the dynamics of choice about voice', the article considers how different patterns of relations frame users' perceptions of voice as a positive or negative experience. This regards public service organisations receptivity to users' views, including whether 'due process' is followed in the support of different forms of 'perceived justice' (distributive, procedural, relational). As indicated above, relational dynamics may result in 'satisfaction', or at least qualified acceptance of the organisational response ('accommodation'). However, dissatisfaction may result in further engagement ('persistence', 'strategy switching'), or 'withdrawal'. Withdrawal indicates a break down in the relationship, a lowering of commitment and trust, and a widening of the 'relational distance' between service users and providers. The article suggests this may be reinforced where providers' power relative to users enables them to control the agenda; if the use of power becomes coercive and domineering, this can add significantly to the potential for user resistance and/or withdrawal over time.

With regard to *cultural explanations* for user involvement and participation, the article observes that cultural factors help to define the contextual conditions (i.e. cultural values direct people's

attention to what is more and less important, while cultural norms define what is appropriate and inappropriate behaviour). The extent to which the values and norms institutionalised in public service contexts overlap with those internalised in service users is suggested to provide the basis for either 'cultural congruence' or 'culture clashes'. This can potentially affect the 'reflexive' way in which users 'frame' service issues; the mechanism chosen to express their voice; the language/rhetoric produced when they do; and their expectations of subsequent action. The article reports evidence of cultural congruence in only one of the cases examined. In the others, incompatibilities (or 'cultural blindspots') are identified that constrain the expression of user voice in one way or another. In such cases the article identifies risks for public services - both in opportunities for organisational learning being missed and in further user withdrawal.

5.1.6 PUBLICATION 6: 'User Voice and Complaints as Drivers of Innovation in Public Services', *Public Management Review,* Published online: 21 Nov 2016: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/14719037.2016.1257061

This article is based on the extension of a conceptual frame developed during the project entitled 'Complaints and Innovation in Public Services', funded by the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA). The article examines user voice through the related notions of 'consumer knowledge management' and 'consumer-knowledge-enabled innovation'. These are set out in a conceptual 'process map', the potential insights from which are investigated through six practical examples.

Aim

To show how user and consumer knowledge expressed through voice and complaints can be utilised to drive innovations in public services, but equally how sometimes such opportunities can be defeated (wittingly or unwittingly) by elements of the 'service', 'innovation' and 'consumer knowledge management' systems in public service organisations.

Objectives

- To build understanding of the potential contributions of user knowledge, and how greater openness to listening, engaging and responding to this can help promote service improvements and innovation.

- To identify ways in which the above processes can break down, so that opportunities for 'consumer-knowledge- enabled innovation are not lost.

Methodology and Methods

The article is largely conceptual. However, it is supported with insights from some practical examples drawn primarily from desk-based case studies, with some primary interviews with relevant stakeholders. Cases are drawn from the UK, and selected as examples of successful service innovation from which learning can be taken, and against which the conceptual framework can be provisionally tested.

Key Results

Overall, the article reflects that little is known about at least three important things:

1. The extent to which consumer knowledge is valued in public services.
2. The ability of consumer knowledge to articulate with other legitimate actors and forms of knowledge in order to promote change.
3. The potential roles of service users in helping to drive forward effective public service innovation.

Contribution of this Article to the Participation Literature

This article again connects with various literatures identified in Section 4. *Resource-based explanations* largely focus on the different knowledge resources that public service users make available through various channels for user voice. These may serve as bargaining assets in negotiation processes or as contributions to more co-creative/co-productive processes with public service organisations. However, the article also addresses the problem of capturing learning opportunities from not only those who 'shout the loudest' (who often enjoy greater endowments of personal resources) but also those who are 'hard to hear' (who may not).

With regard to *activational explanations*, the article considers examples of where voice is initially activated by a 'source of dissatisfaction' (whether this involves an unmet need, or perceptions of jeopardy or perversity). However, the article goes on to suggest examples (such as 'experience-based design' and 'end-of-life care') where users subsequently become activated into more progressive and co-productive processes. In other examples ('prison calls' and 'addiction services'), third parties were activated in the support of users when providers failed to listen; while in a further case ('community flood group'), activation even took the course of mobilizing direct action.

In terms of *subject-object relations*, the article considers the advantages of accepting users' perspectives as a unique and legitimate way of viewing the values, attributes and consequences

of the service that is not available to providers. This becomes evident in the summary table of examples, where in every instance the public service organisation was initially unable to see the problem as it was presented to them. This links directly to *subject-other relational explanations*, in that in each case different patterns of resistance or support are evident in the responses of provider representatives to users' voice, with differential effects on perceptions of procedural and administrative justice. The article also makes the point that sometimes pursuing these relations a little further, rather than closing them down too early, can have positive effects.

In terms of *cultural-institutional explanations*, the article suggests that sometimes 'cultural innovation' is required as part of the institutional work done within public service organisations, before other more tangible changes can be made. To some extent the summary table of examples suggests that in each case public service organisations were – at least initially – impervious to change. This was, however, most evident in two cases ('prison calls' and 'addiction services'), where institutionalised values and organised patterns of talk and action proved particularly difficult to break down.

NB. This article also explicitly addresses some of the notions of *outcomes* discussed in Section 3.4.3, distinguishing between different forms of added value ('functional', 'financial', 'social', 'emotional') and outcomes (in which many or few benefit from consumer-knowledge enabled innovation, to a greater or lesser extent). The effects of this on generating further *behavioural* responses are discussed – whether this is user satisfaction/loyalty, further iterations of voice, or exit.

5.2 Summary

In sum, Section 5.1 attempts to show how the contribution of each individual publication to the themes identified in Section 4 of this narrative. In Section 6, it now moves on to briefly consider how this corpus of work as a whole contributes to these issues.

6.0 Summary of Research Contribution and Future Research

In this concluding summary, an attempt to understand where the above corpus of work helps to advance existing knowledge is made; first, by considering where it makes theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions, and then by briefly returning to see how it relates to the research questions set out in Section 4.9. Finally, suggestions for further development of this research are then tentatively presented in a heuristic framework, which attempts to bring various elements of this narrative together and identify gaps that might be filled.

6.1 Theoretical, Empirical and Methodological Contributions

While the published papers often confirm the findings of previous research in new contexts, they add further insights. For example, several key theoretical contributions are located in the six published papers presented in this thesis: '*the participation chain*' and '*mutual incentives theory*'; '*choice about voice*'; the '*differentiated consumer in public services*'; '*citizen governance*'; '*leadership and listening*' and '*consumer-knowledge-enabled innovation*'. Empirical and methodological contributions come from the corpus of data and the development and testing of tools such as a scale of collectivistic motivations (PUBLICATION 1). Recently, a further methodological contribution has been added drawing on data from the above research to the application of CT in public services (Simmons, 2016). This paper has been described by two leading scholars in this field as a 'methodological advance in operationalization using attitudinal and behavioural and institutional measures… [which] advances this institutional theory itself' (6 & Swedlow, 2016: 872).

Challenges to existing knowledge arise in various ways:

6.1.1 How public service users trade off different motivations – 'I' mentality v. 'we' mentality.

Mutual incentives theory [PUBLICATION 1] reinforces the importance of collectivistic as well as individualistic motivations for collective action. Rather than simply accepting Olsonian rational choice arguments centring on the calculation of personal costs and benefits, PUBLICATION 1 demonstrates that participants often set such considerations to one side and view their participation through the lens of shared values, shared goals and a sense of community. This provides a different starting point for building certain more participative and co-productive forms of governance and delivery in the public services.

6.1.2 How public service users understand and evaluate different mechanisms and channels for communication.

Through an original counter-position of the different voice mechanisms available to public service users, *choice about voice* [PUBLICATION 5] offers new understandings of why users might use one voice mechanism rather than another in pursuing different projects; how their experiences of doing so correspond with their expectations; and what might be done about it through complementary forms of 'institutional work' (cf. Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

6.1.3 How public service users respond to different contextual conditions and the importance of 'cultural congruence'.

Choice about voice and *leadership and listening* [PUBLICATIONS 4 and 5] both establish that different sets of cultural-institutional conditions may lead to different expectations and experiences of user voice. User responses may therefore vary according to the extent to which they perceive such conditions to be congruent or dissonant with how they 'should' be. This includes the specific environment of *citizen governance* [PUBLICATION 2], in which the simple (unitary) governance structures found in many public service organizations may prove sub-optimal in accommodating the need for both 'steering' and 'representation' in the governance and delivery of the service.

6.1.4 How the projects of public service users and providers overlap, and how this can lead to competition as well as co-operation.

Consumer-knowledge-enabled innovation [PUBLICATION 6] further challenges the dominance of other forms of professional, strategic and 'expert' knowledge in the public services, showing how users' unique perspectives can combine with those of others to overcome service issues and add value. *Leadership and listening* [PUBLICATION 4] suggests the need to negotiate these boundaries more productively. Meanwhile, *the differentiated consumer* [PUBLICATION 3] informs new ways to consider user engagement, showing how 'connecting' users who are currently disconnected may even be counterproductive if, upon getting involved, they subsequently perceive themselves to be unable to 'have a say and make a difference'.

6.1.5 How different explanations for 'silent non-exit' provide a more nuanced view that goes beyond 'apathy' as an explanation

Cluster analysis of 'non-participants' [PUBLICATION 1], analysis of users' 'positive' and 'negative' identifications versus their sense of connection to the service [PUBLICATION 3], and analysis of users' 'expectation versus experience' in their choice about voice [PUBLICATION 5] each show how apathy is a poor explanation for the phenomenon of 'silent non-exit'. Different forms of support, accommodation and withdrawal provide alternative accounts.

6.1.6 Summary

Together, the above contributions help to establish nuances in user attitudes, thinking, behaviour and experiences. Further, they examine the role of context and culture, not as a backdrop to the 'action', but as part of it (cf. Pollitt, 2013). They also consider the possibilities that arise as new

spaces for involvement open up; who the participants are, what they connect with (service, service providers, service context), and how this forms distinctive patterns or 'fields' of relationships.

In doing so, this work seeks to provide a critical investigation of service user involvement and participation and the incorporation of user knowledge in the governance and delivery of UK public services. More specifically, the body of work advances further and more nuanced answers in relation to some of the overarching questions in this field of research identified in Section 4.9.

6.2 Addressing Overarching Questions

6.2.1 [Q1]. On what basis is user/consumer involvement sought in different public service contexts and environments?

A large literature establishes how participation and involvement have become positioned in the 'architecture' of public services, and put to work in their governance and delivery in different ways for different purposes over time. This literature suggests various ways in which involvement and participation can fail. Yet it also suggests various ways in which public services can fail if there is a *lack of* involvement and participation. Roberts (2004: 316) therefore identifies a need for both 'better theory building' and 'the tracking and evaluation of innovative practice', to better understand the 'conditions of possibility' in which involvement and participation are constituted (Clarke, 2013: 25). This thesis seeks to make its own contribution to this larger effort of theory building and empirical enquiry. Several PUBLICATIONS (1, 2, 5, 6) help examine the influence of different contexts and 'spaces' for user involvement. Together, their message is that effective involvement is often contextual rather than universalistic, and this needs to be recognised and accommodated in structures that work.

Moreover, the thesis establishes how, within these public service contexts and environments, user involvement and participation is sought in at least three ways – one individual/consumerist; another collective/communitarian; and another within the formal governance structures of public service organisations. It is in these contexts that users must negotiate their path with regard to involvement and participation.

From an individual/consumerist perspective, this shows, for example, that individualistic motivations can be important for participation but this tends to wane once people become more involved (PUBLICATION 1); that individuals are not all connected and positive 'rational actors', but may also either (i) choose to exclude themselves or (ii) experience relationships of 'subjection' or 'alienation' (PUBLICATION 3); that users tend to choose individualistic voice channels (such as suggestion schemes, complaint and redress, or direct personal communications) in specific

circumstances (such as discussing one-off problems and getting recompense**)** (PUBLICATION 5); and that individual user knowledge can provide important prompts for 'consumer-knowledge-enabled innovation' (PUBLICATION 6).

The same PUBLICATIONS (1, 3, 5 and 6) address communitarian/collective perspectives. For example, the relative importance of collectivistic motivations (such as sense of community, shared values and shared goals) (PUBLICATION 1); that user collectivities and communities are not all connected and positive as 'co-producers', but may also either (i) delegate responsibility to representatives or (ii) experience relationships of 'marginalisation' or 'repression' (PUBLICATION 3); that collectivistic voice channels (such as user groups, forums and associations) tend to be used differently (such as to gain a better understanding of the service, discuss new ideas and, in some cases, increase the likelihood of action) (PUBLICATION 5); and that 'local' or 'group' knowledge can provide important prompts for 'consumer-knowledge-enabled innovation' (PUBLICATION 6).

Finally, PUBLICATIONS 1, 2, 3 and 4 advance research in this area by addressing, at least in part, user involvement and participation in the formal governance structures of public service organisations. For example, the role and practices of group representatives in formally-constituted forums and committees (PUBLICATION 1); the balance between steering and representation inherent in citizen governance (PUBLICATION 2); and a desire for co-productive activity that is not always fully recognised or given practical form (PUBLICATIONS 3 and 4).

6.2.2 [Q2]. How might the range of users' involvement and participation behaviours be characterised?

Following on from the seminal work of Hirschman (1970; 1986), this thesis addresses the behavioural aspects of user 'exit' and 'voice' – or perhaps more specifically 'exit' and 'non-exit' (Dowding & John, 2012). In relation to exit, the main contributions of this thesis are in providing certain more nuanced insights for public service users (namely, 'reluctant exit' and 'exit without alternatives') (cf. PUBLICATION 5). 'Reluctant exit' is linked to Hirschman's (1970) notions of both: (i) 'loyalty', and (ii) 'alert' and 'inert' consumers (who respond to 'decline' at different speeds), while 'exit without alternatives' is linked with a sense of futility and lack of agency (Hoggett, 2001).

However, this thesis is predominantly concerned with users' voice behaviours (or the lack of them). The large ESRC-funded research projects behind PUBLICATIONS 1, 3, 4 and 5 directly investigate the respective roles of individual and collective forms of voice. In doing so, further insights are developed into behavioural issues, such as users' 'choice about voice'. This recognises that users may pursue different channels for voice for different reasons in different situations (cf.

PUBLICATIONS 1 and 5). In line with Dowding and John's (2012) notion of 'silent non-exit', this thesis also provides a more nuanced view, explaining users' lack of voice behaviour in four ways: as *satisfaction-support, acceptance-accommodation, apathy-indifference* or *withdrawal-avoidance* (cf. PUBLICATIONS 1 and 5).

The notion of *withdrawal-avoidance* links both to Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) distinction of 'maladaptive' coping behaviour, and to Rusbult et al's (1982; 1988) widely-cited framework that adds 'neglect' (as a 'passive-destructive' behaviour) to Hirschman's (1970) classic trilogy of exit, voice and loyalty. Furthermore, this thesis challenges common assumptions that *apathy-indifference* provides the predominant explanation for a lack of user voice (cf. Needham, 2002). For example, as suggested above, the research that led to PUBLICATIONS 1 and 5 suggest that only 20% of non-participants could be categorised as genuinely apathetic.

Overall, the corpus of work suggests there is value in a more nuanced set of understandings around how people sometimes choose between different voice options, sometimes exit reluctantly or without alternatives, and sometimes choose to remain silent rather than voice or exit.

6.2.3 [Q3]. To what extent do resources act to support the effectiveness of user involvement and participation on an individual and a collective level?

Following the seminal work of Verba and Nie (1978; Verba et al, 1995), this thesis finds that users' endowments of personal resources are more useful as a predictor for participation than as an explanation for it. PUBLICATION 5 associates users' resource endowments with their sense of agency (or lack of it). Similarly, PUBLICATION 1 identifies that issues such as entry costs, lack of knowledge, time, physical ability, skills and confidence can be significant potential barriers for participants.

However, PUBLICATION 1 also suggests that strategies to mitigate such issues and help users overcome these issues can be important. The training sometimes provided to support the practice of user involvement and participation showed up as particularly useful in building users' confidence – and perhaps the 'civic skills' that are widely considered important for participation (cf. Brady et al, 1995). This was often independent of users' relative lack of educational resources. Similarly, the reimbursement of participants' financial costs often helped ameliorate users' relative lack of financial resources, and level the playing field for those who would not otherwise be able to participate.

Moreover, PUBLICATION 1 also shows how users' infra-resources of social capital and network connectedness are important in increasing their exposure to mobilisation attempts (cf. Klandermans, 2002; Parry et al, 1992). This was especially the case if such mobilisation attempts were from trusted parties in their environment (whether professionals or informal contacts such as friends/neighbours). This suggests the need for more clearly thought-out mobilisation strategies that work 'with-the-grain' of people's infra-resources - and the harness bonds of trust they can generate - in order to overcome their inertia.

Yet notions of the 'participation chain', considered extensively in PUBLICATION 1, suggest that overcoming *resource-based* and *mobilisation* issues in themselves is insufficient. These insights have prompted a more nuanced view, setting the role of resources and mobilisation alongside motivational factors in a more holistic framework.

6.2.4 [Q4]. To what extent do public service users' identities structure their expectations and experiences of involvement and participation?

The seminal work of Turner et al (1987) shows how people's personal and social identities structure the ways in which they seek to enact and reproduce them. For public service users, participation and involvement provide opportunities to represent and reproduce the multiple categories and identities with which they associate themselves (e.g. Jovchelovitch, 2007; Passi & Giugni, 2000). For example, strong identifications with particular identities or in-groups can lead to their 'chronic salience' in users' identity hierarchies, and vice-versa (Ellemers et al, 2002). In turn, this may help establish a set of 'role expectations' in people's participation and involvement (e.g. March & Olsen, 1996; Davies et al, 2006). Enactment of these roles can lead to positive reinforcement and recognition - but alternatively to a more negative stereotyping and/or questioning by 'others' (such as provider representatives) about participants' representativeness and legitimacy to speak (e.g. Fraser, 1995; 1997; Newman, 2001). Such role enactment might be therefore less likely where identifications with the in-group are weaker, or where users fear such negative consequences.

This thesis addresses certain aspects of these important issues within the public services. For example, PUBLICATION 3 seeks to clarify some of the differences in the *nature* of users' identities. It considers questions of how relevant to users themselves 'labels' such as citizen, consumer, client, customer, member of the public and so on actually are, concluding they are generally less important than how users feel they are treated, can make their views known, and/or have their concerns recognised. This is reinforced by a common tendency amongst providers to stereotype users according to these terms, with some stereotypes held more positively than others.

PUBLICATION 1 considers the *strength* of people's identifications. Its cluster analysis helps to differentiate between users for whom their participant identities have become chronically salient ('campaigners', 'footsoldiers'); others who are aligned symbolically rather than concretely ('scrutineers', 'habitual participants'); and the remainder ('marginal' and 'non-participants'), for whom such identities are either low in their identity hierarchies or held negatively. Meanwhile, PUBLICATIONS 1, 4 and 5 examine how the 'dynamics' of participation serve to recognise people's individual and collective identities to a greater or lesser extent as they enact them, and the effect of this on perceptions of whether their expectations are met. Overall, this corpus of work suggests that different service users have different preferences and expectations about how they would like to be listened to, and that positive and negative associations with their individual or collective identifications depend on the extent of their recognition and users' experience of being able to 'have a say and make a difference'.

6.2.5 [Q5]. What are the motivations of service users to participate?

Olson's seminal contribution, 'The Logic of Collective Action' (1965; 1971) is one of many popular theories of motivation that assumes self-interest to be the key driver of behaviour. However, its predictions are thought to better explain why individuals *do not* participate rather than why they do (Finkel et al, 1989; Finkel & Muller, 1998). As a result, a number of more 'mixed motive' perspectives have been put forward, including those in which people also co-operate to optimise their collective interests (Mansbridge, 1990). Motivational explanations for participation therefore raise important questions about the extent to which users' viewpoints are either individual or collective (e.g. Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996).

This thesis addresses the above themes directly. They provide a particular focus in PUBLICATION 1. Using 'mutual incentives theory', this article shows the extent to which users are motivated by individualistic or collectivistic concerns. Supporting the contention that rational choice theory provides only a partial view, and may be better at explaining why people do not participate rather than why they do, the article calls individualistic explanations into question, finding that 'collectivistic' incentives (understood here in terms of sense of community, shared values and shared goals) are at least as important.

PUBLICATION 2 draws a related but slightly different distinction for 'citizen governors' between more instrumental motivations and more expressive and/or democratic ones. Noting the potential for tensions between stakeholders in relation to values such as efficiency and democracy, it also points to differences in the knowledge resources that are contributed by those recruited for their technical expertise, and those recruited as representatives. The former may find themselves

frustrated by extended discussion and debate. However, for the latter an overly-instrumental focus risks neglecting some other important motivations (such as sense of community and shared values).

The 'participation chain' model in PUBLICATION 1 provides a systematic framework for understanding what makes public service users participate, so that 'demand side' factors of motivation are then combined with others on the 'supply side' (resources, mobilisation). This model seeks to demonstrate that, while the question of participation requires a combination of answers, it is a combination that can be predicted, planned for and acted upon. As many of the publications in this thesis conclude, this can help inform both the opportunities for participation and involvement, and the investment of institutional effort required to ensure they work effectively.

6.2.6 [Q6]. What mechanisms for participation and involvement are made available to public service users? How do users choose between/become mobilised into these alternative mechanisms? Once mobilised, how do they experience and evaluate them?

The literature establishes how people's 'issues' or 'concerns' are important in catalysing people's involvement and participation (e.g. Parry et al, 1992; Sharp, 1984). However, there is some debate about how appropriate opportunities to raise and discuss such issues are created, and how confident users feel in the opportunities with which they are provided (e.g. Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Newman & Clarke, 2009a); factors that can affect the choices people make about how they become active. This reflects a view that, in principle at least, an adequate and attractive opportunity structure is one that connects with the issues that matter most to service users, and allows participation and involvement to take place in ways that meet their expectations (Lowndes et al, 1998; Barnes & Cotterell, 2012).

This thesis seeks to make a contribution to knowledge in various aspects of the above. In particular, most PUBLICATIONS address – whether implicitly or explicitly - questions of how public service users experience and evaluate the alternative 'voice' mechanisms that are available to them, and the extent to which they are activated by the perception of 'good' opportunities to participate. PUBLICATION 1 shows that this perception goes further than simply removing *practical barriers*, such as the timing of meetings and payment of expenses. It also recognises that while people's social resources and network *connectedness* are an important part of being asked to participate, and that being asked by a trusted source is an important way in which people become active, these are, in themselves, insufficient conditions for activation.

PUBLICATIONS 1 and 6 identify *service issues* such as relative deprivation, unmet need and dissatisfaction with authorities as important catalysts for participation. PUBLICATIONS 2 and 4 build on this by showing a need to *balance* users' more technical/transactional and more adaptive/transformative concerns - and how this may lead to a sense of unease within citizen governance structures in the face of perceptions of depoliticisation and/or managerialisation. PUBLICATION 5 develops these issues further, discussing various *mechanisms* within the public services for the expression of user voice. It argues that these mechanisms are rarely considered together and that new insights emerge from their juxtaposition. These include the nature of the issues for which users consider different mechanisms to be appropriate, and why.

PUBLICATIONS 4 and 5 go on to assert that the viable activation of user voice depends on compatibility between the channels preferred by users as 'voice mechanisms' and those preferred by organisations as 'listening mechanisms'. For example, PUBLICATION 6 identifies some viable examples (such as 'experience-based design' and 'end-of-life care') where, while user voice is initially activated by dissatisfaction, users subsequently become activated into more 'co-productive' processes. However, a lack of viability may result in different forms of 'withdrawal'. PUBLICATION 3 considers how, despite attempts within the public services to promote the more active user categories of 'rational actors' and 'co-producers', many users instead often occupy more passive positions where they either choose not to participate or feel they lack sufficient agency to do so.

6.2.7 [Q7]. How important is the 'depth of connection' to a public service for service users' participation and involvement? Does this influence the 'projects' they seek to pursue in relation to such services?

The literature establishes that, to the extent that they have meaning or play a part in their experiences, public services represent 'contexted objects' for their various stakeholders (e.g. Rugge, 2013; Dowding & John, 2012). However, such representations can vary according to the way that people relate to particular services (e.g. Newman & Clarke, 2009a; Denhardt, 1981). The seminal work of Laaksonen (1994) defines the nature of this relationship both in terms of the values, attributes and consequences of the object concerned, and in terms of the 'depth of connection' that is felt by different stakeholders (or 'subjects').

This raises issues of not only what should be cared about, but also whether change is necessary and how much. In this way, a further seminal contribution suggests that *subjects*, *objects* and *projects* form 'a system of mutual constitution', whereby 'projects' are constructed by the relations (or attempted relations) between different subjects with regard to an object of common

concern (e.g. Bauer & Gaskell, 1999). Disagreements on such issues can sometimes lead to significant conflicts between different stakeholders (e.g. Pellizzoni, 2001; Newman & Clarke, 2009a), requiring spaces in which communication and action can be conducted (e.g. Jovchelovitch, 2007). Importantly, for Laaksonen (1994) the stronger the connectedness of the subject with the object - in terms of its dimensionality, centrality and relatedness - the more likely active involvement projects become.

This thesis addresses various aspects of these issues. For example, in what are termed 'preconditions' for participation, PUBLICATION 1 considers how, other things being equal, a service's importance to them will vary according to the intensity, continuity, and duration of their need for it. These aspects link with Laaksonen's notions of 'centrality'. In terms of 'dimensionality', PUBLICATION 5 further examines some of the particular attributes and consequences that users care about in different public services, observing that some of the consequences that are important to users are often missing from service evaluations. Finally, in terms of 'relatedness' PUBLICATION 5 also considers the extent to which users 'care about' the services they use and how a sense of attachment and perception of 'having a stake' acts as an important stimulus for user voice. PUBLICATION 3 builds on these ideas, suggesting that - even in those with 'positive' identifications (who feel able to 'have a say and make a difference') - a low level of connectedness serves to reduce users' likelihood of involvement, and vice versa.

Other PUBLICATIONS address users' projectivity. For example, PUBLICATION 4 reports high proportions of service users that 'care about' the service, and how this helps to promote their active involvement. PUBLICATIONS 1 and 4 suggest that the purposes behind such projects may involve either 'maintenance'/'defence' (to prevent deterioration of the service) or 'innovation'/'protest' (to make necessary improvements). PUBLICATION 4 also compares and contrasts providers' subject-object relationships and their own subsequent projectivity. This demonstrates the potential for both conflict and co-operation - a theme that is picked up in PUBLICATION 6, which considers the advantages of accepting users' perspectives as a unique and legitimate way of viewing the values, attributes and consequences of the service that is not available to providers.

6.2.8 [Q8]. To what extent do users perceive relations with service providers to be co-operative or conflictual, and with what effects? How is this mediated by prevailing patterns of power relations?

The literature recognises the ambiguous nature of users' relationship with the state, either as citizens asserting rights or as consumers pursuing their interests (e.g. Tovey et al, 2001; Potter,

1988). In either case, however, few people today contend that user voice is unimportant in public services. Voice is thought to help shape better-informed decisions and ensure that limited resources are used to meet service users' priorities. Others point out that voice makes for better relationships, improving communication, building trust, and smoothing the process of service delivery. Yet this masks wide variations in practice, and users' sense of agency (or lack of agency) is often dependent on the ways that important relational issues such as competing legitimacies, power and dominance are resolved (e.g. Skelcher, 1993; Barnes & Prior, 2009). Arnstein's (1969) seminal contribution suggests that 'genuine' participation is not always on offer, while Fiske's (1991) seminal typology outlines how different 'dynamics of inter-subjectivity' can establish different patterns of relations between actors. Such insights may be used to support wider notions of new forms of relationalism in the public services, in which the potential for complementarities and 'perceived justice' are brought more to the fore (e.g. Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Newman & Clarke, 2009a; Dean, 2003). In this sense, user voice may be important in closing the 'distance' between users and providers of public services (e.g. Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000).

A range of further important considerations arise in this Thesis with regard to these issues. For example, several PUBLICATIONS address the nature of the relationships between service users and providers. PUBLICATIONS 1, 2 and 5 each address the notion of power imbalances here that allow certain stakeholders to exercise disproportionate influence and limit the scope for user action. PUBLICATION 5 goes further to suggest that, where providers' power relative to users enables them to control the agenda so that the use of power becomes coercive and domineering, this can add significantly to the potential for user resistance and/or withdrawal over time. This theme is also picked up in PUBLICATION 3, which nevertheless suggests a range of interventions in order to acknowledge diversity and reconnect the disconnected.

Various PUBLICATIONS also address the extent to which users feel they are listened to. PUBLICATION 4 asserts that, at the voice-listening interface, users and providers may seek to enforce a particular direction, stand in negotiation with one another, or find ways to integrate one another's views through deeper, more inclusive dialogue and new forms of 'relationalism'. PUBLICATION 3 reinforces this in discussing the importance of 'having a say and making a difference' for positive user identifications. Yet PUBLICATIONS 1, 2, 4 and 5 each note the scope for relationships between different parties to become strained if communication becomes difficult. In the sections on 'dynamics' in PUBLICATIONS 1 and 5, different patterns of relations frame users' perceptions of voice as a positive or negative experience. This regards public service organisations receptivity to users' views, including whether 'due process' is followed in the support of different forms of 'perceived justice' (distributive, procedural, relational). With

PUBLICATION 4, this shows how different senses of 'listening' emerge, and how influence over decision-making is often hard-won. PUBLICATION 6 further details how, in the cases presented, different patterns of resistance or support are evident in providers' responses to user voice, and the differential effects of this on users' perceptions of procedural and administrative justice.

Various PUBLICATIONS also suggest strategies for a more relational approach. At the level of citizen governance, PUBLICATION 2 suggests strategies such as more complex governance structures and stronger links of the 'sphere of governance' with the wider 'sphere of participation'. Meanwhile, at the level of service delivery, PUBLICATIONS 4 and 5 suggest both keeping a range of channels open, and investing the appropriate levels of institutional effort to capture what they are saying - given that the choices desired by service users are not always those either supplied by providers, and even if they are, the articulation of users' views through certain channels may be subject to different patterns of support, toleration or resistance. Moreover, PUBLICATION 6 points out that sometimes pursuing user relations a little further, rather than closing them down too early, can have particularly positive effects.

6.2.9 [Q9]. How do cultural explanations help explain how the context for interaction between public service users and providers might be better understood? What are the implications of this for institutional design and/or the commitment of institutional effort/institutional work?

The literature establishes how 'culture' provides the broad principles of inter-subjectivity by which people organise and interpret reality (e.g. Fiske & Hartley, 1978; Vidaver-Cohen, 1998). Cultural values and norms are assumed to underpin society's institutions, while institutions preserve cultural values and norms, give them authority, and provide a context for social interaction (e.g. Douglas, 1986; Goodin, 1996). Hence, different cultural contexts can have different effects on the thoughts and actions of individuals as they engage in a process of 'world-making' (Grendstad & Selle, 1999).

Such cultural understandings are becoming increasingly widely-recognised in the public service environment (e.g. Hood, 1998; Peck & 6, 2006). Cultural 'systems' of ideas and values therefore find their expression in different public service settings in _structures_ (such as organizations or bureaucratic sub-units) _systems_ (such as operating systems, information systems, communications systems, maintenance systems, reward systems), _policies_ (which codify principal goals and work methods), and _practices_ (actual actions and behaviours). Controversies remain, however, on the extent to which it is possible to develop an overall 'unifying' culture that promotes the optimum efficiency, effectiveness and equity of public service organisations, or

whether it is necessary to accommodate a plurality of cultural perspectives that co-exist in dynamic tension with one another in different contexts (e.g. Hoppe, 2011; 6, 2003).

This thesis seeks to add modestly to this emerging work in the public services. First, several PUBLICATIONS identify how the values and norms in public service institutions can serve to facilitate or constrain user voice. PUBLICATION 2 examines the level of governance, suggesting that an organisational emphasis on either steering or representation represents a commitment to different (and potentially competing) values and norms. PUBLICATONS 1, 4 and 5 address things more from the level of service delivery, suggesting that there may be *cultural* incompatibilities that constrain the outputs from participatory processes in gaining traction in decision making and resource allocation. Hence, in so far as users perceive conditions to allow them to have a say and make a difference, such cultural 'incompatibilities' may provide a key factor in their feeling excluded or ignored.

The notion that 'governance design' is important in PUBLICATION 2 rests on a notion that structural considerations can be used to help resolve these competing values more effectively in public service organisations. This leads to the position in PUBLICATIONS 4 and 5, which recognises how the extent and importance of 'value pluralism' in public service contexts might be linked to a sense of 'cultural congruence' or 'culture clashes' in driving new institutional bargains. This links cultural understandings to both the notion of 'listening leadership' and potential new forms of relationalism in PUBLICATION 4, and to the argument in PUBLICATION 5 that a combination of both appropriate institutional design *and* the commitment of institutional effort may be necessary to ensure that service cultures fit better with users' expectations. This is supported in PUBLICATION 6, in the suggestion that sometimes 'cultural innovation' is required as part of the 'institutional work' done within public service organisations, before other more tangible changes can be made.
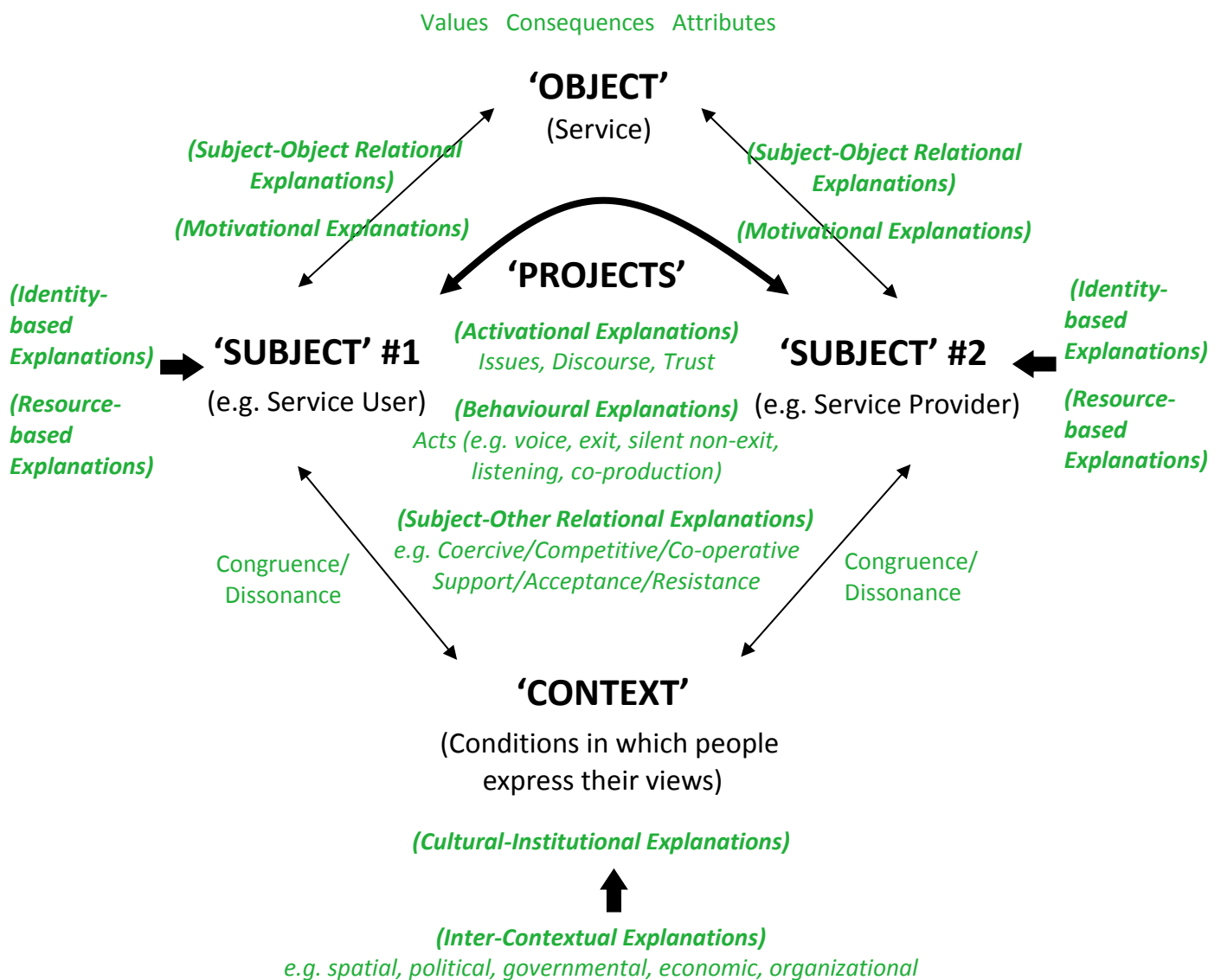
6.3 Bringing the Elements Together and Mapping Emergent Thinking

6.3.1 Representing User Involvement and Participation in Public Services

This thesis has identified and brought together a number of elements and explanations for user participation and involvement in the governance and delivery of public services. In terms of the inter-relationships between these elements and different sets of explanations, this section draws together the various subjective, objective and contextual factors in a tentative heuristic framework ('the user involvement diamond') (see Figure 14). This heuristic encapsulates some of the key relationships and processes involved, providing a simplified representation of the

complexity of public service fields of relationships, and is labelled in line with the conceptual and empirical analysis in this thesis. It aims both to show the contribution of the papers to the overall field of research and highlight possible gaps for future research.

The framework draws on the important literatures introduced earlier (e.g. Bauer & Gaskell, 1999; Jovchelovich, 2007; Laaksonen, 1994), but also broader insights from communication theory (e.g. Windahl and Signitzer, 1992). It emphasises the importance of user voice, the lessons to be learned from a deeper understanding of users, providers, their relationships with the service itself, their relationships with each other, and the influence of the particular context within which the service is delivered.

Values   Consequences   Attributes

'OBJECT'
(Service)

(Subject-Object Relational Explanations)

(Motivational Explanations)

(Subject-Object Relational Explanations)

(Motivational Explanations)

'PROJECTS'

(Identity-based Explanations)

'SUBJECT' #1
(e.g. Service User)

(Activational Explanations)
Issues, Discourse, Trust

'SUBJECT' #2
(e.g. Service Provider)

(Identity-based Explanations)

(Resource-based Explanations)

(Behavioural Explanations)
Acts (e.g. voice, exit, silent non-exit, listening, co-production)

(Resource-based Explanations)

(Subject-Other Relational Explanations)
e.g. Coercive/Competitive/Co-operative Support/Acceptance/Resistance

Congruence/ Dissonance

Congruence/ Dissonance

'CONTEXT'
(Conditions in which people express their views)

(Cultural-Institutional Explanations)

(Inter-Contextual Explanations)
e.g. spatial, political, governmental, economic, organizational

Figure 14: *A Tentative Heuristic Framework of Public Service Fields of Relationships: The 'User Involvement Diamond'*

6.3.2 Potential Further Applications of the Framework

In terms of future research, it is argued that many of the different elements of the 'involvement diamond' could benefit from further empirical analysis to develop more nuanced and deeper understanding. Hence, while the heuristic is used above to illuminate the field of relationships between service users and providers of a particular service in a particular context, there exists within the public service environment a plurality of subjects (e.g. managers, professionals, politicians, regulators, watchdogs, ombudsmen), a plurality of objects (different public services and different elements of particular services), and a plurality of contexts (as noted above). In this way, it is tentatively proposed that placing different 'subjects', 'objects' and 'contexts' under examination holds the prospect of new discoveries; for example, in revealing more about the nature of the 'projects' at the heart of the heuristic. As stated at the outset, the existence and creation of such projects in different spaces and places in the public sector makes the endeavour to more deeply understand participation and involvement enduringly important.

More specifically, the heuristic could be used to understand a number of relationships that are currently under-researched; for example, the fields of relationships created between users (as 'subject #1') and ombudsmen (as 'subject #2') (Simmons, 2015; cf. Creutzfeldt, 2016). Moreover, while some fields of relationships may have been considered extensively in isolation (e.g. those created by regulators as 'subject #1' and providers as 'subject #2'), the heuristic might be used to more comprehensively map out the various sets of relationships that apply in a particular service setting. In doing so, it may be possible to follow up on Barnes and Prior's (2009: 200) concerns to better understand 'the significance of intricate and multiple relations of power, of the competing values and motivations of different actors, and of the complex relationships between institutional context and individual agency in analysing and explaining the outcomes of public services'.

This thesis argues that when it comes to users finding their voice, and user knowledge being incorporated into the governance and delivery of UK public services, all of these things matter. They bring together a range of different forces that must be balanced within the service system. Arguably, broader contextual changes continue to make this balancing act problematic. This heuristic and linking narrative therefore aim to continue to build on the portfolio of published works to provide some additional analytical and practical strategies to help better conceptualise and critically investigate service user involvement and participation and the incorporation of user knowledge in the governance and delivery of UK public services.

References

Albury, D. (2005) 'Fostering Innovation in Public Services', *Public Money and Management*, 25 (1): 51-56

Alford, J. (2002) 'Why do Public-Sector Clients Coproduce? Toward a Contingency Theory' *Administration and Society*, 34 (1): 32-56

Alinsky, S. (1969) *Reveille for Radicals,* New York: Vintage Books

Almond, G. & Verba, S. (1963) *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

Almond, G. & Verba, S. (1989) *The Civic Culture Revisited*, London: Sage

Andrews, M. (1991) *Lifetimes of Commitment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Andrews, R. & Boyne, G. (2010) 'Better Public Services', *Public Management Review*, 12(3): 307-321

Andrews, R., Cowell, R., Downe, J., Martin, S. & Turner, D. (2008) 'Supporting Effective Citizenship in Local Government: engaging, educating and empowering local citizens', *Local Government Studies*, 34 (4): 489-507

Archer, M. (2003) *Structure, Agency and the Internal Conversation,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Arnstein, S. (1969) 'A Ladder of Citizen Participation', *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35 (4): 216-224

Arnstein, S. (1971) 'Eight Rungs on the Ladder of Citizen Participation', in Cahn, E. & Passet, B. (eds.), *Citizen Participation: Effecting Community Change*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers

Aspinwall, L. (2010) 'Future-Oriented Thinking, Proactive Coping, and the Management of Potential Threats to Health and Well-being', in Folkman, S. (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Stress, Health and Coping*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Astill, S. & Cairney, P. (2015) 'Complexity Theory and Political Science: Do New Theories Require New Methods?', in Geyer, R. & Cairney, P. (eds.), *Handbook on Complexity and Public Policy*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar

Audit Commission (1999) *Listen up! Effective Community Consultation,* London: Audit Commission

Axelrod, R. (1984) *The Evolution of Co-operation*, New York: Basic Books

Axelrod, R. (1997) *The Complexity of Cooperation: Agent-Based Models of Competition and Collaboration,* Princeton: Princeton University Press

Baggott, R. (2005) 'A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum? Reforming Patient and Public Involvement in the NHS in England', *Public Administration*, 83 (3): 533-551

Bailey, N. & Pill, M. (2015) 'Can the State Empower Communities Through Localism? An Evaluation of Recent Approaches to Neighbourhood Governance in England', *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 33 (2), 289-304

Baldock, J. & Ungerson, C. (1996) 'Becoming a Consumer of Care: Developing a Sociological Account of the 'New Community Care', *Sociological Review*, 44 (S1), 11-35

Bandura, A. (1971) *Social Learning Theory*, New York: General Learning Press

Barbour, R. (2001) 'Checklists for Improving Rigour in Qualitative Research: a Case of the Tail Wagging the Dog?' *British Medical Journal*, 322 (7294): 1115–1117

Barkan, S., Cohn, S. & Whitaker, W. (1995) 'Beyond Recruitment: Predictors of Differential Participation in a National Anti-hunger Organization', *Sociological Forum*, 10: 113–34

Barnes, M. (1999) 'Researching Public Participation', *Local Government Studies*, 25 (4), 60-75

Barnes, M. (2009) 'Authoritative Consumers or Experts by Experience? User Groups in Health and Social Care', in: Simmons, R., Powell, M. & Greener, I. (eds.), *The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services*, Bristol: Policy Press

Barnes, M. & Cotterell, P. (2011) *Critical Perspectives on User Involvement*, Bristol: Policy Press

Barnes, M. & Prior, D. (2009) 'Examining the Idea of 'Subversion' in Public Services', in Barnes, M. & Prior, D. (eds.), *Subversive Citizens: Power, Agency and Resistance in Public Services*, Bristol: Policy Press

Barnes, M., Newman, J. & Sullivan, H. (2007) *Power, Participation and Political Renewal: Case Studies in Public Participation*, Bristol: Policy Press

Barnes, M., Newman, J., Knops, A. & Sullivan, H. (2003) 'Constituting 'the Public' in Public Participation', *Public Administration*, 81 (2), 379-399

Barnes, M., Skelcher, C., Beirens, H., Dalziel, R., Jeffares, S. & Wilson, L. (2008) *Designing Citizen-Centred Governance*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Baron, R., Kerr, N. & Miller, N. (1992) *Group Process, Group Decision, Group Action*, Buckingham: Open University Press

Bason, C. (2010) *Leading Public Sector Innovation,* Bristol: Policy Press

Bate, P. & Robert, G. (2007) *Bringing User Experience to Healthcare Improvement: Experience-Based Design*. Oxford: Radcliffe

Bauer, M. & Gaskell, G. (1999) 'Towards a Paradigm for Research on Social Representations', *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 29 (2), 163-186

Bauman, Z. (2007) 'Collateral Casualties of Consumerism', *Journal of Consumer Culture*, 7 (1), 25-56

Bebbington, J., Brown, J., Frame, B. & Thomson, I. (2007) 'Theorizing Engagement: the Potential of a Critical Dialogic Approach', *Accounting, Auditing and Accountability Journal*, 20 (3): 356-381

Becker, H. (*1974*) '*Labelling Theory Reconsidered', i*n Rock, P. & McIntosh, M. (eds), *Deviance and Social Control, London*: *Tavistock*

Beierle, T. (2002) 'The Quality of Stakeholder-Based Decisions', *Risk Analysis*, 22 (4), 739-749

Bender, T. (1978) *Community and Social Change in America*, Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press

Benhabib, S. (2008) *Another Cosmopolitanism,* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Benz, M. & Stutzer, A. (2004) 'Are Voters Better Informed When They Have a Larger Say in Politics?', *Public Choice*, 119 (1-2), 31-59

Beresford, P. (2009) 'Differentiated Consumers? A Differentiated View from a Service-User Perspective', in Simmons, R., Powell, M. & Greener, I. (eds.), *The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services*, Bristol: Policy Press

Beresford, P. & Croft, S. (1993) *Citizen Involvement: A Practical Guide for Change*. London: Macmillan

Berube, M. (2003) 'Citizenship and Disability', *Dissent*, Spring, 52-57

Bies, R. &. Moag, J. (1986) 'Broadening the Domain of Research on Procedural Justice', in Lewicki, R., Sheppard, B. & Bazerman, M. (eds) *Research on Negotiation in Organizations,* Greenwich, CT: JAI Press

Bies, R. (1987) 'Beyond 'Voice': The Influence of Decision-Maker Justification and Sincerity on Procedural Fairness Judgment', *Representative Research in Social Psychology,* 17: 3-14

Bies, R. & Shapiro, D. (1987) 'Interactional Fairness Judgments: The Influence of Causal Accounts', *Social Justice Research*, 1 (2): 199-218

Bies, R. & Shapiro, D. (1988) 'Voice and Justification: Their Influence on Procedural Fairness Judgments', *Academy of Management Journal*, 31 (3): 676-685

Biggs, S. (1999) 'Changing Identities and Relationships in the Human Services', *Education and Ageing,* 14 (2)

Biggs, S. (2001) 'Toward Critical Narrativity: Stories of Aging in Contemporary Social Policy', *Journal of Aging Studies*, 15 (4): 303-316

Birchall, J. & Simmons, R. (2004) *User Power*, London: National Consumer Council

Birchall, J. (2002) 'Mutual, Non-Profit or Public Interest Company? An Evaluation of Options for the Ownership and Control of Water Utilities', *Annals of Public and Cooperative Economics*, 73 (2): 181-213

Birchall, J. (2012) 'The Big Society and the 'Mutualisation' of Public Services: A Critical Commentary', in Edwards, J. (ed) *Retrieving the Big Society*, London: Wiley

Birner, R. & Wittmer, H. (2003) 'Using Social Capital to Create Political Capital: How do Local Communities Gain Political Influence?', in Dolšak,N. & Ostrom, E. (eds.) *The Commons in the New Millennium: Challenges and Adaptation*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Blaikie, N. (2010) *Designing Social Research* (2nd ed.), Cambridge: Polity Press

Bochel, C., Bochel, H., Somerville, P. & Worley, C. (2008) 'Marginalised or Enabled Voices? 'User Participation' in Policy and Practice, *Social Policy and Society*, 7 (2): 201-210

Boix, C. & Posner, D. (1998) 'Social capital: Explaining its Origins and Effects on Government Performance', *British Journal of Political Science*, 28 (4): 686-693

Bovaird, T. (2007) 'Beyond Engagement and Participation: User and Community Coproduction of Public Services', *Public Administration Review*, 67 (5): 846-860

Bovaird, T. (2014) 'Attributing Outcomes to Social Policy Interventions – 'Gold Standard' or 'Fool's Gold' in Public Policy and Management?', *Social Policy & Administration*, 48 (1): 1-23

Bowles, S and Gintis, H (2011) *A Co-operative Species: Human Reciprocity and its Evolution*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

Boyle, D. (2013) *The Barriers to Choice Review How are People Using Choice in Public Services?* London: Cabinet Office

Bracht, N. & Tsouros, A. (1990) 'Principles and Strategies of Effective Community Participation', *Health Promotion International*, 5 (3): 199-208

Brackertz, N. & Meredyth, D. (2009) 'Community Consultation in Victorian Local Government: A Case of Mixing Metaphors?', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 68 (2): 152-166

Brady, H., Verba, S. & Schlozman, K. (1995) 'Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation', *American Political Science Review*, 89 (2): 271-294

Brann, P. & Foddy, M. (1987) 'Trust and the Consumption of a Deteriorating Common Resource', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 31 (4): 615-630

Brannan, T., John, P. & Stoker, G. (2006) 'Active Citizenship and Effective Public Services and Programmes: how can we know what really works?' *Urban Studies*, 43 (5-6): 993-1008

Brett, J. (2000) 'Culture and Negotiation', *International Journal of Psychology,* 35 (2): 97-104

Brodie, E., Hughes, T., Jochum, V., Miller, S., Ockenden, N. & Warburton, D. (2011) *Pathways Through Participation: What Creates and Sustains Active Citizenship,* London: NCVO/IVR/INVOLVE

Bryman, A. (2015) *Social Research Methods,* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Buchanan, J. & Tullock, G. (1962) *The Calculus of Consent,* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

Burke, R. (2010) 'Reflections: Managers, Balance, and Fulfilling Lives', *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, 25 (2): 86-90

Burns, D., Hambleton, R., & Hoggett, P. (1994) *Politics of Decentralisation: Revitalising Local Government,* Basingstoke: Macmillan

Burton, P. (2004) 'Power to the People? How to Judge Public Participation, *Local Economy*, 19 (3): 193-198

Burton, P., Goodlad, R. & Croft, J. (2006) 'How Would We Know What Works? Context and Complexity in the Evaluation of Community Involvement', *Evaluation*, 12 (3): 294-312

Burton, P., Goodlad, R., Croft, J., Abbott, J., Hastings, A. & MacDonald, G. (2004) *What Works in Community Involvement in Area-Based Initiatives?* London: Home Office

Cahn, E. & Gray, C. (2012) 'Co-production from a Normative Perspective', in Pestoff, V., Brandsen, T. & Verschuere, B. (eds.), *New Public Governance, the Third Sector and Co-production,* New York: Routledge

Cairncross, L., Morrell, C., Darke, J. & Brownhill, S. (2002) 'Tenants Managing: an Evaluation of Tenant Management Organisations in England, London: ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)

Cairney, P. (2012) 'Complexity Theory in Political Science and Public Policy', *Political Studies Review,* 10 (3): 346-358

Cairney, P. (2013) 'Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: How do we Combine the Insights of Myultiple Theories in Public Policy Studies', *Policy Studies Journal*, 4 (1): 1-21

Cameron, K. (2008) 'A Process for Changing Organizational Culture', In Cummings, T. (ed.) *Handbook of Organizational Development*, London: Sage

Campbell, C. (1995) 'The Sociology of Consumption', in Miller, D. (ed.), *Approaching Consumption*, London: Routledge

Carter, N. (2007) *The Politics of the Environment: Ideas, Activism, Policy* (2nd ed.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Charmaz, K. (2000) 'Grounded Theory: Objectivist and Constructivist Methods', in Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (2nd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Charmaz, K. (2005) 'Grounded Theory in the 21st Century: A Qualitative Method for Advancing Social Justice Research', in Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (3rd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Clarke J. (2005) 'New Labour's Citizens: Activated, Empowered, Responsibilised, Abandoned?', *Critical Social Policy,* 25 (4): 447–463

Clarke, J. (2008) 'Performance Paradoxes: the Politics of Evaluation in Public Services' in Davis, H. & Martin, S. (eds.) *Public Services Inspection in the UK,* London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Clarke, J. (2012) 'The Work of Governing', in Coulter, K. & Schumann, W. (eds.) *Governing Cultures: Anthropological Perspectives on Political Labour, Power and Government*, Utrecht: Springer

Clarke, J. (2013) 'Contexts: Forms of Agency and Action', in Pollitt, C. (ed.) *Contexts in Public Policy and Management: The Missing Link?,* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing

Clarke, N. & Cochrane, A. (2013) 'Geographies and Politics of Localism: the Localism of the United Kingdom's Coalition Government', *Political Geography*, 34: 10-23

Clarke, J. & Newman, J. (1997) *The Managerial State: Power, Politics and Ideology in the Remaking of Social Welfare,* London: Sage

Clarke, J., Newman, J., Smith, N., Vidler, E. & Westmarland, L. (2007) *Creating Citizen-Consumers: Changing Publics and Changing Public Services,* London: Sage

Cloutier, C., Denis, J., Langley, A. & Lamothe, L. (2016) 'Agency at the Managerial Interface: Public Sector Reform as Institutional Work', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 26 (2): 259-276

Clwyd, A., & Hart, T. (2013) 'A Review of the NHS hospitals Complaints System: Putting Patients Back in the Picture' London: Department of Health

Coglianese, C. (2003) 'Does Consensus Work? Pragmatism and Democracy in the Regulatory Process' in Morales, A. (ed.), *Renascent Pragmatism: Studies in Law and Social Science*, Burlington: Ashgate

Cole, M. (2004) 'Consultation in Local Government: A Case Study of Practice at Devon County Council', *Local Government Studies*, 30 (2): 182-195

Collier, D. & Orr, P. (2003) 'Information Overload: Processing Consultation Responses from Experts, Stakeholder Groups and Communities', *Proceedings*, ASME 9th International Conference*, January

Colquitt, J. & Conlon, D. (2001) 'Justice at the Millennium: A Meta-Analytic Review of 25 Years of Organizational Justice Research', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86 (3): 425-445

Connolly, M., Farrell, C. & James, C. (2017) 'An Analysis of the Stakeholder Model of Public Boards and the Case of School Governing Bodies in England and Wales', *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 45 (1): 5-19

Contandriopoulos, D. (2004) 'A Sociological Perspective on Public Participation in Health Care', *Social Science & Medicine*, 58 (2): 321-330

Cook, D. (2002) 'Consultation, for a Change? Engaging Users and Communities in the Policy Process', *Social Policy & Administration*, 36 (5): 516-531

Cooke, G. & Muir, R. (2012) 'The Possibilities and Politics of the Relational State', in *The Relational State*, London: IPPR

Coote, A. (1999) 'Why Involve the Public?', Written Evidence to Public Administration Select Committee Report, *Innovations in Citizen Participation in Government*, London: Stationery Office

Cornwall, A. & Coelho, V. (2007) *Spaces for Change? The Politics of Citizen Participation in New Democratic Arenas*, London: Zed Books

Corrigan, P. & Joyce, P. (1997) 'Reconstructing Public Management', *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, 10 (5): 417-432

Cowan, D. & Marsh, A. (2004) 'Community, Neighbourhood, Responsibility: Contemporary Currents in Housing Studies', *Housing Studies*, 19 (6): 845-853.

Craib, I. (1998) *Experiencing Identity,* London: Sage.

Creighton, J. (2005) *The Public Participation Handbook: Making Better Decisions through Citizen Involvement*, London: John Wiley & Sons

Cress, D., McPherson, J. & Rotolo, T. (1997) 'Competition and Commitment in Voluntary Memberships: the Paradox of Persistence and Participation, *Sociological Perspectives*, 40 (1): 61-79

Creswell, J. (2009) *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Methods Approaches* (3rd ed.), London: Sage

Creswell, J. & Plano-Clark, V. (2007) *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, London: Sage

Creutzfeldt, N. (2016) 'What Do We Expect From an Ombudsman?' *International Journal of Law in Context*, 12 (4): 437-452

Cropanzano, R., Byrne, Z., Bobocel, D. & Rupp, D. (2001) 'Moral Virtues, Fairness Heuristics, Social Entities, and Other Denizens of Organizational Justice', *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 58: 164-209

Cruickshank, J. (2003) *Critical Realism: The Difference it Makes*, London: Routledge

Cupchik, G. (2001) 'Constructivist Realism: An Ontology That Encompasses Positivist and Constructivist Approaches to the Social Sciences', *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 2 (1): 1-12

Dahl, A. & Soss, J. (2014) 'Neoliberalism for the Common Good? Public Value Governance and the Downsizing of Democracy, *Public Administration Review*, 74 (4): 496-504

Dahl, R. (1989) *Democracy and its Critics,* New Haven: Yale University Press

Davies, C., Wetherell, M. & Barnett, E. (2006) *Citizens at the Centre: Deliberative Participation in Healthcare Decisions*, Bristol: Policy Press

Davies, J. & Pill, M. (2012) 'Empowerment or Abandonment? Prospects for Neighbourhood Revitalization Under the Big Society', *Public Money and Management*, 32 (3): 193-200.

Davies, R. (1998) 'Order and Diversity: Representing and Assisting Organisational Learning in Non-Governmental Aid Organisations', *Doctoral Thesis,* University of Swansea

Davis, H. & Daly, G. (2004) 'From Community Government to Communitarian Partnership? Approaches to Devolution in Birmingham', *Local Government Studies*, 30 (2): 182-195

Dawes, R. (1980) 'Social Dilemmas', *Annual Review of Psychology*, 31 (1): 169-193

Dawes, R. & Thaler, R. (1988) 'Anomalies: Cooperation', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 2 (3): 187-197

Dawes, R., Orbell, J., Simmons, R. & Van De Kragt, A. (1986) 'Organizing Groups for Collective Action', *American Political Science Review*, 80 (4): 1171-1185

Dawes, R., Van De Kragt, A. & Orbell, J. (1988) 'Not Me or Thee but We: the Importance of Group Identity in Eliciting Cooperation in Dilemma Situations: Experimental Manipulations', *Acta Psychologica*, 68 (1): 83-97

Day, D. (1997) 'Citizen Participation in the Planning Process: an Essentially Contested Concept?', *Journal of Planning Literature,* 11 (3): 421-34

Day, P. & Klein, R. (1987) *Accountabilities: Five Public Services*, London: Taylor & Francis

De Cindio, F. & Peraboni, C. (2011) 'Building Digital Participation Hives: Toward a Local Public Sphere,' in Foth, M., Forlano, L., Satchell, C. & Gibbs, M. (eds.), *From Social Butterfly to Engaged Citizen*, Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Deakin, N. & Wright, A. (2005) *Consuming Public Services,* London: Routledge

Dean, H. (2003) 'Re-Conceptualising Welfare-to-Work for People with Multiple Problems and Needs', *Journal of Social Policy*, 32 (3): 441-459

Deaux, K. (2000) 'Models, Meanings and Motivations', in Capozza, D. & Brown, R. (eds.) *Social Identity Processes*, London: Sage

Deci, E. & Ryan, R. (1985) 'The General Causality Orientations Scale: Self-Determination in Personality', *Journal of Research in Personality*, 19 (2): 109-134

Deci, E. & Ryan, R. (2000) 'The Support of Autonomy and the Control of Behavior', in Higgins, E. Tory & Kruglanski, A. (eds), *Motivational Science: Social and Personality Perspectives,* New York: Psychology Press

DeLeon, L. & DeLeon, P. (2002) 'The Democratic Ethos and Public Management', *Administration and Society*, 34 (2): 229-250

Denhardt, R. (1981) 'Toward a Critical Theory of Public Organization', *Public Administration Review*, 41 (6): 628-635

Denhardt, R. & Denhardt, J. (2000) 'The New Public Service: Serving Rather than Steering', *Public Administration Review*, 60 (6): 549-559

Dietz, T. & Stern, P. (2008) *Public Participation in Environmental Assessment and Decision Making*, Dulles, VA: National Academies Press

Doel, M., Carroll, C., Chambers, E. & Cooke, J. (2007) *Participation: Finding Out What Difference it Makes*, London: Social Care Institute for Excellence

Doosje, B., Ellemers, N. & Spears, R. (1999) *Commitment and Intergroup Behavior,* Oxford: Blackwell Science

Doosje, B., Spears, R. & Ellemers, N. (2002) 'Social Identity as Both Cause and Effect: The Development of Group Identification in Response to Anticipated and Actual Changes in the Intergroup Hierarchy', *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 41: 57-76

Douglas, M. (1970) *Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology*, London: Barrie and Rockliff

Douglas, M. (1982) *In the Active Voice*, London: Routledge

Douglas, M. (1986) *How Institutions Think*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul

Douglas, M. (1992) *Risk and Blame: Essays in Cultural Theory*, London: Routledge

Dowding, K. & John, P. (2012) *Exits, Voices and Social Investment: Citizens' Reaction to Public Services,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Dowding, K., John, P., Mergoupis, T. & Vugt, M. (2000) 'Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Analytic and Empirical Developments', *European Journal of Political Research*, 37 (4): 469-495

Durose, C. (2009) 'Front-Line Workers and 'Local Knowledge': Neighbourhood Stories in Contemporary UK Local Governance', *Public Administration*, 87 (1): 35-49

Durose, C. & Lowndes, V. (2010) 'Neighbourhood Governance: Contested Rationales Within a Multi-Level Setting–a Study of Manchester', *Local Government Studies*, 36 (3): 341-359

Durose, C., Needham, C., Mangan, C. & Rees, J. (2016) 'Generating 'Good Enough' Evidence for Co-production', *Evidence and Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice*

Ellemers, N., Kortekass, P. & Ouwerkerk, J. (1999) 'Self-Categorisation, Commitment to the Group and Group Self-Esteem as Related but Distinct Aspects of Social Identity', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 29: 371-389

Ellemers, N., Spears, R. & Doosje, B. (2002) 'Self and Social Identity', *Annual Review of Psychology*, 53 (1): 161-186

Elster, J. (1998) *Deliberative Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Emirbayer, M. & Mische, A. (1998) 'What Is Agency?', *American Journal of Sociology*, 103 (4): 962–1023

Entwistle, V. & Watt, I. (2013) 'Treating Patients as Persons: a Capabilities Approach to Support Delivery of Person-Centred Care, *American Journal of Bioethics*, 13 (8): 29-39

Etzioni, A. (1988) 'Normative-Affective Factors: Toward a New Decision-Making Model', *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 9 (2): 125-150

Etzioni-Halevy, E. (1983) *Bureaucracy and Democracy,* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul

Farrell, C. (2005) 'Governance in the Public Sector – the Involvement of the Board', *Public Administration*, 83(1): 89–110

Farrell, C. (2009) 'The Consumer in Education', in Simmons, R., Powell, M. & Greener, I. (eds.), *The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services*, Bristol: Policy Press

Farrell, C. (2010) 'Citizen and Consumer Involvement in UK Public Services', *International Journal of Consumer Studies*, 34 (5): 503-507

Farrell, C. & Jones, J. (2000) 'Evaluating Stakeholder Participation in Public Services–Parents and Schools', *Policy and Politics*, 28 (2): 251-262

Farrell, C. & Law, J. (1999) 'The Accountability of School Governing Bodies', *Education Management and Administration*, 27(1): 5–15

Farrell, C., Morris, J. & Ranson, S. (2016) 'The Theatricality of Accountability: the Operation of Governing Bodies in Schools', *Public Policy and Administration*, Published online: June 24, doi: 10.1177/0952076716654208

Festinger, L. (1954) 'A Theory of Social Comparison Processes', *Human Relations*, 7 (2): 117-140

Field, J. (2017) *Social Capital* (3rd ed.), Abingdon: Routledge

Finkel, S. & Muller, E. (1998) 'Rational Choice and the Dynamics of Collective Political Action: Evaluating Alternative Models with Panel Data', *American Political Science Review*, 92 (1): 37-49

Finkel, S., Muller, E. & Opp, K. (1989) 'Personal Influence, Collective Rationality and Mass Political Action, *American Political Science Review*, 89 (3): 885-903

Fiorino, D. (1990) 'Citizen Participation and Environmental Risk: A Survey of Institutional Mechanisms, *Science, Technology and Human Values*, 15 (2): 226-243

Fishkin, J. (1991) *Democracy and Deliberation: New Directions for Democratic Reform,* New Haven: Yale University Press

Fiske, A. (1991) *Structures of Social Life: The Four Elementary Forms of Human Relations,* New York: Free Press

Fiske, J., & Hartley, J. (1978) *Reading Television,* London: Methuen

Flemming, B. (2004) 'Universities in the New Millennium: Heading Towards a New Culture', *Policy Options*, Montreal: Institute for Research on Public Policy

Folger, R. & Cropanzano, R. (2001) 'Fairness Theory: Justice as Accountability', in Greenberg, J. & Cropanzano, R. (eds.), *Advances in Organizational Justice*, Stanford: Stanford University Press

Folger, R., Cropanzano, R., Timmerman, T., Howes, J. & Mitchell, D. (1996) 'Elaborating Procedural Fairness: Justice Becomes Both Simpler and More Complex, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 22: 435-441

Francis, R. (2013) *Report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry,* London: Stationery Office

Franklin, A. (2001). 'Serving the Public Interest? Federal experiences with Participation in Strategic Planning', *American Review of Public Administration*, 31 (2): 126-138

Fraser, N. (1995) 'Recognition or Redistribution? A Critical Reading of Iris Young's Justice and the Politics of Difference', *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 3 (2): 166-180

Fraser, N. (1997) *Justice Interruptus: Critical Reflections on the 'Post-Socialist' Condition,* London: Routledge

Fraser, N. (2000) 'Rethinking Recognition', *New Left Review*, 3: 107

Fraser, N. (2001) 'Recognition Without Ethics?', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 18 (2-3): 21-42

Fraser, N. (2003) 'Rethinking Recognition: Overcoming Displacement and Reification in Cultural Politics', in Hobson, B. (ed.) *Recognition Struggles and Social Movements: Contested Identities, Agency and Power*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Fraser, N. (2005) 'Reframing Justice in a Globalizing World', *New Left Review*, 36: 69-88

Fraser, N. & Honneth, A. (2003) *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange,* London: Verso

Frey, B. & Stutzer, A. (1999) 'Measuring Preferences by Subjective Well-Being', *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics*, 155: 755-778

Fudge, C. (1984) 'Decentralisation: Socialism Goes Local?', in Boddy, M. & Fudge, C. (eds.) *Local Socialism?*, Basingstoke: Macmillan

Fung, A. (2015) 'Putting the Public Back Into Governance: The Challenges of Citizen Participation and its Future', *Public Administration Review*, 75 (4): 513-522

Funtowicz, S., & Ravetz, J. (1993) 'Science for the Post-Normal Age', *Futures*, 25 (7): 739-755

Furnham, A. (2000) *The Hopeless, Hapless and Helpless Manager: Further Explorations in the Psychology of Managerial Incompetence*. London: Whurr Publishing

Gabriel, Y. & Lang, T. (2006) *The Unmanageable Consumer* (2nd ed.), London: Sage

Gavious, A. & Mizrahi, S. (1999) 'Two-Level Collective Action and Group Identity', *Journal of Theoretical Politics,* 11 (4): 497-517

Geddes, M., Davies, J. & Fuller, C. (2007) 'Evaluating Local Strategic Partnerships: Theory and Practice of Change, *Local Government Studies*, 33 (1): 97-116

Geen, R. (1991) 'Social Motivation', *Annual Review of Psychology*, 42 (1): 377-399

Geertz, C. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays*, New York: Basic Books

Gibbs, G. (2007) *Analyzing Qualitative Data*, London: Sage

Gibson, A., Britten, N. & Lynch, J. (2012) 'Theoretical Directions for an Emancipatory Concept of Patient and Public Involvement', *Health* 16 (5): 531-547

Gilliatt, S., Fenwick, J. & Alford, D. (2000) 'Public Services and the Consumer: Empowerment or Control?', *Social Policy and Administration,* 34(3): 333-49

Glynn, W., De Burca, S., Brannick, T., Fynes, B. & Ennis, S. (2003) 'Listening practices and performance in service organisations', *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 14 (3): 310-330

Gofen, A. (2012) 'Entrepreneurial Exit Response to Dissatisfaction with Public Services, *Public Administration*, 90 (4): 1088-1106

Goffman, E. (1963) *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity,* New York: Prentice-Hall

Goodin, R. (1996) 'Institutions and their Design', in Goodin, R. (ed.) *The Theory of Institutional Design*: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Goodin, R. (2000) 'Institutional Gaming', *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration*, 13 (4): 523–533

Granovetter, M. (1973) 'The Strength of Weak Ties', *American Journal of Sociology*, 78 (6): 1360-1380

Granovetter, M. (1985) 'Economic Action and Social Structure: the Problem of Embeddedness', *American Journal of Sociology*, 91 (3): 481-510

Gray, D. (2009) *Doing Research in the Real World* (2nd ed.), London: Sage

Green, D. & Shapiro, I. (1994) *Pathologies of Rational Choice Theory: A Critique of Applications in Political Science,* New Haven: Yale University Press

Greener I. (2003) 'Who Choosing What? The Evolution of the Word 'Choice' in the NHS and its Implications for New Labour', *Social Policy Review,* 15: 49-67

Grendstad, G. & Selle, P. (1999) 'The Formation and Transformation of Preferences' in Thompson, M., Grendstad, G. & Selle, P. (eds.) *Cultural Theory as Political Science*, London: Routledge

Grint, K. (2010) 'Wicked Problems and Clumsy Solutions: the Role of Leadership', in Brookes, S. & Grint, K. (eds.) *The New Public Leadership Challenge*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Gustafsson, U. & Driver, S. (2005) 'Parents, Power and Public Participation: Sure Start, an Experiment in New Labour Governance, *Social Policy & Administration*, 39 (5): 528-543

Gyford, J. (1991) *Citizens, Consumers and Councils: Local Government and the Public,* Basingstoke: Macmillan

Habermas, J. (1987) *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. II*, Cambridge: Polity

Hambleton, R. (1988) 'Consumerism, Decentralization and Local Democracy', *Public Administration*, 66 (2): 125-147

Hardin, G. (1968) 'The Tragedy of the Commons', *Journal of Natural Resources Policy Research*, 1 (3): 243-253

Harrison, S. (1999) 'Citizen Participation in the NHS', Written Evidence to Public Administration Select Committee Report, *Innovations in Citizen Participation in Government*, London: Stationery Office

Hart, D. (1972) 'Theories of Government Related to Decentralization and Citizen Participation, *Public Administration Review*, 32: 603-621.

Haslam, S., Oakes, P., Reynolds, K. & Turner, J. (1999) 'Social Identity Salience and the Emergence of Stereotype Consensus', *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 25 (7): 809-818.

Haslam, S., Turner, J., Oakes, P., Reynolds, K. & Doosje, B. (2002) 'From Personal Pictures in the Head to Collective Tools in the World: How Shared Stereotypes Allow Groups to Represent and Change Social Reality', in McGarty, C., Yzerbyt, V. & Spears, R. (eds.) *Stereotypes as Explanations*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Hendry, J. (2002) 'The Principal's Other Problems: Honest Incompetence and the Specification of Objectives', *Academy of Management Review*, 27 (1): 98-113

Hicks, A. & Misra, J. (1993) 'Political Resources and the Growth of Welfare in Affluent Capitalist Democracies, 1960-1982', *American Journal of Sociology*, 99 (3): 668-710

Higham, R. (2014) 'Free Schools in the Big Society: the Motivations, Aims and Demography of Free School Proposers', *Journal of Education Policy*, 29 (1): 122-139

Hill, D. (2000) *Urban Policy and Politics in Britain,* Basingstoke: Macmillan

Hirschman, A. (1991) *The Rhetoric of Reaction: Perversity, Futility, Jeopardy*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap

Hirschman, A. (1970) *Exit, Voice, and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations and States*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Hirschman, A. (1986) 'Exit and Voice: an Expanding Sphere of Influence, in Hirschman, A. (ed.) *Rival Views of Market Society and Other Recent Essays,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Hoggett, P. (1995) 'Does Local Government '*Want'* Local Democracy?', *Town and Country Planning,* April, 107-109

Hoggett, P. (2001) 'Agency, Rationality and Social Policy', *Journal of Social Policy*, 30 (1): 37-56

Hoggett, P. (2003) 'Why Public is not the Same as Private', Paper to International Society for the Psychoanalytic Study of Organizations Symposium, *Power and Politics*, Boston, June 19–21

Hoggett, P., Mayo, M. & Miller, C. (2006) 'Private Passions, the Public Good and Public Service Reform', *Social Policy and Administration*, 40 (7): 758-773

Hoggett, P., Wilkinson, H. & Beedell, P. (2013) 'Fairness and the Politics of Resentment', *Journal of Social Policy*, 42 (3): 567-585

Holman, D. (2014) 'The Relational Bent of Community Participation: the Challenge Social Network Analysis and Simmel Offer to Top-down Prescriptions of 'Community'', *Community Development Journal*, 50 (3): 418-432

Holt, D. (1997) 'Poststructuralist Lifestyle Analysis: Conceptualizing the Social Patterning of Consumption in Postmodernity', *Journal of Consumer Research*, 23 (4): 326-350

Homans, G. (1961) *Social Behaviour: Its Elementary Forms*, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World

Homans, G. (1974) *Social Behaviour: Its Elementary Forms* (2nd ed.), New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich

Hood, C. (1995) 'Contemporary Public Management: a New Global Paradigm?', *Public Policy and Administration*, 10 (2): 104-117

Hood, C. (1998) *The Art of the State*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Hood, C. (2010) 'Discussant Comments', in Andrews, R., & Boyne, G. (2010) 'Better Public Services: The moral purpose of public management research?', *Public management Review*, 12 (3): 307-321

Hood, C., Peters, G. & Wollmann, H. (1996) 'Sixteen Ways to Consumerize Public Services: Pick 'n' Mix or Painful Trade-offs?', *Public Money and Management*, 16 (4): 43-50

Hoppe, R. (2011) *The Governance of Problems: Puzzling, Powering and Participation,* Bristol: Policy Press

Hunold, C. & Peters, G. (2004) 'Bureaucratic Discretion and Deliberative Democracy', in Mälkiä, M., Anttiroiko, A. & Savolainen, R. (eds), *eTransformation in Governance: New Directions in Government and Politics*, Hershey, PA: Idea Group Publishing

Hunter, S. (2003) 'A Critical Analysis of Approaches to the Concept of Social Identity in Social Policy', *Critical Social Policy*, 23 (3): 322-344

Hupe, P. & Hill, M. (2007) 'Street-Level Bureaucracy and Public Accountability', *Public Administration*, 85 (2): 279-299

INVOLVE (2005) *The True Costs of Participation*, London: Involve

Irvin, R. & Stansbury, J. (2004) 'Citizen Participation in Decision Making: Is it Worth the Effort?', *Public Administration Review*, 64 (1): 55-65

Jackson, E. & Rucks, V. (1993) 'Reasons for Ceasing Participation and Barriers to Participation, *Leisure Sciences*, 15 (3): 217-230

Jackson, L. (2001) 'Contemporary Public Involvement: Toward a Strategic Approach', *Local Environment*, 6 (2): 135-147

Jenkins, W. & Gray, A. (1992) 'Evaluation and the Consumer: The UK Experience', in Mayne, J., Bemelmans-Videc, M., Hudson, J. & Conner, R. (eds.) (1992), *Advancing Public Policy Evaluation*, Amsterdam: North-Holland

Jessop, B. (2003) 'Governance and Meta-Governance', in Bang, H. (ed.) *Governance as Social and Political Communication*, Manchester: MUP

John, P., Gains, F., Goodwin, M., Richardson, L., Rao, N. & Evans, E. (2007) *Improving the Representativeness of Councillors: Learning from Five High Performing Local Authorities in England,* London: Department for Communities and Local Government

John, P., Smith, G. & Stoker, G. (2009) 'Nudge Nudge, Think Think: Two Strategies for Changing Civic Behaviour', *Political Quarterly,* 80 (3): 361-370

Jones, B., Greenberg, S., Kaufman, C. & Drew, J. (1977) 'Bureaucratic Response to Citizen-Initiated Contacts: Environmental Enforcement in Detroit', *American Political Science Review*, 71 (1): 148-165

Jones, R., Pykett, J. & Whitehead, M. (2013) *Changing Behaviours: On the Rise of the Psychological State,* Edward Elgar, Cheltenham

Jones, R., Pykett, J. & Whitehead, M. (2013) 'Behaviour Change Policies in the UK: An Anthropological Perspective', *Geoforum*, 48: 33-41

Jones, R., Pykett, J. & Whitehead, M. (2013) 'Psychological Governance and Behaviour Change, *Policy & Politics*, 41(2): 159-182

Joshi, A. & Moore, M. (2004) 'Institutionalised Co-production: Unorthodox Public Service Delivery in Challenging Environments', *Journal of Development Studies*, 40 (4): 31-49

Jovchelovitch, S. (2007) *Knowledge in Context: Representations, Community and Culture*. London: Routledge

Jung, T., Scott, T., Davies, H., Bower, P., Whalley, D., McNally, R. & Mannion, R. (2009) 'Instruments for Exploring Organizational Culture: A Review of the Literature', *Public Administration Review*, 69 (6): 1087-1096

Kabeer, N. (2003) *Mainstreaming Gender Equality in Poverty Eradication and the Millennium Development Goals.* London: Commonwealth Secretariat

Kahneman, D. & Tversky, A. (1979) 'Prospect Theory: An Analysis of Decision Under Risk', *Econometrica: Journal of the Econometric Society*, 263-291

Kateb, G. (1975) 'Comments on David Braybrooke's "The Meaning of Participation and the Demands for it', in Chapman, J. & Pennock, R. (eds.) *Participation in Politics,* New York: Lieber-Atherton

Kauppi, K. & Van Raaij, E. (2015) 'Opportunism and Honest Incompetence—Seeking Explanations for Non-Compliance in Public Procurement', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 25 (3): 953-979

Keat, R., Whiteley, N. & Abercrombie, N. (1994) *The Authority of the Consumer,* London: Taylor & Francis

Kelly, C., & Breinlinger, S. (1996) *The Social Psychology of Collective Action: Identity, Injustice and Gender,* London: Taylor & Francis

King, C., Feltey, K. & Susel, B. (1998) 'The Questions of Participation: Toward Authentic Participation in Public Administration', *Public Administration Review*, 58: 317-326

Klandermans, B. (1997) *The Social Psychology of Protest*, Oxford: Blackwell

Klandermans, B. (2002) 'How Group Identification Helps to Overcome the Dilemma of Collective Action', *American Behavioural Scientist*, 45 (5): 887-900

Klandermans, B. & Oegema, D. (1987) 'Potentials, Networks, Motivations and Barriers: Steps Towards Participation in Social Movements', *American Sociological Review*, 52: 519-531

Klein, R. (1979) 'Control, Participation, and the British National Health Service' *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly. Health and Society*, 57 (1): 70-94

Klein, R. (1990) 'The State and the Profession: the Politics of the Double Bed', *British Medical Journal*, 301 (6754), 700

Klein, R. & Lewis, J. (1976) *The Politics of Consumer Representation. A Study of Community Health Councils,* London: Centre for Studies in Social Policy

Klijn, E. & Koppenjan, J. (2000) 'Politicians and Interactive Decision Making: Institutional Spoilsports or Playmakers?', *Public Administration*, 78 (2): 365-387

Klijn, E. & Skelcher, C. (2007) 'Democracy and Governance Networks: Compatible or Not?', *Public Administration*, 85 (3), 587-608

Knorr-Cetina, K. (1997) 'Sociality with Objects: Social Relations in Postsocial Knowledge Societies, *Theory, Culture and Society*, 14 (4): 1-30

Kuper, A. (1999) *Culture—the Anthropologists' Account*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Kweit, M. & Kweit, R. (1981) *Implementing Citizen Participation in a Bureaucratic Society: A Contingency Approach*. New York: Praeger

Laaksonen, P. (1994), *Consumer Involvement*, London: Routledge

Laird, F. (1993) 'Participatory Analysis, Democracy, and Technological Decision Making, *Science, Technology and Human Values*, 18 (3): 341-361

Lamb, R. & Kling, R. (2003) 'Reconceptualizing Users as Social Actors in Information Systems Research', *MIS Quarterly*, 27 (2): 197-235

Langlands, A. (2005) *The Good Governance Standard for Public Services*. London: OPM/CIPFA

Lawrence, T. & *Suddaby, R.* (*2006*) 'Institutions and Institutional Work', in S. Clegg et al (eds.) *Handbook of Organizational Studies*, London: Sage

Lawton, A. & Macaulay, M. (2014) 'Localism in Practice: Investigating Citizen Participation and Good Governance in Local Government Standards of Conduct, *Public Administration Review*, 74 (1), 75-83

Lazarus, R. (1999) *Stress and Emotion: A New Synthesis,* New York: Springer

Lazarus, R. & Folkman, S. (1984) *Stress, Appraisal, and Coping*. New York: Springer

Le Grand, J. (2003) *Motivation, Agency, and Public Policy: of Knights and Knaves, Pawns and Queens*. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Le Grand, J. (2006) 'Choice and Competition in Public Services', *Research in Public Policy*, Summer

Le Grand, J. (2007a) 'The Politics of Choice and Competition in Public Services', *Political Quarterly*, 78 (2): 207-213

Le Grand, J. (2007b) *The Other Invisible Hand: Delivering Public Services Through Choice and Competition,* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press

Le Grand, J. (2010) 'Knights and Knaves Return: Public Service Motivation and the Delivery of Public Services', *International Public Management Journal*, 13 (1): 56-71.

Lee. L. & Young, P. (2013) 'A Disengaged Britain?', *British Social Attitudes: 30th Report*, London: NatCen

Lewin, K. (1948) *Resolving Social Conflicts,* New York: Harper

Lewis, J., Inthorn, S. & Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2005) *Citizens or Consumers? What the Media Tell Us About Political Participation,* Maidenhead: Open University Press

Lincoln, Y. & Guba, E. (1985) *Naturalistic Inquiry*, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage

Lipsky, M. (1980) *Street Level Bureaucrats,* New York: Russell Sage

Lipsky, M. (2010) *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Service* (30th anniv. ed.), New York: Russell Sage Foundation.

Lister, R. (2001) 'Towards a Citizens' Welfare State: The 3+ 2 'R's of Welfare Reform', *Theory, Culture and Society*, 18 (2-3): 91-111

Loney, M. (1983) *Community Against Government. The British Community Development Project 1968-78: a study of government incompetence,* London: Heinemann

Lowndes, V. (2004) 'Getting On or Getting By? Women, Social Capital and Political Participation, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 6 (1), 45-64

Lowndes, V. & Wilson, D. (2001) 'Social Capital and Local Governance: Exploring the Institutional Design Variable', *Political Studies*, 49 (4): 629-647

Lowndes, V., Pratchett, L. & Stoker, G. (2006) 'Diagnosing and Remedying the Failings of Official Participation Schemes: the CLEAR Framework, *Social Policy and Society*, 5 (2): 281-291

Lowndes, V., Stoker, G., Pratchett, L., Wilson, D., Leach, S. & Wingfield, M. (1998) *Guidance on Enhancing Public Participation in Local Government,* London: Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions.

Lupton, D. (2014a) 'Critical Perspectives on Digital Health Technologies', *Sociology Compass*, 8 (12): 1344-1359

Lupton, D. (2014b) 'The Commodification of Patient Opinion: The Digital Patient Experience Economy in the Age of Big Data', *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 36 (6): 856-869

Lyons, W. & Lowery, D. (1986) 'The Organization of Political Space and Citizen Responses to Dissatisfaction in Urban Communities: An Integrative Model', *Journal of Politics,* 48 (2): 321-346

Lyons, W. & Lowery, D. (1989) 'Citizen Responses to Dissatisfaction in Urban Communities: A Partial Test of a General Model', *Journal of Politics,* 51 (4): 841-868

Maloney, W., Jordan, G. & McLaughlin, A. (1994) 'Interest Groups and Public Policy: the Insider/Outsider Model Revisited', *Journal of Public Policy*, 14 (1): 17-38

Mamadouh, V. (1999) 'Grid-Group Cultural Theory: an Introduction', *GeoJournal*, 47: 395-409

Mansbridge, J. (1990) *Beyond Self-Interest,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Manza, J. & Cook, F. (2002) 'A Democratic Polity? Three Views of Policy Responsiveness to Public Opinion in the United States, *American Politics Research*, 30 (6): 630-667

March, J. & Olsen, J. (1996) *Democratic Governance*, New York: Free Press

March, J. (1994) *Primer on Decision Making: How Decisions Happen,* New York: The Free Press

Margolis, H. (1987) *Patterns, Thinking and Cognition: A Theory of Judgment,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Marquand, D. (2004) *Decline of the Public*, Oxford: Polity

Martin, G. (2008) 'Ordinary People Only': Knowledge, Representativeness, and the Publics of Public Participation in Healthcare, *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 30 (1): 35-54

Martin, S. (2003) 'Engaging with Citizens and Other Stakeholders', in Bovaird, T. & Loeffler, E. (eds) *Public Management and Governance*, London: Routledge

Martin, S. & Webb, A. (2009) 'Citizen-Centred' Public Services: Contestability Without Consumer-Driven Competition?', *Public Money and Management*, 29 (2): 123-130

Marwell, G. & Oliver, P. (1993) *The Critical Mass in Collective Action,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Maslow, A. (1943) 'A Theory of Human Motivation', *Psychological Review*, 50 (4): 370

Mason, J. (2002) *Qualitative Researching* (2nd ed.)*,* London: Sage

Mason, J. (2006) 'Mixing Methods in a Qualitatively Driven Way', *Qualitative Research*, 6 (1): 9-25

Maxwell, S. & Delaney, H. (2004) 'Designing Experiments and Analyzing Data', Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum

Mayo, M., Hoggett, P. & Miller, C. (2007) 'Navigating the Contradictions of Public Service Modernisation: the Case of Community Engagement Professionals', *Policy & Politics*, 35 (4): 667-681

Mays, N. & Pope, C. (2000) 'Assessing Quality in Qualitative Research', *British Medical Journal,* 320: 50–2

McAdam, D. (1996) 'Conceptual Origins, Current Problems, Future Directions', in McAdam, D., McCarthy, J. and Zald, M. (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

McGarty, C., Yzerbyt, V. & Spears, R. (2000) *Stereotypes as Explanations: The Formation of Meaningful Beliefs about Social Groups*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

McGarvey, N. (2001) 'Accountability in Public Administration: a Multi-Perspective Framework of Analysis', *Public Policy and Administration*, 16 (2): 17-29

McMillan, D. & Chavis, D. (1986) 'Sense of Community: A Definition and Theory, *Journal of Community Psychology*, 14 (1): 6-23

Messick, D., Wilke, H., Brewer, M., Kramer, R., Zemke, P. & Lui, L. (1983) 'Individual Adaptations and Structural Change as Solutions to Social Dilemmas' *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 44 (2): 294

Milbrath, L. (1965) *Political Participation: how and why do People get Involved in Politics?,* Chicago: Rand McNally & Company

Milewa, T., Valentine, J. & Calnan, M. (1999) 'Community Participation and Citizenship in British Health Care Planning: Narratives of Power and Involvement in the Changing Welfare State', *Sociology of Health and Illness,* 21 (4): 445-65

Miller, D. (1999) 'The Norm of Self-Interest', *American Psychologist*, 54 (12): 1053

Minogue, V., Boness, J., Brown, A. & Girdlestone, J. (2005) 'The Impact of Service User Involvement in Research, *International Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance*, 18 (2): 103-112

Molm, L. (2000) 'Theories of Social Exchange and Exchange Networks, in Ritzer, G. & Smart, B. (eds.), *The Handbook of Social Theory*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Molm, L. (2003) 'Theoretical Comparisons of Forms of Exchange', *Sociological Theory*, 21 (1): 1-17

Moon, G. & Lupton, C. (1995) 'Within Acceptable Limits: Health Care Provider Perspectives on Community Health Councils in the Reformed British National Health Service', *Policy and Politics*, 23 (4): 335-346

Morgan-Trimmer, S. (2013) 'It's Who You Know': Community Empowerment Through Network Brokers, *Community Development Journal*, 49 (3): 458-472

Moss, G. & Coleman, S. (2014) 'Deliberative Manoeuvres in the Digital Darkness: E-democracy Policy in the UK', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 16 (3): 410-427

Moulettes, A. (2009) *The Discursive Construction, Reproduction and Continuance of National Culture*, Lund: Lund Business Press

Muir, R. & Parker, I. (2014) *Many to Many: How the Relational State will Transform Public Services*, London: IPPR

Muller, E. and Opp, K. (1986) 'Rational Choice and Rebellious Collective Action', *American Political Science Review*, 80 (2): 471-487

Muller, E. and Opp, K. (1987) 'Rebellious Collective Action Revisited', *American Political Science Review*, 81 (2): 557-564

Muller, E., Dietz, H. & Finkel, S. (1991) 'Discontent and the Expected Utility of Rebellion: the Case of Peru', *American Political Science Review*, 85 (4): 1261-1282

Munshi, S., Abraham, B. & Chaudhuri, S. (2009) *The Intelligent Person's Guide to Good Governance,* London: Sage

Murphy, D., Duggan, M. & Joseph, S. (2013) 'Relationship-based Social Work and its Compatibility with the Person-Centred Approach: Principled Versus Instrumental Perspectives', *British Journal of Social Work*, 43 (4): 703-719

NAO (National Audit Office) (2004) *Getting Citizens Involved: Community Participation in Neighbourhood Renewal,* London: National Audit Office

Needham, C. (2002) 'Consultation: A Cure for Local Government?', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 55 (4): 699-714

Needham, C. (2008) 'Realising the Potential of Co-production: Negotiating Improvements in Public Services', *Social Policy and Society*, 7 (2): 221-231

Newman, J. & Clarke, J. (2009a) *Publics, Politics and Power: Remaking the Public in Public Services*, London: Sage.

Newman, J. (2001) *Modernizing Governance: New Labour, Policy and Society*. London: Sage

Newman, J. (2011) 'Boundary Troubles: Working the Academic–Policy Interface, *Policy and Politics*, 39 (4): 473-484

Newman, J. (2012) *Working the Spaces of Power: Activism, Neoliberalism and Gendered Labour,* London: Bloomsbury Academic

Newman, J. & Clarke, J. (2009b) 'Narrating Subversion, Assembling Citizenship', in Barnes, M. & Prior, D. (eds.), *Subversive Citizens: Power, Agency and Resistance in Public Services*

Newman, J. & Tonkens, E. (2011) *Participation, Responsibility and Choice: Summoning the Active Citizen in Western European Welfare States,* Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press

Newman, J., Barnes, M., Sullivan, H. & Knops, A. (2004) 'Public Participation and Collaborative Governance, *Journal of Social Policy*, 33 (2): 203-223

NLGN (New Local Government Network) (2005) *Making Community Leadership Real*, London: New Local Government Network

Nowak, M. (2011) *Super Co-operators*, Edinburgh: Canongate

Oakley, P. (1991) 'The Concept of Participation in Development', *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 20 (1-3): 115-122

ODPM (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister) (2005) *Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why Neighbourhoods Matter*, London: Stationery Office

Oliver, P. (1984) '"If You Don't Do it, Nobody Else Will": Active and Token Contributors to Local Collective Action', *American Sociological Review,* 49 (5): 601-610

Olsen, W. (2004) 'Triangulation in Social Research: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods can Really be Mixed', in Holborn, M. (ed.), *Developments in Sociology*, Ormskirk: Causeway Press

Olson, M. (1965) *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Olson, M. (1971) *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups* (revised edition), Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

ONS (Office for National Statistics) (2001) *Social Capital: A Review of the Literature,* London: Office of National Statistics

Osborne, S. (2010) 'Delivering Public Services: Time for a new theory?' *Public Management Review*, 12 (1): 1-10

Osborne, S., Radnor, Z. & Nasi, G. (2012) 'A New Theory for Public Service Management? Toward a (Public) Service-Dominant Approach', *American Review of Public Administration*, 43 (2): 135-158

Osborne, S., Radnor, Z. & Strokosch, K. (2016) 'Co-Production and the Co-Creation of Value in Public Services: a Suitable Case for Treatment?', *Public Management Review*, 18 (5): 639-653

Osborne, S., Radnor, Z., Kinder, T. & Vidal, I. (2015) 'The SERVICE Framework: A Public-Service-Dominant Approach to Sustainable Public Services', *British Journal of Management*, 26 (3): 424-438

Osborne, S. & Strokosch, K. (2013) 'It Takes Two to Tango? Understanding the Co-production of Public Services by Integrating the Services Management and Public Administration Perspectives', *British Journal of Management,* 24: S31-S47

Osimo, D., van den Broek, T., Frissen, V., Huijboom, N., Punie, Y., Ferro, E. & Parycek, P. (2010) 'Government 2.0-Hype, Hope, or Reality?', *European Journal of ePractice*, 9: 2-4

Ostrom, E (1990) *Governing the Commons: The Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Oswick, C. & Robertson, M. (2009) 'Boundary Objects Reconsidered: from Bridges and Anchors to Barricades and Mazes', *Journal of Change Management*, 9(2): 179-193

Ouwerkerk, J., Ellemers, N. & de Gilder, D. (1999) 'Group Commitment and Individual Effort in Experimental and Organizational Contexts', in Ellemers, N., Spears, R. & Doosje, B. (eds.), *Social Identity: Context, Commitment, Content*, Oxford: Blackwell Science

Owen, D. (2012) 'Constituting the Polity, Constituting the Demos: on the Place of the All Affected Interests Principle in Democratic Theory and in Resolving the Democratic Boundary Problem', *Ethics and Global Politics*, 5 (3): 129-152

Parry, G., Moyser, G. & Day, N. (1992) *Political Participation and Democracy in Britain,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Parsons, T. (1991) 'A Tentative Outline of American Values', in Robertson, R. & Turner, B. (eds.) *Talcott Parsons: Theorist of Modernity*, London: Sage

PASC (Public Administration Select Committee). (2005). *Choice, Voice and Public Services,* Fourth Report 2004/5, London: Stationery Office

PASC (2008) *User Involvement in Public Services*, Sixth Report 2007-8, London: Stationery Office

PASC (2014a) *More Complaints Please!,* Twelfth Report 2013-14, London: Stationery Office

PASC (2014b) *Time for a People's Ombudsman Service,* Fourteenth Report 2013-14, London: Stationery Office

Passy, F. & Giugni, M. (2000) 'Life-Spheres, Networks, and Sustained Participation in Social Movements: A Phenomenological Approach to Political Commitment', *Sociological Forum,* 15 (1): 117-144

Pateman, C. (1970) *Participation and Democratic Theory,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Pateman, C. (1974) ''To them that hath, shall be given': on 'Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality' by Sidney Verba and Norman H. Nie', *Politics*, 9 (2): 139-145

Peck, E. & 6, P. (2006) *Beyond Delivery: Policy Implementation as Sense-Making and Settlement,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Pellizzoni, L. (2001) 'The Myth of the Best Argument: Power, Deliberation and Reason', *British Journal of Sociology*, 52 (1): 59-86

Pfeffer, J. & Salancik, G. (1978) *The External Control of Organisations: a Resource Dependency Perspective,* New York: Stanford University Press

Pickering, A. (1995) *The Mangle of Practice: Time, Agency and Science,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Pierre, J. & Peters, G. (2000) *Governance, Politics and the State*, Basingstoke: Macmillan

Piette, D. (1990) 'Community Participation in Formal Decision-Making Mechanisms', *Health Promotion International*, 5 (3): 187-197

Pollitt, C. (2013) *Context in Public Policy and Management: The Missing Link?,* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing

Pollitt, C. & Bouckaert, G. (2011) *Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis-New Public Management, Governance and the Neo-Weberian State,* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pollitt, C., Birchall, J. & Putman, K. (1998) *Decentralising Public Management: the British Experience*, Basingstoke: Macmillan

Popkin, S. (1994) *The Reasoning Voter: Communication and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press

Potter, J. (1988) 'Consumerism and the Public Sector: how well does the coat fit?, *Public Administration*, 66 (2): 149-164

Poundstone, W. (1992) *Prisoner's Dilemma: Game Theory and the Puzzle of the Bomb*, New York: Anchor

Power Inquiry (2006) *Power to the People*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Pratchett, L. (1999) 'New Fashions in Public Participation: Towards Greater Democracy?', *Parliamentary Affairs,* 52 (4): 616-33

Proeller, I. (2013) 'What We Know So Far and How to Proceed: Contextual Variables in NPM Reform Research', in Pollitt, C. (ed.) *Context in Public Policy and Management: The Missing Link?* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar

Prout, A., Simmons, R. & Birchall, J. (2006) 'Reconnecting and Extending the Research Agenda on Children's Participation: Mutual Incentives and the Participation Chain', in Tisdall, K., Davis, J., Hill, M. & Prout, A. (eds.) *Children, Young People and Social Inclusion*, Bristol: Policy Press

Putnam, R. (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community,* New York: Simon and Schuster

Putnam, R. (with Leonardi, R., & Nanetti, R. (1993) *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy,* Princeton: Princeton University Press

Radnor, Z., Osborne, S., Kinder, T. & Mutton, J. (2014) 'Operationalizing Co-production in Public Services Delivery: the Contribution of Service Blueprinting', *Public Management Review*, 16 (3): 402-423

Rajaniemi, P. & Laaksonen, M. (1989) *Reciprocal Interaction Approach to Consumer Behavior,* Paris: Institut Européen de Recherches et d'Etudes Supérieures en Management

Ranson, S. (1988) 'From 1944 to 1988: Education, Citizenship and Democracy', *Local Government Studies*, 14 (1): 1-19

Ranson, S. (2003) 'Public Accountability in the Age of Neo-Liberal Governance', *Journal of Education Policy*, 18 (5): 459-480

Ranson, S. (2011) 'School Governance and the Mediation of Engagement', *Educational Management Administration and Leadership*, 39 (4): 398-413

Ranson, S., Arnott, M., McKeown, P., Martin, J. & Smith, P. (2005) 'The Participation of Volunteer Citizens in School Governance', *Educational Review*, 57 (3): 357-371

Raskin, J. (2008) 'The Evolution of Constructivism', *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 21(1): 1-24

Reddel, T. (2002) 'Beyond Participation, Hierarchies, Management and Markets: 'New' Governance and Place Policies, *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 61 (1): 50-63

Reicher, S. (2004) 'The Context of Social Identity: Domination, Resistance and Change', *Political Psychology*, 25 (6): 921-945

Richardson, A. (1983) *Participation*, London: Routledge

Roberson, Q., Moye, N. & Locke, E. (1999) 'Identifying a Missing Link between Participation and Satisfaction: The Mediating Role of Procedural Justice Perceptions', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84 (4): 585

Roberts, N. (2004) 'Public Deliberation in an Age of Direct Citizen Participation', *American Review of Public Administration*, 34 (4): 315-353

Robinson, F. & Hudson, R. (2013) 'Can Universities Really Engage with Socially Excluded Communities?', in Benneworth, P. (ed.), *University Engagement with Socially Excluded Communities*, Utrecht: Springer

Rogers, B. & Robinson, E. (2004) *The Benefits of Community Engagement: A Review of the Evidence,* London: Active Citizenship Centre

Rose, R. (1984) *Understanding Big Government,* London: Sage

Rose, R. (1981) 'What if Anything is Wrong with Big Government?', *Journal of Public Policy*, 1: 5-36

Rosener, J. (1982) 'Making Bureaucrats Responsive: a Study of the Impact of Citizen Participation and Staff Recommendations on Regulatory Decision Making', *Public Administration Review*, 42 (4): 339-345

Rowe, R. & Shepherd, M. (2002) 'Public Participation in the New NHS: No Closer to Citizen Control?', *Social Policy and Administration*, 36 (3): 275-290

Rowlands, J. (1995) 'Empowerment Examined', *Development in Practice*, 5 (2): 101-107

Rudestam, K. & Newton, R. (2007) *Surviving Your Dissertation: A Comprehensive Guide to Content and Process* (3rd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Rugge, F. (2013) 'The Intransigent Context: Glimpses at the History of a Problem', in Pollitt, C. (ed.) *Context in Public Policy and Management: The Missing Link?* Cheltenham: Edward Elgar

Rusbult, C., Farrell, D., Rogers, G. & Mainous, A. (1988) 'Impact of Exchange Variables on Exit, Voice, Loyalty and Neglect', *Academy of Management Journal*, 31 (3): 599-627

Rusbult, C., Zembrodt, I. & Gunn, L. (1982) 'Exit, Voice, Loyalty and Neglect: Responses to Dissatisfaction in Romantic Involvements', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 43 (6): 1230

Rydin, Y. & Pennington, M. (2000) 'Public Participation and Local Environmental Planning: the Collective Action Problem and the Potential of Social Capital', *Local Environment*, 5 (2): 153-169

Sanderson, I. (1998) 'Beyond Performance Measurement? Assessing 'Value' in Local Government', *Local Government Studies*, 24 (4): 1-25

Schwartz, B. (1986) *The Battle for Human Nature,* New York: Norton

Scott, J. (2008) *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance*. New Haven: Yale University Press

Seargeant, J. & Steele, J. (1998) *Consulting the Public*, London: Policy Studies Institute

Seargeant, J. & Steele, J. (1999) *Who Asked You? The Citizen's Perspective on Participation*, London: Improvement and Development Agency

Shackley, P. & Ryan, M. (1994) 'What is the Role of the Consumer in Health Care?', *Journal of Social Policy*, 23 (4): 517-541

Sharp, E. (1984) 'Exit, Voice, and Loyalty in the Context of Local Government Problems', *Western Political Quarterly*, 37 (1): 67-83

Sieber, S. (1981) *Fatal Remedies: The Ironies of Social Intervention*, New York, Plenum

Simey, M. (1985) *Government by Consent: The Principles and Practice of Accountability in Local Government*, London, Bedford Square Press

Simmel, G. (1922) [1955] *Conflict and the Web of Group Affiliations* (Trans. Wolff, K. & Bendix, R.), New York: Free Press

Simmons, R. (2001) 'Mutuality and Public Services', in Birchall, J. (ed.) *The New Mutualism in Public Policy*, London, Routledge

Simmons, R. (2003) *New Leisure Trusts*, Lower Basildon, Institute of Leisure and Amenity Management

Simmons, R. (2004) 'A Trend to Trust? The Rise of New Leisure Trusts in the UK', *Managing Leisure: an International Journal*, 9 (3): 159-177

Simmons, R. (2008) 'Harnessing Social Enterprise for Local Public Services: New Leisure Trusts in the UK', *Public Policy and Administration*, 23 (3): 278-301

Simmons, R. (2015) 'Access to Redress for Public Service Consumers', invited paper at conference *Designing Consumer Redress: Making Redress Accessible*, Centre for Socio-Legal Studies, Oxford/QMU Edinburgh, 11 June

Simmons, R. (2016) 'Improvement and Public Service Relationships: Cultural Theory and Institutional Work', *Public Administration,* 94 (4): 933-952

Simmons, R. & Birchall, J. (2007) 'Tenant Participation and Social Housing in the UK: Applying a Theoretical Model', *Housing Studies*, 22 (4): 573-595

Simmons, R. & Birchall, J. (2009) 'The Public Service Consumer as Member', in Simmons, R., Powell, M. & Greener, I. (eds.), *The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services*, Bristol: Policy Press

Simmons, R., Birchall, J. & Prout, A. (2007a) 'Hearing Voices? User Involvement and Public Service Cultures', *Consumer Policy Review*, 17 (5): 234-240

Simmons, R., Birchall, J. & Prout, A. (2007b) *Our Say: User Voice and Public Service Culture*, London: National Consumer Council

Simmons, R. & Brennan, C. (2013) *The Role of Complaints in Innovation in the Public Services*, London: NESTA

Simmons, R. & Powell, M. (2009) 'The Consumer in Public Services', in Simmons, R., Powell, M. & Greener, I. (eds.), *The Differentiated Consumer in Public Services*, Bristol: Policy Press

Simon, H. (1957) *Models of Man, Social and Rational: Mathematical Essays on Rational Human Behavior in a Social Setting,* New York: Wiley

Simpson, B. (2006) 'Social Identity and Cooperation in Social Dilemmas', *Rationality and Society*, 18 (4): 443-470

6, P. (2003) 'Institutional Viability: a neo-Durkheimian Theory', *Innovation*, 16 (4):395-415

6, P. & Swedlow, B. (2016) 'An Institutional Theory of Cultural Biases, Public Administration and Public Policy', *Public Administration*, 94 (4): 867-880

Skelcher, C. (1993) 'Involvement and Empowerment in Local Public Services', *Public Money and Management*, 13 (3): 13-20

Skelcher, C., Mathur, N. & Smith, M. (2005) 'The Public Governance of Collaborative Spaces: Discourse, Design and Democracy', *Public Administration*, 83 (3): 573-596

Skelcher, C. & Torfing, J. (2010) 'Improving Democratic Governance through Institutional Design: Civic Participation and Democratic Ownership in Europe', *Regulation and Governance*, 4 (1): 71-91

Skidmore, P. & Craig, J. (2005) *Start with People. How Community Organisations put Citizens in the Driving Seat,* London: Demos

Snow, D. & Benford, R. (1988) 'Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization', *International Social Movement Research*, 1 (1): 197-217

Snow, D., Rochford, E., Worden, S. & Benford, R. (1986) 'Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation', *American Sociological Review*, 51: 464-481

Sousa, F. & Vala, J. (2002) 'Relational Justice in Organizations: the Group-Value Model and Support for Change', *Social Justice Research*, 15 (2): 99-121

Star, S. & Griesemer, J. (1989) 'Institutional Ecology, Translations and Boundary Objects', *Social Studies of Science*, 19 (3): 387-420

Steele, J. (1999) 'Potential for Strengthening the Democratic Process', Written Evidence to Parliamentary Select Committee on Public Administration Report, *Innovations in Citizen Participation in Government*, London: Stationery Office

Steifel, M. & Wolfe, M. (1994) *A Voice for the Excluded,* London: Zed Books

Stewart, J. & Stoker, G. (1995) *Local Government in the 1990s*, Basingstoke: Macmillan

Stewart, J. (1996) 'Innovation in Democratic Practice in Local Government', *Policy and Politics*, 24 (1): 29-41

Stewart, J. (1999) Oral Evidence to Parliamentary Select Committee on Public Administration Report, *Innovations in Citizen Participation in Government*, London: Stationery Office

Stirling, A. (2008) ''Opening Up' and 'Closing Down': Power, Participation and Pluralism', *Science, Technology and Human Values*, 33(2): 262-294

Stoker, G. (1997) 'Local Political Participation, in Davis, H., Skelcher, C. and Clarke, M. (eds.) *New Perspectives on Local Governance*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Stoker, G. (2000) *The New Politics of British Local Governance,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Stoker, G. (2001) 'Life is a Lottery: New Labour's Strategy for the Reform of Devolved Governance', *Public Administration*, 80 (3): 417-434

Stoker, G. (2004) 'New Localism, Progressive Politics and Democracy', *Political Quarterly*, 75: 117-129

Stoker, G. (2006) *Why Politics Matters: Making Democracy Work,* Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Streeck, W. & Schmitter, P. (1985) 'Community, Market, State – and Associations?', *European Sociological Review*, 1 (2): 119-138

Sullivan, H. & Williams, P. (2012) 'Whose Kettle? Exploring the Role of Boundary Objects in Managing and Mediating the Boundaries of Integration in Health and Social Care', *Journal of Health Organization and Management*, 26 (6): 697–712

Tajfel, H. (1978) *Differentiation Between Social Groups: Studies in the Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations,* Cambridge, MA: Academic Press

Tajfel, H. & Turner, J. (1979) 'An Integrative Theory of Intergroup Conflict', in Austin, W. & Worchel, S. (eds.) *The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations*, Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole

Tashakkori, A. and Teddlie, C. (eds.) (2003) *Mixed Methods in Social and Behavioural Research*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Taylor, M. (2003) *Public Policy in the Community*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan

Taylor, M. (2007) 'Community Participation in the Real World: Opportunities and Pitfalls in New Governance Spaces, *Urban Studies*, 44 (2): 297-317

Taylor-Gooby, P. (1998) *Choice and Public Policy*, Basingstoke: Macmillan

Thomas, J. (1992) 'Citizen Involvement in Public Management: Lessons from Municipal Administration', in Denhardt, R. & Hammond, B. (eds.) *Public Administration in Action: Readings, Profiles and Cases,* Belmont: Wadsworth Publishing

Thomas, J. (1995) *Public Participation in Public Decisions: New Skills and Strategies for Public Managers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Thomas, J. & Melkers, J. (2001) 'Citizen Contacting of Municipal Officials: Choosing Between Appointed Administrators and Elected Leaders', *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 11 (1): 51-72

Thomas, J. & Streib, G. (2005) 'E-democracy, E-commerce, and E-research: Examining the Electronic Ties Between Citizens and Governments', *Administration and Society*, 37 (3): 259-280

Thomas, P. (1998) 'The Changing Nature of Accountability', in Peters, G. & Savoie, D. (eds.), *Taking Stock: Assessing Public Sector Reforms*, London: McGill-Queens University Press

Thomas, R., Hardy, C. & Sargent, L. (2007) *Artifacts in Interaction: the Production and Politics of Boundary Objects*, ESRC/ AIM Working Paper, London: Advanced Institute of Management Research

Thompson, A. (2003) 'Moving Beyond the Rhetoric of Citizen Involvement: Strategies for Enablement', *Eurohealth,* 9(4): 5-8

Thompson, A. (2007) 'The Meaning of Patient Involvement and Participation in Health Care Consultations: a Taxonomy', *Social Science and Medicine*, 64 (6): 1297-1310.

Thompson, M., Ellis, R. & Wildavsky, A. (1990) *Cultural Theory*, Boulder, CO: Westview Press

Tovey, P., Atkin, K., & Milewa, T. (2001) 'The Individual and Primary Care: Service User, Reflexive Choice Maker and Collective Actor', *Critical Public Health*, 11 (2): 153-166

Tritter, J. & McCallum, A. (2006) 'The Snakes and Ladders of User Involvement: Moving Beyond Arnstein', *Health Policy*, 76 (2): 156-168

Tummers, L., Jilke, S. & Van de Walle, S. (2013) 'Citizens in Charge? Reviewing the Background and Value of Introducing Choice and Competition in Public Services', in Dwivedi, Y., Shareef, M., Pandey, S. & Kumar, V. (eds.), *Public Administration Reformation: Market Demand from Public Organizations,* London: Routledge

Tunstall, R. (2001) 'Devolution and User Participation in Public Services: how they work and what they do', *Urban Studies*, 38 (13): 2495-2514

Turner, J., Hogg, M., Oakes, P., Reicher, S. & Wetherell, M. (1987), *Rediscovering the Social Group: A Self-Categorization Theory,* Oxford: Basil Blackwell

Tversky, A. & Kahneman, D. (1992) 'Advances in Prospect Theory: Cumulative Representation of Uncertainty', *Journal of Risk and Uncertainty*, 5 (4): 297-323

Tyler, T. & Bies, R. (1990) 'Beyond Formal Procedures: the Interpersonal Context of Procedural Justice', in Carroll, J. (ed.), *Applied Social Psychology and Organizational Settings*, Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Tyler, T. & Degoey, P. (1995) 'The Psychological Dynamics of Procedural Justice and Social Identification', in Melton, G. (ed.) *The Individual, the Family and Social Good*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska

Tyler, T. (2010) *Why People Cooperate: The Role of Social Motivations,* Princeton: Princeton University Press

Tyler, T. & Blader, S. (2000) *Cooperation in Groups: Procedural Justice, Social Identity and Behavioral Engagement,* New York: Psychology Press

US EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)/SAB (Science Advisory Board) (2001) *Improved Science-Based Environmental Stakeholder Processes*, Washington, DC: EPA Science Advisory Board

Uslaner, E. (2002) '*The Moral Foundations of Trust,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

van den Broek, T., Frissen, V., Huijboom, N. & Punie, Y. (2010) 'The Impact of Social Computing on Public Services: a Rationale for Government 2.0', *European Journal of ePractice*, 9 (3): 5-19

Van Kersbergen, K. & Van Waarden, F. (2004) 'Governance' as a Bridge Between Disciplines: Cross-Disciplinary Inspiration Regarding Shifts in Governance and Problems of Governability, Accountability and Legitimacy', *European Journal of Political Research* 43: 143–171

Van Lange, P., Balliet, D., Parks, C. & Van Vugt, M. (2014) *Social Dilemmas: Understanding Human Co-operation,* Oxford: Oxford University Press

Veenstra, G. (2000) 'Social Capital, SES and Health: an Individual-Level Analysis', *Social Science and Medicine*, 50 (5): 619-629

Veenstra, K. & Haslam, S. (2000) 'Willingness to Participate in Industrial Protest: Exploring Social Identification in Context', *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 39: 153-172

Verba, S. and Nie, N. (1972) *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality*, New York: Harper & Row

Verba, S., Schlozman, K. & Brady, H. (1995) *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press

Vidaver-Cohen, D. (1998) 'Moral Climate in Business Firms: A Conceptual Framework for Analysis and Change, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 17 (11): 1211-1226

Wagner, W., Duveen, G., Farr, R., Jovchelovitch, S., Lorenzi-Cioldi, F., Markova, I. & Rose, D. (1999) 'Theory and Method of Social Representations', *Asian Journal of Social Psychology*, 2 (1): 95-125

Wampler, B. (2012) 'Participation, Representation and Social Justice: Using Participatory Governance to Transform Representative Democracy, *Polity*, 44 (4): 666-682

Warburton, D., Wilcox, D. & Bailey, N. (1988) *Creating Development Trusts: Case Studies of Good Practice in Urban Regeneration:* London: Department of the Environment/HMSO

Webler, T., Tuler, S. & Krueger, R. (2001) 'What is a Good Public Participation Process? Five Perspectives from the Public, *Environmental Management*, 27 (3): 435-450

Wensley, R. (1990) 'The Voice of the Consumer? Speculations on the Limits to the Marketing Analogy', *European Journal of Marketing*, 24 (7): 49-60

White, S. (1996) 'Depoliticising Development: the Uses and Abuses of Participation', *Development in Practice*, 6 (1): 6-15

Whiteley, P. & Seyd, P. (1999) *Their Number's Up*, Guardian, 11th October

Whiteley, P. and Seyd, P. (1996) 'Rationality and Party Activism: Encompassing Tests of Alternative Models of Political Participation', *European Journal of Political Research*, 29: 215-234

Whiteley, P. & Seyd, P. (1998) 'The Dynamics of Party Activism in Britain: A Spiral of Demobilization?', *British Journal of Political Science*, 28 (1): 113-137

Widdicombe, S. (1998) 'Identity as an Analyst's and a Participant's Resource', In Antaki, C. & Widdicombe, S. (eds.) *Identities In Talk*, London: Sage

Wilcox, D. (1996) *The A–Z of Effective Participation*, York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation

Wilkin, P. & Boudeau, C. (2015) 'Public Participation and Public Services in British Liberal Democracy: Colin Ward's Anarchist Critique', *Environment and Planning C: Government and Policy*, 33 (6): 1325-1343

Wilkins, A. (2013) 'Libertarian Paternalism: Policy and Everyday Translations of the Rational and the Emotional', *Critical Policy Studies*, 7 (4): 395-406

Williams, G. & Deci, E. (1996) 'Internalization of Biopsychosocial Values by Medical Students: a Test of Self-Determination Theory, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 70 (4): 767-779

Wilson, D. (1999) 'Exploring the Limits of Public Participation in Local Government', *Parliamentary Affairs*, 52 (2): 246-259

Windahl, S. & Signitzer, B. (1992) *Using Communication Theory - An Introduction to Planned Communication,* London: Sage

Woolcock, M. (2001) 'Microenterprise and Social Capital: a Framework for Theory, Research and Policy, *Journal of Socio-Economics*, 30 (2): 193-198

Woolcock, M. & Narayan, D. (2000) 'Social Capital: Implications for Development Theory, Research and Policy', *World Bank Research Observer*, 15 (2): 225-249

Appendix 1

	Positive Outcomes Accrue?	**Positive Outcomes do not Accrue?**
'Technical/ Material' Outcomes	- Improved quality of services, that 'meet real needs and reflect community values' (INVOLVE, 2005) - Continuous improvement, innovation and adaptation through the transmission of local knowledge and the identification of service gaps (e.g. Rydin & Pennington, 2000; Simmons & Brennan, 2013) - More effective maintenance of services; users and citizens help to 'keep things running if they are involved in setting it up' (Jackson, 1999). - Cost savings and increased efficiency, through reduced duplication and better-coordination of resources (including preventative spending) (e.g. ODPM, 2005; Chanan, 2000) - Access to new resources, as involvement and participation serve to 'leverage goodwill and volunteer effort' (INVOLVE, 2005). - Supports the development of long-term social capital (Burton et al, 2006; Stoker, 2004; Marshall, 1999).	- Simple lack of evidence (e.g. Public Administration Select Committee, 2008; Brannan et al, 2006; Doel et al., 2007); e.g. 'A failure to link the results of consultation with decision-making processes' in 75% of authorities (Audit Commission, 1999). - No sense of the 'deadweight' (i.e. what would have happened anyway, without user involvement and participation), so it is hard to assess 'additionality' (INVOLVE, 2005). - Inefficiency of involvement and participation - too expensive, too slow, too cumbersome, creates uncertainty and delay, and becomes 'one extra thing to deal with' for busy service providers (Andrews et al, 2008). - Negates the expertise built up by the specialist (Burton et al, 2004) - Negative outcomes accrue to users when: * Their participation is not matched by a willingness to change anything as a result; * The burden of costs is shifted to participants (Taylor, 2003) * They are mollified into accepting a 'moribund consensus' (Clarke, 2012).
'Relational' Outcomes	- Networks of formal and informal connections enable the 'horizontal' integration of users, citizens and communities and the 'vertical' integration of these actors with service providers (NAO, 2004). - Improved communication (ODPM, 2005) - Reduction in conflict (e.g. Irvin & Stansbury, 2004; Rydin & Pennington, 2000; Marshall, 1999)	- People are either too passionate or too apathetic (Burton et al, 2004). - Conflict undermines trust and confidence and may breed 'cynicism' and disengagement (Collier & Orr, 2003) - 'Compromise' based on consensus may be sub-optimal to other alternatives (Coglianese, 2001) - 'Preferential attachments' may mean that investments concentrate social capital rather than spread it around (ONS, 2001).

	- Greater person-centredness as people grow to understand each other better, challenge each other's assumptions and build recognition of what each can bring to the service (Tunstall, 2001). - Improved conditions through higher levels of trust and 'deeper' relationships (ODPM, 2005; Geddes et al., 2007). - Creates/maintains a web of co-operative relationships, organisations and structures that strengthen community capacity (Veenstra, 2000; Oakley, 1991; Warburton et al, 1988).	
'Political' Outcomes	- Reinforces the legitimacy of public service officials, in the face of diminishing values of respect for authority and expertise (e.g. Roberts, 2004). - Reduces the transaction costs of political decision-making through more appropriate decisions that enjoy greater consent and support (e.g. Beierle, 2002). - Meets public demands for 'influence' (allowing those without power to challenge those who do; e.g. Rosener 1982) and 'accountability' (preventing the capture of public policy by narrow interests; e.g. Etzioni-Halevy, 1983).	- Creates 'noise' in the system (Whiteley & Seyd, 1999), in what Clarke (2008) describes as the 'attack dog' role that some users, citizens or communities adopt (rather than their more sober 'watch dog' or 'guide dog' roles). - Makes decision-making more difficult, protracted, contentious and unpredictable (Burton et al, 2004) - Direct interaction with the executive shuts out politicians who have a legitimate role (NLGN, 2005) - Assumptions that citizens will participate if given the opportunity does not fit with reality (Almond & Verba, 1989); involvement and participation therefore are not inclusive ('usual suspects syndrome'; Burton, 2004). - Participants are victims of 'mis-selling' (Roberts, 2004); i.e despite the rhetoric attached to it, involvement and participation cannot prevent powerful actors from dominating (e.g. Barnes et al, 2007; Cornwall & Coelho, 2007; Rowe & Shepherd, 2002).
'Cultural' Outcomes	- The process of participation changes actors' perceptions and gradually wears away cultural barriers as positive relationships are built and seep into	- People's different value positions result in 'culture clash' and the inability to communicate and negotiate (Brett, 2000)

	organisational structures (Stevenson, 2002). - Behaviour change as a result of 'institutional work' (e.g. 'experience-based-design'; Bate & Robert, 2007) - 'Spreads the practice of democracy and 'active' citizenship' (Jackson, 1999; Rogers & Robinson, 2004).	
'Developmental' Outcomes	- Civil renewal, producing stronger individuals, groups and communities (Skidmore & Craig, 2005; NAO, 2004). - Increased public awareness and understanding; i.e. if people are involved in an issue they are more likely to get informed about it (Benz & Stutzer, 2004) - Reduces incentives toward 'rational ignorance' (the sense that it is not worth getting informed as it will make no difference; Rydin & Pennington, 2000). - Increases the skills, abilities, confidence, and empowerment of individuals, groups and communities, to promote future growth and development (Roberts, 2004). - Promotes sustainability and the sharing of responsibility (ODPM, 2005)	- People lack the willingness and ability to comprehend the management of complex public affairs and institutions (Hart, 1972; Fishkin, 1991) - Requires skills, resources, money and time that most citizens do not have (Day, 1997; King et al, 1998)
'Emotional' Outcomes	- Health and wellbeing benefits (Rogers & Robinson, 2005). - Increased sense of satisfaction from helping with a wider cause or issue (INVOLVE, 2005) - 'Internal locus of control' that is supportive of personal autonomy, self-reliance and greater happiness (e.g. Frey & Stutzer, 1999).	- Failed participatory processes may breed low self-esteem, alienation, cynicism and distrust (Kweit & Kweit, 1981).