Title    Participation and Exclusion:  A qualitative study of processes of power and inequality in area-based initiatives in an English town

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# Abstract

The processes of three area-based initiatives relating to health provision, urban and neighbourhood renewal in Luton are used to examine whether political participation affects social exclusion. Government policies presume that increased participation reduces exclusion, while critical literature questions the type of participation produced in state initiatives, and also whether the discourse of exclusion adequately articulates social inequality. Participation is analysed in its relations to power, the political and to a social typology. Exclusion is analysed by delineating its contested meaning, and developing a dialectical model of inclusion and exclusion, that enables exclusion to be prefigured both as an analytical concept and as a critical component for exploring inequality. This thesis explores the processes of participation and exclusion via voluntary and community groups by presenting a predominantly qualitative analysis of the frameworks and processes of participation and the circumstances and experiences of exclusion.

The study finds that:

● The participation of the voluntary and community groups in the initiatives was on an unequal basis with the statutory sector, it was constrained by bureaucratic procedures, and led to a combative relationship between the sectors in two of the initiatives.

● The voluntary and community sectors – elements of which are here characterised as "remedial movements" – had some effects on micro- and meso-level processes, but no direct effect on macro-policy that controls the initiatives. Participation in the groups and initiatives faced a number of structural dilemmas.

● Social exclusion in the areas was heterogeneous, but associated with the lack of interactional processes that enable inclusion. The range of experiences of exclusion demonstrated what I shall define as an "inequality of capabilities for inclusion".

The research concludes that participation via initiatives does not necessarily result in the total incorporation of the voluntary and community sector, and claims for rights to be recognised had both achieved gains and reflected an antagonistic, if complementary, approach by some groups to the state. If the aim is to increase participation, however, the evidence implies that it needs to be consistently driven; that while the initiatives have affected exclusion, their effects have been limited and are fragile, and that reducing inequality is necessary to enable inclusive participation.

*For the participants*

*and the excluded*

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## List of Abbreviations

| | |
|---|---|
| ABI | Area-based Initiative |
| ACU | Active Communities Unit |
| BME | Black or Minority Ethnic |
| CDP | Community Development Project |
| CFI | Community Funding Initiative |
| CLG | Community Liaison Group |
| EEDA | East of England Development Agency |
| GO East | Government Offices for the Eastern Region |
| HAZ | Health Action Zone |
| HImP | Health Improvement Plan |
| LA | Local Authority |
| LBC | Luton Borough Council |
| LDP | Luton-Dunstable Partnership |
| LSP | Local Strategic Partnership |
| MFCDT | Marsh Farm Community Development Trust |
| NAP | Neighbourhood Area Partnership |
| NDC | New Deal for Communities |
| NOF | New Opportunities Fund |
| NRU | Neighbourhood Renewal Unit |
| ODPM | Office of the Deputy Prime Minister |
| OSEP | Observatories Social Exclusion Partnership |
| PCG | Primary Care Group |
| PCT | Primary Care Trust |
| PIU | Performance and Innovation Unit |
| PSA | Public Service Agreement |
| RDA | Regional Development Agency |
| SEU | Social Exclusion Unit |
| SRB | Single Regeneration Budget |
| TUC | Trade Union Council |
| VAL | Voluntary Action Luton |

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## Acknowledgements

## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Luton. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other University.

Dermot O'Reilly

Day of the 7$^{th}$ June 2004.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Introduction

This thesis is concerned with the effects of public political participation on social exclusion as evidenced in three area-based initiatives in the Luton-Dunstable conurbation in the year 2002. The findings are based on interviews and empirical data that describe the context and circumstances of the initiatives and the perceptions of those involved. These findings are analysed in terms of the concepts of participation and social exclusion, and the processes evidenced are interpreted according to the theoretical frameworks of power and inequality.

In this first chapter I will begin the exploration of the two analytical concepts of participation and exclusion by discussing some of the theoretical frameworks in which they have been used in the past, and alternative concepts that have been used in addressing the inter-relation between the political and the social, in particular the difference between social exclusion and social capital. From these initial considerations I will also outline the theoretical approach to investigation utilised in this thesis and the ontology upon which it is predicated. Only after these initial discussions of participation, exclusion and of the methodological approach used, is it possible to explain the importance of the question that has motivated this research. I will then outline the structure of this thesis.

**Themes and concepts**

*Political Participation*

One of the two main themes in this thesis is that of political participation, what it consists of, how it is mediated, and what effects it has. Political participation is a major theme in political thought and political science. In the former its relation to democracy, and in the latter the types and contours of actual political participation, come under scrutiny. It is necessary to see the inter-relationship between theoretical interest and scientific exposition. Accordingly, the findings and concerns of political science will be discussed briefly before moving on to discussions of social movements, their role in civil society, critical perspectives on participation initiatives as colonising civil society, and lastly, the relationship between hegemony and democracy.

These themes need to be introduced at this stage, and will be returned to in later chapters. There is a wealth of different approaches to the scientific examination of political participation, too many for adequate description or consideration in this space, so it is necessary to limit this preliminary discussion to some of the major and most recent discussions regarding political participation before outlining how it is understood in this thesis in Chapter 2.

One of the most recent large-scale studies of political participation in the UK is Parry et al's (1992) survey of the population. They recognise that political participation is not a unified realm of activity and develop a number of general categories into which individual acts of participation can be placed – collective/communal group participation, party political participation, and direct or

protest participation (Parry et al 1992 pp.233-7). Their definition of political participation is "taking part in the processes of formulation, passage and implementation of public policies" (1992 p.16), but they recognise that a large portion of political participation is reactive in the sense that it responds to agendas or decisions taken by those in authority (p.7), so even though such political action is aimed at affecting public policies, participation in such action can take place outside of political institutions.

Identifying who participates in political action, whether inside or outside of political institutions, is one of the prime concerns in studying participation. Activists are a minority of the population, and are in most cases unrepresentative of the public at large (Parry et. al 1992). Concentrating on those who do participate, the resource mobilisation thesis (Verba and Nie 1972) posits that the differing levels of political activity in society are correlated with the availability and usage of resources throughout society, and that those with these resources who do participate convert these resources into mobilisation through the development of cognitive 'civic attitudes' such as a sense of efficacy, psychological involvement and a feeling of obligation (cited in Clark 1998 pp.39-40).

Resource mobilisation theory has also been used to suggest that participants' associational affiliations act as an important resource and that those citizens who are heavily embedded within pre-existing group networks are more likely to be able to convert resources into participation (McCarthy and Zald 1976). Many studies have concluded, therefore, that participation is a minority activity and that it tends to be prevalent amongst the more privileged members of society (Brady et al 1995). This research raises two questions. Firstly, whether the

excluded are able to participate if they do not have resources? Secondly, even if they can, to what extent can their participation be on a par with other parties?

Barnes et al (2003) argue, however, that studies that concentrate on the characteristics of those who participate often neglect the question of why they participate, that is, their motivations for doing so. Similarly, Clark (1998) argues that it is of little use looking simply at the characteristics of those who participate without looking at the structures and processes that mediate, structure and engender participation and non-participation, and that these features, furthermore, need to be looked at in terms of what they mean to those who are active or apathetic.

It is clear then that we do need to look at the characteristics of those who participate and how their resources affect participation, but this needs to be put into the context of the structures of participation, and what both these structures and participation (or non-participation) mean to those involved. The nature of participation is explored in detail in Chapter 2, and the question of how participation is mediated and its relation to resources will be returned to in the concluding chapters.

The concern with the mediating processes of participation highlights the fact that participation is a social phenomenon, and thus it needs to be looked at in terms of collective action and social movements. Eder's discussion of collective action splits such action into three levels of analysis – micro, meso-and macro. Microanalysis of collective action focuses on the 'group': the pressure on members, the mechanisms for integrating members, individual motivations, and the "social construction produced by actors drawing boundaries between the

collective action they contribute to and its environment" (1993 p.53), and refines these concerns into a theory of the self-production and self-reproduction of group identity through cognitive practices (p.53). The groups established through collective action can then be considered as collective actors. There is also the possibility of collective learning processes resulting from the reflective creation of a group identity; "*moral learning processes* that thematize and change the normative context of strategic co-operation, and *strategic learning processes* that use and instrumentalize moral arguments in a rational-choice situation, in a co-operative game" (p.54 italics in original).

The meso-level is concerned with the normalisation and stabilisation of collective action through organisation, specifically in relation to the political opportunity structure, and the expansion of material and symbolic resources. Social movement organisations (SMOs) "are oriented toward the patronage of constituencies who do not act on their own" (Eder 1993 p.54), which constitute a social movement industry that develops a professional division of labour both within and between collective actors, and implies unequal capacities in mobilising resources. The interaction of organised collective actors can lead to collective learning processes and possibly, changes to the rules of the game, in terms of controlling and regulating the interactions between different collective actors, including the state.

The macro-level of analysis looks beyond collective actors as processes of social production and reproduction to their effects on the social structure, and whether such collective actors, through their effects, can be described as historical actors. As this research is focused on the interactions of voluntary and community

groups with various parts of the state, most of the analysis relates to the micro- and meso- levels of collective action, and in the concluding chapters we will return to the question as to how to characterise these groups as movements.

This concern with collective action and social movements beyond the institutions of politics, or in its relation to them, brings up the question of civil society. The idea of civil society, of a sphere outside of state mechanisms that is engaged in a variety of non-economically motivated social activities and public communication has garnered considerable intellectual interest in the last two decades (see Keane 1988, 1998; Offe 1984; Cohen and Arato 1992; Touraine 1981). A variety of these discussions focus on the potential of civil society as a space for politics to involve the development of the public use of reason, and not simply for politics to be the pursuance of group or individual interests.

The problem with using the concepts of civil society or social movements, in the confined space here, stems from the heterogeneous nature of the various different organisations and groups these terms cover. Even purely in terms of participation, there is evidence to suggest that these groups do not necessarily act as ideal spaces for deliberation, as Staeheli observes, the "failure to recognize exclusion has idealized some spaces as public when they are, in fact, exclusionary. With the effect of continuing the marginalization and exclusion of some groups" (1996 p.607). Furthermore, it is impossible to artificially separate civil society from the state structures that are a part of the milieu that influences the type of civil society that develops (Clark 1998).

Both the internal characteristics of social movements in relation to social structures, and the identification of the 'new' social movements as a distinctive

cultural component of modern liberal society, have been theorised by Habermas (1984, 1987a, 1987b, 1989, 1993). Habermas makes a contrast between 'emancipatory' social movements that carry a democratic, egalitarian and transformative potential, and 'defensive' social movements which are formed around the defence of the movement's members' interests (commonly characterised as NIMBYism, but which could also involve challenges to intrusive or centralising state power). While this contrast is purposely simplistic and primarily of heuristic use, both types of social movement, and civil society more generally, are theorised by Habermas as a response from the lifeworld against its colonisation by the system. Social life, in these manifestations of collective action, seeks to defend the spaces of autonomy for people and to foster expressive and developmental human life (for a recent re-application of Habermas' work on social movements and colonisation see Crossley 2003).

The purpose of this thesis is not to discuss civil society or social movements in the abstract, however, but to look at particular processes of interaction between voluntary and community groups, in whatever way they prefigure themselves as social agents, and the institutions of the state that have been seeking to encourage their participation in initiatives geared towards urban regeneration and tackling social exclusion. Just such interactions between social organisations and the state have been the object of a variety of critical studies. The element of these critical studies that is of interest for this thesis concerns participation, and other critical comments about the operation of area-based initiatives lie outside the scope of this thesis (for some of these studies see

Benington 1976; CDP 1977; or for more recent reviews Benington and Donnison 1999, or Alcock 2004)

The perspectives that have been used to criticise initiatives between the state and social organisations are of four main types. The first perspective is based on studies that detail the limited processes of unequal participation of the public or its agents, either because of limited information, limited resources, the setting of agendas by other actors, or the bureaucratic strictures within which the initiatives are situated (Atkinson and Cope 1995, Davoudi and Healey 1995). These studies then either argue for more equal participation through the rectification of the problems they identify, or conclude that equal participation is not possible, depending on what the causes for, or the processes of, limited participation they identify are.

The second type of critical perspective on interactions between social organisations and the state utilises Foucault's concept of governmentality. This concept draws attention to the way actors act on others at a distance through techniques of subjectification, problematisation and/or inscription (see Rose and Miller 1992). Through these processes, it is argued, the state enmeshes agents into the webs of power. Importantly, though, this perspective highlights that these agents become empowered through the same processes by which they are drawn into relations with others, and the results of many interacting agents of power are not predictable. Atkinson (2003) points out that though the theory of governmentality has been subject to various sophisticated developments, the operational use of the concept is comparatively underdeveloped. The importance of Foucault's work on power is dealt with at length in Chapter 2.

The third perspective on state-civil society relations concentrates on the subversion of social organisations by the processes of incorporation, co-option, or the colonisation (Blaug 2002), of the processes of participation (in contrast, for an account of how social movements may subvert social programmes, see Hills 1998), or in its most developed form, by the process of organisation itself. While incorporation or co-option is seldom rigorously defined in this literature, it is generally used to signify the gaining of recognition by emerging social groups in the system of interest representation without their gaining of substantive public policy gains (this definition draws on Gamson 1975).

The negative view of incorporation or co-option can be seen in growth machine or urban regime theory (for an interpretation of truly representative incorporation as benign, see Johnson 2002). In these theories representatives of social movements or the public are brought into the decision-making processes alongside the interests of local government and private capital where they necessarily have to subject their interests that conflict with those of the local regime because of the exigencies of regional economic competition. Tackling social inequality is not an easily achieved goal, and the local regime is dependent for its survival on identifying goals which it is able to mobilise enough resources to deliver (see Stone 2002), which results in social groups being marginalised.

Piven and Cloward's seminal work on organisations of the poor (1977) is even more comprehensive in its diagnosis of the doomed fate of organisations that attempt to work with the state. In their view the state's primary reason for seeking dialogue and/or co-operation with organisations of the poor is social unrest, particularly when it is urban. Organisations of the poor mistakenly believe that

they will have some influence over the state if they organise well enough. These attempts at mass organisations, however, cannot garner significant resources from the poor because of their limited resources, and so seek resources from the state. The state prefers to deal with organisations than with mobs, and thus will divert some resources, both to meet some of the demands of the poor, and to support the organisations of the poor. When social unrest has subsided, however, and public opinion has turned against those who have received diverted resources, the state is able to withdraw its concessions to the poor, and the organisations that spent their time developing their organisational capacity, fade away with the withdrawal of the resources that sustained them.

These critical views on incorporation are thrown into relief by the concept of hegemony. Hegemony denotes

> intellectual and moral leadership ... [it] refers to the creation of political alliances under the leadership of a particular social group or class ... it foregrounds the struggle for ideological domination whereby people are encouraged to interpret their experiences in ways favourable to certain sets of power relations (Martin 1998 p.2)

The importance of the three elements of this quotation lies in their three different characterisations of what hegemony is, and is symptomatic of their common conflation. Hegemony as intellectual and moral leadership implies the free and conscious agreement of people behind a common and unifying cause. This version of hegemony is isomorphic, in shape and content, to the democratic ideal of a unified polity.

The second version of hegemony, as it is concerned with the importance of alliances and compromise, signifies groups subjecting certain aspirations and interests to benefit from inclusion in the ruling alliance. There is then the corresponding importance of the leading group or fraction being able to structure alliances in its favour, implying that it has the most powerful position, but that it is also dependent on the support of the groups beneath it, and as such has constraints on its range of actions. Poulantzas' (1978) version of hegemony follows this logical structure, and he furthermore highlights the important role of the resources available to the different class fractions that make up the ruling alliance. He also notes that the ruling class fraction does not need the continual support of subordinate class fractions so long as it is able to muster sufficient resources, whether economic or political, to sustain its position at the apex of the power bloc when subjected to challenge. In contrast to the democratic version of hegemony, therefore, this version of hegemony is best described as structural.

The third version of hegemony, which stresses ideology as the realm of domination, is the most problematic. In common usage the word hegemony is often used to signify cultural domination, but this is unsatisfactory because of its inexact and unspecified application. As opposed to some unspecified form of mind-control, Laclau and Mouffe (1985) develop a theory of hegemony that is built upon the fixing of identity through selective interpretations, "the reproduction of identities over time is achieved not by the reflection of their 'true essence' but through the maintenance of certain sets of differences rather than others" (Martin 1998 p.162). The creation of social and political identities is always achieved by excluding other possible components of identity. According to Laclau and Mouffe

this almost invisible process of creating identity through difference and exclusion through discursive processes is the most basic practice of forming social and political power.

Gramsci's use of the concept of hegemony incorporates all three elements, and was particularly developed to understand how

> to identify the state with the struggle for hegemony over civil society ... It was in this integral sense, he argued, that the state should be analysed; as consisting of the entire complex of practical and theoretical activities with which the ruling class not only justifies and maintains its dominance, but manages to obtain the active consent of the governed (Martin 1998 pp.69-70)

Gramsci's analysis was primarily concerned with times of crisis (Martin 1998), however, so while he may well be correct that in such times the process of hegemony involves the domination of civil society by the state through the development of alliances and the articulation of unitary ideals in order to achieve active consent, in less intense circumstances the three elements can be disaggregated in theory, to reflect how they disaggregate in practice.

It is impossible, without concrete analyses, to make any judgement on whether these versions of the processes of hegemony are warranted in describing the interface between governmental institutions, that are attempting to develop public participation, and local and community groups, that are attempting to extend and develop both their activities and to influence both the operations of governmental institutions and society itself. The themes of social movements, civil

society, co-option and hegemony, therefore can only be returned to after the detailed analysis of these initiatives. To enable the analysis of these initiatives it is clear that there needs to be a conceptual definition of power and what counts as politics, what counts as political participation, a categorical typology of the different types of agents of participation, and the modes of participation. These questions are dealt with at length in Chapter 2 through the development of Foucault's work on power.

*Exclusion or Capital? Exploring the social:*

The second major concept used in this thesis is that of social exclusion. The use of the concept of social exclusion is often attacked as a retreat from a concern with social inequality (see Savage 2002). Inequality, it is argued, is best understood through class analysis rather than through notions of exclusion. Such arguments generally associate social exclusion with what Levitas (1998) calls the Social Integrationist Discourse, a discourse that she claims neglects differences and inequalities between those who may be classed as included. The use of the concept of social exclusion, depending on how it is defined, however, is not necessarily tied to this, or to any other specific ideological discourse.

In chapter 3 we will examine the various different concepts of exclusion that have been used and how they have been related to ideological discourses. The concept of social exclusion that will be used here sees exclusion as a result of social closure. Social closure, however, is not a total experience and can be produced on a variety of different levels or spaces of social interaction, so social exclusion is not necessarily an all-encompassing experience, but can be variable,

multi-faceted or discrete. Social exclusion, therefore, may in some instances be related to class circumstances, but it may not. Social exclusion, thus, is a type of social inequality worthy of study in its own right, but its study does not deny that there are other types and forms of social inequality worthy of attention.

The concept of social capital is often invoked in discussions of participation, and on the face of it, is related to social exclusion. Kearns (2003) traces, however, the displacement of a concern with social exclusion by the UK government with the discourses of social capital and community cohesion. It is necessary at this stage to outline why the perspective enabled by the concept of social exclusion is preferred to that by the concept of social capital. There are a number of versions of social capital, however, so, firstly it will be outlined in a way that corresponds to the ontology used in this thesis, and secondly to explain why even this version of the concept is not used.

The term social capital has been popularised by Putnam (Putnam et al 1993, Putnam 1995, 2000, 2002), so his version of the concept will be discussed first. "For Putnam, social capital signifies the measurable number and density of a society's human connections and memberships that connect us in civil society" (McLean, Schultz and Steger 2002 p.1). Social capital refers to more than just interactions between individuals, that is, it also encompasses the "norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them"(p.4). Putnam's argument is that there is a diminishing stock of such social capital because of a downturn in membership in civil associations, and this diminished stock is the leading cause of political disengagement (p.4). Such "an approach to social capital assumes that associations facilitate economic growth or democratic performance through their

impact on individual norms and attitudes, which in turn have an impact on society through individual behaviour" (Foley, Edwards and Diani 2001 p.270).

One could read Putnam's argument as – associational life affects social capital, which in turn affects political engagement. Such a reading would address the question motivating this thesis in reverse. The concept of social capital influenced by Putnam has, moreover, been institutionalised by the World Bank, highlighting a need to unpack the details of his concept and his argument.

One of the striking features of Putnam's concept of social capital is the delimited sphere of associational life that he concentrates upon. On the one hand, he does not particularly consider familial life and its effects on trust or norms, and on the other "neo-Tocquevillean liberals [as Putnam is characterised] and conservative proponents of civil society tend to ignore or actually exclude from consideration those sorts of organisations and activities that are associated with advocacy and political action, considering them divisive or simply beside the point" (Edwards and Foley 2001 p.6). That is, social capital is only promoted by the middle-range of social interaction between the private and the public sphere, and although Putnam recognises that social capital may be put to bad uses, he regards it as a public good.

Putnam's conception of social capital can be contrasted to that of Bourdieu (1977, 1987). Bourdieu contends that "the volume of the social capital possessed by a given agent ... depends on the size of the networks of connections he can effectively mobilize and on the volume of the capital (economic, cultural or symbolic) possessed in his own right by each of those to whom he is connected" (cited in Edwards and Foley 2001 p.9), and moreover is constitutive of that agent's

identities and strategies. Bourdieu takes the analogy to financial capital seriously, but social capital is only one of the three capitals he considers, the others being economic and cultural. In the last instance, however, Bourdieu considers cultural and social capital to be reducible to economic capital.

For Bourdieu social capital is not fungible, that is, it is an endogenous property of particular social relationships. It is these particular concrete relationships, the connections and resources available through them, that is the social capital. Social capital is not an intervening variable between social interaction and social, economic or political effects, it is an analytical approximation of the types and degrees of social interaction, actual and potential, and it is these interactions that have broader effects. Most importantly for Bourdieu, social capital has to be understood as a part of individuals' habitus – the prejudices, habits and inclinations that are conjoined in their identities and contexts. Attempting to manipulate an individual's social capital without appreciating the ingrained nature of their habitus is to neglect the very character of the person and their social climate (see McGhee 2003)

Using the concept of social capital as an analysis of the networks and resources available through social interaction is a much more straightforward use of the concept, and does not lead to it being reified as an exogenous variable. Trust, as Foley, Edwards and Diani (2001) remark, is affected by many other factors than associational membership, such as financial set-backs or age, so neither is there a clear way of establishing how associational membership is responsible for civic engagement.

Neither is social capital particularly useful for looking at social exclusion. At first sight the access to and control over resources articulated by the concept of social capital may seem a useful indicator of social exclusion. There is no need, however, to use the concept of social capital, as the concept of social interaction does just as well in articulating social networks. Moreover, the types of interaction, and the ends to which they are orientated are not expressed in the concept of social capital, so there is a need for other theoretical constructs to adequately account for these aspects of social life.

Despite these reasons for rejecting Putnam's concept of social capital, his argument still raises valid questions. Translating his argument into the terms used in this research, Putnam argues that a lack of social interaction in civil associations results in political disengagement. As noted, however, Putnam's emphasis on interaction in associations is unnecessarily restrictive, and it is valid to ask whether a lack in a variety of types of social interaction throughout society results in political disengagement. The question I am posing reverses this inquiry, that is, I am concerned with whether increased political participation results in increased social interaction and of what types of interaction and integration in society. As will become clear in the development of the concept of political participation, the distinction between political participation and social interaction is not always clear cut, so the terms of Putnam's argument require de-constructing, which leads to a more complex interrelationship between the social and the political than is capable of being addressed in Putnam's terms.

## Methodological approach

As has become clear in the preceding discussions, how one inquires into social facts, how one organises these facts into concepts, how one may de-construct concepts and theories, and how they are related to ideologies, are all vital considerations. A methodology that ignores any of these considerations is flawed or partial.

The methodology in this thesis, therefore, is predicated upon an ontology and an epistemology that relates concrete empirical phenomena to socially constructed concepts, which can be de-constructed and re-constructed, and in turn relates these concepts to broader social theories which can be influenced by, or bound up in, ideologies. Both the rationale for, and use of, this analytical interpretative methodology is the critical imperative. Eder (1993) describes the critical imperative as the recognition of contradictions in society which necessarily include contestations over meanings. Contradictions can exist between different material or social logics, that is contradictions in their actual constitution (see Offe 1984). Contradictions can exist between ideals of social organisation or justice and the realities of the societies that purport to uphold and implement these ideals. Contradictions can also exist between the ideals or meanings that are attributed to social meanings. These three types of contradiction, which are either strictly material in character, between ideal or material conditions, or between ideational processes, are the motive forces for change, dynamism and disruption in society (Eder, 1993). The critical theorist, therefore, is interested in contradictions not simply as interesting intellectual issues, but because they are implicated in any serious study of society that seeks to explain how societies function, and how they

change. This methodology, and how it relates to the particular phenomena and concepts investigated in this thesis, is developed in chapter 4.

**Motivating questions**

The critical imperative of investigating whether political participation affects social exclusion is not primarily related to previous academic literature on either participation or exclusion, even though they influence the question. Neither is it primarily motivated by the UK government's assumption in its regeneration policies that participation will alleviate social exclusion (SEU 1998, 2001a), even though this lends the question both topical and policy relevance.

The pertinent aspect that arises from the academic literature is the disjuncture between the concepts of the political and the social, in that the social is often prefigured as being a-political. Theorists disposed to critical thinking, however, argue that the political suffuses the social – that the relations that are political are at the same time social. The spheres of political participation and social exclusion, therefore, are not distinct, but inter-related.

If one were to take up Putnam's argument that social interaction affects political engagement, then those who could be classed as socially excluded could not engage in politics, as political engagement requires social involvement. While this may be true to an extent, it neglects that the perception of social injustice, whether prefigured as inequality, exclusion or deprivation, is often the motivation for political participation, (see Byrne, 1997 for an argument that social movements arise as a result of political exclusion) and that in many cases, it is precisely marginalised sections of society that effect political pressure. Whether or not this

political pressure then affects the social injustice, exclusion or deprivation that motivated it, is the question to be answered in this thesis.

**Outline of the thesis**

This answer needs to be approached in stages. In chapter 2 the concept of participation is explored and developed. This is achieved through an explication of the concept of power as capacity and its instantiation through agents in relations of interaction. Three primary relations can be distinguished, between discrete relational interactions, between the resources that enable power, and between the cultures and identities that constitute the sphere of social power. Social power is clearly implicated in all social relations, while political power is concerned with the rules or frameworks that empower and constrain social interaction; with the allocation of public resources; with the legitimacy of the decision-making rules and processes that decide both these interactions and allocations; and most importantly, the definition of what properly lies within this sphere and what does not.

Within this definition of political power, the types of political actor are identified and the types of political action in which they can be involved. Finally, the types of political participation within these types of political action are identified and discussed.

In chapter 3 the concept of social exclusion is explored by tracing the history of the concept and by identifying the analytical concepts and ideological discourses through which it has been developed. The relationship between these ideological discourses and concepts of exclusion is found lacking, in that the

relation between inclusion and exclusion is not made explicit or sufficiently clarified. The implicit versions of inclusion are analysed before an analytical dialectical model of inclusion and exclusion is developed.

Further to this philosophically and anthropologically based account of inclusion and exclusion there is also a discussion of human orientations, the types of goals that influence and motivate social interactions. These orientations are related to aspects of the model of inclusion and exclusion, particularly in terms of social norms. Social closure is produced via types of interaction, types of norms and how they are institutionalised, and according to ethical frameworks and dispositions.

The analytical model of inclusion and exclusion is explicitly related to a moral concern with inclusion. This link is made via a discussion of Sen's concept of capabilities of well being (1992) and the implications this has for capabilities of inclusion, and how these are related to rights.

In chapter 4 the methodology employed in this thesis is explicated. This involves outlining an ontology and an epistemology that encompasses the concepts and frames used to articulate participation and exclusion and relating them both to the process of investigating these concepts, analysing the findings, and relating these findings to interpretative schema.

The ontology is based on an interactionist model of society embedded in a material world mediated by communication. The cognitive structure of experience and communication and their place in epistemology are outlined. This type of empirical analysis needs to be supplemented with a concern for meaning that

requires exploring actors' meanings as well as the broader social meaning of their actions.

This methodology is discussed in relation to other scientific conceptions of methodology, and the relation of interpretation to analysis and empirical events is outlined. The critical relevance of interpretation is stressed. The concepts used to describe participation are related to the model of inclusion and exclusion.

The second aspect of chapter 4 is the outlining of the investigation of participation and exclusion conducted for the purposes of this thesis according to these methodological principles. There were two aspects of this investigation, an exploration of participation in three area-based initiatives in Luton via voluntary and community groups and partnership structures, and an exploration of the experiences of exclusion in Luton.

The investigation of participation focussed on voluntary and community groups involved in area-based initiatives, as voluntary and community groups are the primary means of participation in these initiatives. Area-based initiatives are not the only means of participation, but to conduct a study of broader regional or national processes of participation would have been beyond the scope of this study. There is, however, a discussion of government research on participation at the beginning of chapter 5 to set the context for understanding the initiatives in Luton. The three initiatives studied were the Luton Health Action Zone, the Single Regeneration Budget Round 6 process, and the New Deal for Communities. These are not the only area-based initiatives based in Luton, but compared to the Sports Action Zone, the Education Action Zone and Sure Start, they had a greater emphasis on participation, while, during the time of the study, the Luton Strategic

Partnership and the Luton Assembly were in their formative stages, so it was decided to focus the investigation on these three initiatives.

Three methods were used to critically investigate the processes of participation. The primary method was twenty semi-structured interviews with people involved in the initiatives (which I shall refer to as the "participation interviews"), four of whom were workers employed in relation to the initiatives, the rest of whom were members of voluntary and community groups with varying degrees of participation in the initiatives. The second method was observation of meetings, and the third method was analysis of documents produced by or relating to the three initiatives.

The investigation of exclusion focussed on ten semi-structured interviews with people who may, by the criteria employed by policy makers, be classed as excluded (which I shall refer to as "the exclusion interviews"). As will be seen in chapter 6, most of these respondents did not regard themselves as excluded. One of the aims of critically investigating exclusion is to explore the contestations of meaning and categories, so there is a certain paradox in treating these respondents as 'excluded' when they do not regard themselves as being so. For the purposes of investigation, however, an operational usage must be adopted, and the respondents all displayed characteristics that could be associated with social exclusion. So, although, pragmatically, I am using this feature to explain why I am classing them as excluded for the purposes of this thesis, I will refer to them as socially 'excluded' to signify their contestation of the term.

These ten interviews are supplemented by a set of topics included in the twenty participation interviews relating to the voluntary and community members

views and opinions on exclusion, and an analysis of various documents relating to features of exclusion in Luton.

In both sets of interviews there were a number of factors that precluded the possibility of attaining either a quantitatively significant number of interviews or a statistically representative sample of interviewees. Despite this, however, there is a broad range of groups and types of exclusion included in the data. These investigations are not representative case studies, therefore, but illustrative case studies that enable the critical investigation of the meanings and experiences of both participation and exclusion, and the development of the theoretical concepts employed. The critical investigation was facilitated by the use of episodic interviewing (Hermanns in Flick 2000) and the thematised development of coding across the interviews by discursive instances and in response to particular questions. These methodological considerations are dealt with in detail in chapter 4.

The analysis of participation is presented in chapter 5. Following the schema developed in chapter 2 the types of political actor are mapped onto the area-based initiatives being studied. The place of participation and how it is constructed, as well as argued for and instrumentalised in government policies, is detailed, as well as the actual effects of some of these policies.

The majority of the analysis is based on the investigation of participation as experienced by voluntary and community groups in the three area-based initiatives. Luton's status as a deprived conurbation, in comparison to both region and nation, with a population with diverse ethnic backgrounds, has resulted in it being targeted for a considerable number of interventions and schemes. The three

initiatives chosen were at different stages of their lifecycle and embodied different principles and means of engaging with the public, and so afforded a variegated view of participation.

The analysis of the initiatives shows a number of features: the prescriptive role of central government criteria; the tension between empowerment and constriction by bureaucracy; the high levels of human and organisational capital required by voluntary and community groups to participate; the benefits of networking and increased capacity; the antagonistic relationship between the voluntary and community sector and the state sector; the tensions involved in voluntarism; and a low level of public participation. This leads to the conclusion that these initiatives are over-determined on the side of the statutory sector, and that they do not enable participation as much as they could.

The analysis presented in chapter 6 concerns social exclusion. Evidence showing the regional and national comparative deprivation of Luton and the types of this deprivation is presented. A synopsis of the views of the respondents that could be classed as 'excluded' is presented, before the analyses of their responses, and of the responses of the voluntary and community group workers, are developed.

Even though all of the respondents that may be classed as 'excluded' reported a number and variety of problems, the majority do not class themselves as being excluded. Their understanding of exclusion is developed and contrasted with the minority of respondents who do see themselves as excluded.

Both the respondents' interviews and the voluntary and community worker interviews are analysed in relation to the model of inclusion and exclusion, and a

variety of features become apparent. From the respondents' interviews the themes include the differing ethical self-relations of the respondents; the variety of their ethical horizons; their negotiated acceptance of their lack of money; the effects of their local and social relationships; the types of problems they experience accessing services; the mediating role of the voluntary and community groups in accessing them; and situational barriers to social interaction. While from the voluntary and community groups features such as cultural differences; the recognised inability of both state services and the groups to cater for a variety of problems; the isolation of many of their clients; and the problems in encouraging participation, are noted.

Three conclusions are drawn from these analyses. Firstly, exclusion is tied to the social, economic and inter-personal relations that constitute inclusion. Secondly, the social processes of inclusion can by their nature cause features of exclusion, or unequal forms of inclusion. Thirdly, voluntary and community groups play a mediating role in inclusion, but do not tackle all the problems of exclusion, and in both their operations and the operations of the state, can mitigate against full inclusion.

In chapter 7 the inter-relations between the concepts of participation, the model of inclusion and exclusion, and the levels at which they interact are developed. Firstly, in terms of the circuits of power that excluded respondents participated in, and how they affected inclusion and exclusion. Secondly, in terms of the types and levels of participation of the excluded and how they affected inclusion and exclusion. Thirdly, in terms of the effects of the participation of the

voluntary and community groups in the circuits of power on inclusion and exclusion.

The effects on inclusion and exclusion are related both to the levels and types of participation, both of the respondents in the groups, and of the groups in the initiatives. Although there was significant minimal participation as members or users of groups, there was a small degree of active participation, and thus the more thoroughgoing effects of participation were limited to a small proportion of respondents, and the problems the groups experienced in their participation in the initiatives affected the wider benefits to the community.

In relation to the questions raised earlier in this chapter, these findings suggest that the excluded are able to variously participate, as they are seldom excluded in all respects, and that the resources they use to participate tend to be personal or social and not material. The type of participation they are involved in, however, is seriously affected by their comparative lack of resources, and tends to be minimal in nature. A small number of people with resources, again often personal or social, are highly participant, and their involvement in initiatives does not necessarily lead to colonisation, especially if they are able to provide for their core funding outside of the initiatives.

In practice the social closure that constitutes exclusion is often an effect of the type of inclusion examined. This relationship is not necessary, however, and can be altered by attention to the processes of inclusion. Chapter 7 concludes with the identification of the structural problems of developing political participation and tackling social exclusion..

Chapter 8 is concerned with drawing together the findings and the themes of the research and detailing the arguments. The findings point to two contradictions. Firstly there is a contradiction between the government's stated objective of promoting participation, regardless of the reasons analysed for these objectives, and the ways in which it attempts to facilitate participation. The mechanisms of participation create barriers to participation and thus restrict both the number and types of people and groups who participate and restrict both the extent of their participation, and the spheres of power in which they can participate. The second contradiction is the material contradiction that processes of inclusion create experiences of exclusion, in particular with regard to the normative processes of state services, and concomitantly, of the mediating role of the voluntary and community groups. The types of inclusion facilitated can cause other types of exclusion, and though this relation is not necessarily causal, in that it is dependent on the particular process of inclusion, it highlights the multifaceted experiences of exclusion, and points to the need for a multifaceted and encompassing approach to alleviating exclusion.

Active participation does affect the mechanisms of social exclusion, but minimal participation only mitigates certain aspects of it. Moreover, severe types of social exclusion create numerous overlapping barriers to political participation. The suffuse nature of the political within the social means that these two phenomena cannot be causally correlated, but their inter-relation clarifies that their complex natures require models of requisite variety to analyse and interpret them (Ashby 1965).

The conceptualisations of participation and inclusion and exclusion, and the findings relating to them, are used to discuss the broader theoretical frameworks of hegemony and inequality. The importance of an appreciation of participation via the state not necessarily leading to full incorporation is stressed, and an argument is presented for the moral concern for equal capabilities of inclusion to be incorporated into a critical approach to the State, and a number of further avenues for research are outlined.

# Chapter 2: Power and participation

## Introduction

There are two main theoretical concepts in this thesis, political participation and social exclusion. In order to deal with them adequately it is necessary to deal with them in isolation before comparing and contrasting them and developing a perspective that is applicable to both of them. In this chapter the concept of political participation is explored.

As discussed, political participation is one of the major themes in political studies, and yet at the same time is significantly under-theorised and under-investigated. Any adequate description of participation requires a specification of what power is, what political power is and how participation relates to political power. Furthermore the different types of participation need to be specified and the different spheres in which it takes place need to be outlined.

This chapter is structured into three main sections. In the first section, the exploration of power involves arguing through a number of debates concerning its nature. After looking at the nature of the phenomenon that the concept of power describes, there is a discussion of structure and agency that involves considering Poulantzas, Lukes and Eder. Clegg's conceptualisation of a tripartite approach to

understanding power is outlined before again examining Lukes when discussing the notion of power as conflict and Foucault's and Poulantzas' conceptions of power as relational and its implications for resistance.

The second section starts with the differentiation of political power from social power. The structural logic of action is explored in substantiating how political action is to be judged. Political action is then schematised using and expanding Clegg's tripartite approach. Each of Clegg's three circuits is then developed to explore their capacity for involvement in political action.

In the third section political action is analysed in terms of participation, looking firstly at the agents, singular and collective, of political action, and distinguishing the spheres in which they operate and how they inter-relate. There is then a typology of participation developed that expands upon the work of Clark, and this typology is explored in terms of Clegg's circuits of power.

**The nature of power**

Power is both a heuristic and an essentially contested concept. Fundamental to the concept, however, is the idea that power enables one to either make a change or to sustain a condition; that power involves the "significant affecting" of something (White, cited in Lukes 1974 p.26). The word comes from the Latin 'potere', to be able (Morriss, 1987) which implies that though power can be understood as a capacity, it is in its action or use that it becomes manifest. (How inaction in certain conditions can be understood as a use of power will be discussed later).

Hindess (1996) distinguishes two ways of thinking about power. Firstly, that power is a particular attribute which is present in the various sorts and sources

of power and which can be thought of as a quantitative capacity. In contrast, power can be thought of as a categorical description of the various elements, which, either separately or together, enable the significant affecting of the environment that counts as power. Treating power in a simply quantifiable manner, as in the first of Hindess' examples, is unsatisfactory, as it would lead to the simple calculation of the amounts of power agents have, which neglects the heterogeneous nature of the types and contexts in which power may operate. The diversity of the types of instances of power focuses one's analytical attention firstly on the agent of power.

*The structure of agency*

Power is seen here as intentional in that it is a property of agents and is instantiated in the Nietzschean will-to-power. The object of intention does not have to be achieved, however, for an action to be a use of power. It has to be achieved for it to be a successful use of power, but as an instance of power it need only achieve the effecting of some significant change.

The power of organisations and institutions is seen as organised agency. Agency always presupposes organisation, disciplined or spontaneous, singular or plural, as organisation supposes agency (Clegg 1989). Organisation, in either sense, is the "mobilisation of bias" (Schattschneider 1942), that is, all action is orientated towards some particular goal or value, and in consequence excludes others.

In opposition to this conception of power as instantiated by agents (which is often described as a methodological individualism), there is a conception of the

power of structures (whether they are conceptualised as groups, classes, institutions or discourses) that shape both the emergence and direction of power.

There are two versions of this idea of structural power. The harder version, of which early Poulantzas and other Althusserian Marxists are specific examples, redefines power to be the property of a part of the social structure, for example "the capacity of a social class to realise its specific objective interests" (cited in Lukes 1986). Lukes argues against this conception of power as being definitively confined to the structural objectivity of a system, as it implies a determination of action that ignores what the word power in fact articulates – the possibility of alternative actions (1986).

Lukes offers a different conception of structural power whereby the definition of power is not reducible either to the structure or the agent, but is, in any instance, variously mediated by both. Lukes' argument against individual agency states that the interrelations between individuals in groups and organisations are "unlikely to be reducible merely to their individual motivations" (1974 p.54). Lukes does not in fact specify his conception of structural power, but it seems that he means these structures to be "composed of long-term, relatively persistent sets of values, doctrines, rituals, institutions, organisations, procedures, and processes (rules of the game) that constrain and empower agents in the use of power" (Bachrach and Botwinick, 1992 p.59).

In agreement with Lukes, it is clear that there is a great deal more to understand about human action than just agents' conscious motivations. The insights of sociology, anthropology or cultural studies illuminate human behaviour, but are not predicated solely on individual motivations.

Yet, accepting that the intentional aspects of an agent do not exhaust the ways of understanding human action, there is something profoundly unsettling in the notion that there could be a conative aspect to structure. If structure, in whatever form, be it class, culture or discourse, is seen as positively determining human action, then that is tantamount to identifying structure as the agent of action. The aforementioned early work of Poulantzas is explicit in this regard.

Lukes' preferred syncretism of agency and structure still seems to assign this conative aspect to structure, however much it is mediated by agency, and this is what is disputed here. There cannot be any form or sort of agency attributed to structure, except metaphorically. To do so is to reify the metaphor in question. Classes, cultures, markets or discourses, do not act, it is the members or users of classes, cultures, markets and discourses that act. When mention is made of class action, cultural norms, market laws or discourse frames, all that is being done is the schematisation of human action in particular contexts, prefigured in a particular way. The laws of a market or the rituals of a culture do not positively determine the action of an individual, what they show is how an individual, limited to a certain number of contextual options, cognisant of certain factors and disposed towards particular outcomes, is likely to act, but it is still the individual that commits the act.

To help clarify this distinction between acknowledging the existence and importance of structure, but refusing to reify structure as agency (as structure is here seen as the accretion of the results of agents' actions) Eder's description of social learning will be discussed briefly. Although social learning is not of direct concern here, the reasoning he applies typifies the cognitivist strand of

sociological thinking, which in turn is, perhaps, the most theoretically advanced account of culture and discourse as the milieu of social interaction.

Eder is keen to distance himself from the 'action theory' of Habermas, which, he contends, explains the evolution of social systems by reference to the action orientations of individual actors. In preference to this, Eder argues that the

micro-sociological basis of evolutionary learning processes has to be conceptualised not in terms of a theory of social action, but in terms of social interaction, not in terms of competent subjects, but in terms of evolutionary forms of intersubjectivity, not in terms of intentions, but in terms of relations (1999 p.199).

Eder here clarifies the limitations of a motive-based account of action, and his theoretical focus on interaction can be understood as a re-casting of action theory.

Eder goes on to argue that a "non-psychological (and non-individualist) theory of action is based on the idea that the basis of social learning is not individual but social relationships" (1999 p.199). There seems, however, to be an occlusion of the fact that it is individuals who act in social relationships, and that the reason for culture being able to influence the choices from which an actor may choose is not solely dependent on the actor's internalisation of culture, but crucially on their recognition of how others will interpret their actions (Swidler, 1995 p.39).

The benefit of studying structure is precisely to ascertain the codes, norms and tools, as well as the logic of the contexts, which provide the subject with the

specific arenas and practices of interaction. What can be established from these considerations is that firstly, structure empowers and constrains, but does not act, and secondly, that the structures within which agents act are primarily structures of interaction, that is, structure is shaped by society and culture.

The methodological approach which goes beyond a narrow interest-oriented individualism yet declines a reified structuralism will be further explicated in regards to the structural logic of interaction developed below.


*Power as effect*

Despite the previous focus on the agents of power and their role as cause, this is not the only aspect of power that requires attention. For Hobbes "Power and Cause are the same thing" (cited in Clegg, 1989 p.26). In contrast to this idea Clegg argues that the ordered totalities that act as the prior framework in which power operates are in fact an achievement of power and not its generative principle (1989 p.218). Hobbes is an exemplar of what Clegg describes as a tradition of understanding power in terms of episodic agency, discrete actions by an intentional agent involving the use of power in the control or effect of a situation. Clegg recognises that this analysis of power has its uses, but is also wary that it forecloses discussions on power by focussing exclusively on what power is, instead of also looking at what power does.

In addition to the episodic agency circuit of power, Clegg discusses facilitative and dispositional circuits of power. Facilitative power is concerned with developing the organisation necessary for power through system integration, which involves the material conditions or techniques of production and discipline.

This results in the relative "empowerment and disempowerment of agencies' capacities, as these become more or less strategic as transformations occur which are incumbent upon changes in techniques of production and discipline" (1989 p.224). An implicit aspect of facilitative power to note is its capillary nature; in that it acts both on and through the individual in micro-circuits of power that both constrain individuals and empower them. This capillary notion of power micro-circuits is in contrast to a capstone conception which sees power emanating from a sovereign and ordering agent.

Dispositional power, in contrast, is concerned with social integration, the fixing of meaning and membership rules and processes that the development of facilitative power depends upon and utilises. The creation of identity, both in terms of communities and in relation to issues is both an arena and source of power. A further aspect of dispositional power is the development and fixing of obligatory passage points or nodal arenas through which the exercise of power must pass and which thus channel its manifestation.

An important contribution to understanding the logic and nature of social integration are the various discussions on recognition (Honneth 1995; Taylor 1992), which chart the inter-social striving for and development of recognition between individuals and groups, and also the recognition of issues, the means of acquiring recognition and the spaces for recognition to be acknowledged. Re-cognition, the conative acknowledgement of the symbols and representations of identity, of things and beings, and the struggles surrounding its achievement, is the basis for understanding the power dynamics present in social integration.

Understanding how recognition is bound up in identity is essential for any adequate acknowledgement of the phenomenon of identity politics. Honneth's work develops the idea of claims for recognition as claims of identity that are used to negotiate social structures. Taylor (1998) discusses how particular identity claims, if they are to be successful, need to be able to translate their claims into the language of universal rights or entitlements. Without this translation from the particular to the universal, identity claims remain at the level of sub-culture and are not properly integrated into social structures or institutions.

To recap, the three circuits are interrelated realms of power, episodic agency being operative in the decision-making fora of power, facilitative being the productive mechanisms of the resources of power, and dispositional the realm of identity and culture; the circuits are also, however, three heuristic devices for understanding any particular instance of power, as it may have elements of any or all of the three types of power.

Developing an awareness of these circuits of power is also useful for developing an understanding of empowerment. Starkey (2003) distinguishes three versions of empowerment – consumerist empowerment which narrowly concerns individualist customer-oriented mechanisms of voice; liberational empowerment which looks at wider social features of voice; and empowerment as professional practice, which looks at empowerment as something that professionals do to their clients. The analytical frames of the circuits of power can be used to separate out the different elements brought together in the word empowerment. Examining the facilitative circuit may show the skills, mechanisms or knowledges required to express voice, and which may mitigate against certain types of expression, and the

dispositional circuit can be examined to see how identity is constructed and how this effects consciousness and therefore voice (see Goehler 2000). Engagement in the episodic agency circuit requires some degree of empowerment, so analysis of this circuit can be used to judge who is empowered. Empowerment then becomes an analytical device rather than a palliative for the disenfranchised.

*Power as conflict*

There is a common distinction made between 'power over' and 'power to'. Power over is usually associated with conceptualisations derived from Weber, who saw power as the ability to overcome resistance to one's goals. This conceptualisation omits the possibility of power being devoid of observable conflict, which has been criticised for favouring an overly behaviourist approach to the study of power, for, as Lukes argues, power may act "to prevent such conflict from arising in the first place" (1974 p.23). In addition, 'power to' also articulates the possibility of consensual power, a power only activated by the combined intentions and interactions of people.

This distinction between power over and power to also highlights an often-overlooked aspect of Lukes' three faces of power. In his categorisation of the types of power, Lukes diagrammatically states that power is only operated by A over B if there is a conflict of interests (1974 p.32). This can be seen in his understanding of influence and authority. Where there is a conflict of interest then they are also instances of power, whereas if there is no conflict then they are neutral in terms of power. According to Lukes' diagram power is only present if there is a conflict (whether that conflict is observable or is a latent conflict of interests).

Such a conceptualisation of power cannot describe, for example, a use of propaganda to build support within a constituency for an issue that does not adversely affect that constituency's current or real interests, as a form of power. Nor can it appreciate how the development or stockpiling of resources is a use of power, even if it does not cause conflict between interests. Indeed, as the above quote from Lukes recognises, the use of power is often to avoid conflict or to obviate it before it arises, and this does not necessarily entail harm to others' interests, current or real. Lukes' schema may have broadened the idea of conflict from observable conflict to latent conflict, but it is still dependent on conflict, and as such, does not adequately theorise the notion of power to, the instancing, creative or genuinely consensual aspects of power.[1]

*Resistance as relation*

In lieu of a definition of power, the focus is upon its description. Instead of focussing solely on what power is, what power does is of equal importance. This is best accomplished by understanding power as relational, thus capturing the interactional basis of agency within structure, and not only the relation of power as conflict, but also as transformative, additive or consensual, also recognising that power is only zero-sum in particular circumstances (which are themselves the result of power).

For Foucault "relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relations (economic processes, knowledge relationships,

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[1] Following from the disagreement with Lukes' necessity for power to involve conflict, and indeed from the preliminary understanding of power as being able to affect or sustain relations, it should be clear that the various types of influence and authority, whether rule-based or charismatic in character, are understood as sub-sets of the concept of power. For the purposes of this thesis there is no need to inquire into the exact nature of influence or authority as they are effectively subsumed into the area of dispositional power and the nodes of passage of decision-making processes in episodic agency

sexual relations) but are immanent in the latter; they are the immediate effects of the divisions, inequalities, and disequilibriums which occur in the latter, and conversely they are the internal conditions of these differentiations" (1979a, p.94). For Poulantzas, there is a need to stress that any such relation has a precise basis, whether it is material, psychological or ideological, and that, therefore power, and resistances to it, operate in and through both the instances of its basis and its effects (1978, pp.148-51).

Resistance is not restricted to fighting against the flow of power, but can adopt or adapt its course to further other ends, not necessarily contrary to the aim of power, but neither exactly congruent with it. Poulantzas criticises Foucault's early work for conceptualising resistance as somehow external to power, whereas Poulantzas argues that resistance is a pole in the power relation precisely because it too shares in the precise basis of that relation. The consequences of Foucault's early external version of resistance is that it always seeks to escape the structures of power, and that the adoption of strategy by those resisting power necessarily results in their subsumption by the power structure. Subsumption is of course a real possibility, but Poulantzas argues that it is not a necessary consequence of the adoption of strategy by those who resist. In fact, he argues that a refusal to adopt strategy by those resisting can result in them simply giving ground to the structures of power, and in contrast, that adopting a position of strategic resistance situated within the structures of power does not necessitate them relinquishing their autonomy (1978, pp.150-3).

The essential elements of the understanding of power that has been developed so far are: that it is the property of conative agents enmeshed in an interactional structure of relations that empower and constrain their interactions, that it is not restricted to cases of conflict but can also be constructive, that resistance to power is bound up in the relations that constitute it, and that power is not just a cause but also an effect. In particular, it can consist of three interrelated types of effect, the ability to effect discrete decisions, the ability to effect material resources, and the ability to effect the cultural dispositions and systems of belief and identity.

Having arrived at this understanding of power it is now necessary to delimit what different types of power there may be, of particular importance is the understanding of the political, and the nature of political power.


**The power of politics – the three aspects.**

There is a distinction to be made between different types of power, whether it is physical, material, or ideological, and so on. It should be clear from the focus upon strategy, however, that it is not the condition of its existence that defines whether an instance of power is of whichever type, but the way in which that power is utilised.

The relevant distinction for this thesis is between social power and political power. Political power is understood as a subset of social power, as all political power, by definition, must be social in character. What is considered as political, however, is also the result of power, and any attempt at delimiting the political cannot avoid being influenced by previous constellations of power, either in the

reasoning that is employed, or in the consideration of the mechanisms and institutions of the political that have accrued in the past. The particulars of these past political institutions are discussed in chapter 5, but firstly, it is necessary to state the abstract delimitation of the political that is being proposed.

Western politics has been concerned with three inter-relating themes: firstly, the rules or frameworks that empower and constrain social interaction; secondly, with the allocations of public resources; and thirdly with the legitimacy or appropriateness of the decision-making rules and systems that decide both the frameworks of social interaction and the allocations of resources. Crucial to all three of these themes is the question of the public and the private (that which may be legislated on, and that which may not). It relates in the first instance to the demarcation between public interaction and private activity (as well as how this public power should be instantiated), in the second to the difference between public and private resources, and in the third to the question of what is the legitimate demarcation between the public and the private, and thus what is the proper sphere of public power. Western politics has thus been built on the distinction between the public and the private and so the definition of politics that ensues is that it is concerned with power in the public realm.[2]

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[2] This view of politics as being concerned with decisions concerning the frameworks for public interaction and the allocation of public resources has strong resonances with Leftwich's (1984) argument that 'political' activity occurs throughout society and can take place in any form of social encounter where there is "conflict and co-operation ... [which] ... reflects and indeed influences the structure of society" (Stoker, 1995 p.5).

There are two objections to this idea that politics is, potentially at least, everywhere, the first objection argues that if politics is everywhere, then it explains nothing. This is an attempt to make the proposition look absurd that overlooks the fact that because a phenomenon is potentially ever-present does not mean that it is always present in the same form or quantity or that it plays the same role. The notion of political power retains its explanatory potential precisely because it is a phenomenon of many forms and functions.

The second objection is of more value. As Beetham observes, the extension of the definition of the 'political' into the realms of everyday life may foster a preoccupation with the minutia of these spaces at the expense of those wider forces that shape such activity (1996 p.46). This is an important caveat, but it is an argument that reminds us to be aware of the differing significance of particular interactions and arenas, it does not refute that there is a common political element in these different fora. The distinction between social and

An immediate concern with the use of the concepts of the public or the private is the difficulty in defining what is and what is not public or private. In line with the approach taken to categorising social phenomena in this thesis, it is argued that it is not the material condition of a particular event that defines it as public or private, but the context in which that event is considered that is of importance and the definition or allotting of meaning to instances as public or private. Furthermore, there is no single public or private realm, but many publics and privates. Evidently, an action does not have to affect every member of a population for it to be a political act, and, similarly, an issue may be a matter of public concern in one constituency, but of little concern to a broader public. In practice it is the relevance that the action can be shown to have in the context of a particular perspective to a particular community, and the relevance of the framework of that language-game (in Wittgenstein's 1968 sense), which determines what aspect, public or private, is given primacy[3].

A clearer way of explicating how an action can be viewed as having more than one relevant aspect is that any interaction has three structural aspects that are of interest to the social scientist. There is (a) an agent's personal motivation in an interaction, (b) the structural logic of the interaction, and (c) the consequences of the interaction.

Personal motivation can only be established by the agent, or ascribed through knowledge of the agent. The structural logic of the interaction is

political power, based on the question of the definition of the public and the private, is introduced precisely to allow for distinguishing between political and non-political power, and also between types of political power.

[3] There is a vast literature on the question of the public and the private (see Fleming 1995). There is not the space to engage in these arguments adequately, but for the purposes of this thesis there is no need for a definitive answer to the question of what is private or what is public, it is only necessary to recognise that this question is contested, and that the location of the boundary between the public and the private is intrinsic to the nature of the political.

interpreted, and hence, contestable. It should be clear, however, that there is no single or correctly definable logic of an interaction, its logics being illumined according to different interpretative schema. Interpretation clearly depends on the context against which the interaction is judged, and disputes between rival interpretations are again resolved through the comparison of language-games and their respective relevance. The consequences of an interaction, such as they are, are also contestable, firstly in terms of whether or not they were caused by the interaction, and secondly in terms of what causal role they played in further events. An interaction, thus, may have no political motivation, nor be structured politically, and yet have political effects – an example may be the cumulative or transformative effect of witnessing an event.

For an interaction to be judged political in terms of affecting the realm of the public, the following components need to be looked at:

1. The intention of the agent – whether the interaction was intended to affect the public realm.

2. The structural logic of the interaction – whether the act itself, in how it operated, affected the public realm. This may also include the consideration of counter-factuals to highlight or discern the structural logic in question.

3. The consequences of the interaction – whether the consequences or results of the interaction affected the public realm.


The three circuits of power, episodic agency, facilitative and dispositional, clearly take form in different ways in the realm of the political. Most political

analysis focuses on the episodic agency circuit of power, and does so in a behaviourist manner. Interactions in the episodic agency circuit certainly are more concrete and are amenable to a realist analysis. Interactions in the facilitative and dispositional circuits, in contrast, need to be interpreted to a greater extent, and thus are best served by constructivist analyses. The logic and justification for combining realist and constructivist analyses is detailed in chapter 4. At this stage, however, it is apt to outline the contours of how to analyse the three circuits of political power.

In the episodic agency circuit it is necessary to outline and detail the discrete decisions which affect the frameworks of interaction, the allocation of public resources and the systems of decision-making that are made. These decisions can be classed as allocative, entitling, rule or role decisions, and non-decisions.

1. Allocative decisions distribute resources directly to a party or parties, or to a particular purpose. An important element at stake is both the amount of allocated resources that are affected, and the type of resource that is affected (whether material, physical or mental labour). Of interest also, is the degree to which use of these resources is prescribed.

There are two ways of allocating these resources, firstly, they can be put behind a purpose, directly substantiating it, or they can be offered as reward or compensation for the achievement of a purpose. These two strategies are often combined.

2. Entitling decisions do not directly give a party a resource, but entitle them to it (dependent on the party's successful claim to entitlement). As well as capping the allocations to entitled individuals, entitled resources are often effectively capped by a set allocation to the category of entitlement, resulting in a limit on the resources that can be claimed, or indeed conflict between claimants for the resources.

3. Role and rule decisions. These decisions relate to the definition of societal roles and the attendant rules that qualify and enable these roles in their interactions. There are two levels at which these roles are constituted. The first is at the most general, and thus most fundamental level, that of membership differentiation and exclusion, and interaction prohibition.

What is at stake here is who are counted as members of a group, what criteria are used to distinguish members from non-members, internal membership ranks, and the rules of what interactions are prohibited among or between members. These processes are of especial importance at the level of national law, but in a diminished form are observable in most groups.

The second level of decisions relating to roles and rules are concerned not with exclusion or prohibition, but with the processes of reproduction of the group and its processes. Particular types of roles considered necessary or beneficial to the continuation of the group are given responsibilities and powers associated with their allotted tasks, and are governed by specific rules that specify the limits of their interactions. Once more, these processes are of special significance at the level of state institutions, or institutions recognised by the state, but are also

present in diminished form in other groups and organisations. The locus of action of the roles and their associated rules are important elements of these decisions.

4. Non-decisions, in contrast to the other positive decisions, are actions that omit or block issues or grievances from access to the decision-making process (Bachrach and Baratz, 1970).

Clegg identifies what he considers to be three types of non-decisions in Bachrach and Baratz's work (1989 p.77). The first is negative decisions, and involves A not attending to, listening or hearing B's demands, or frustrating the implementation of a recognised demand through bureaucracy or further administrative obfuscation. It is important to note that in reply to their critics Bachrach and Baratz are explicit in stating that non-decisions are not non-actions, but actions, empirically identifiable. The key in establishing a non-decision is where an option for action is presented to a decision-maker that contains a demand from B, but that option is ignored, omitted or over-ruled; alternatively, it can involve the neglect of the gathering or publicity of information that could reasonably be expected to highlight matters of concern. Without these contexts within which an option is available for recognising and dealing with B's demand it is impossible to empirically identify a negative decision.

The second type of non-decision Clegg identifies is the rule of anticipated reactions whereby B does not voice a concern because of the anticipated reaction of A. This is empirically ascertainable by comparing the discourse of Bs among themselves to the communications between Bs and As, that is, the non-emergence of an issue from an observable grievance.

The third form of non-decision is where B does not even realise his/her grievance. This type of non-decision is more properly ascribed to Lukes (1974) than to Bachrach and Baratz. There are two aspects to this scenario for Lukes. According to Lukes' concept of power it is not necessary for the putative subject of power to believe that his/her interests are being affected, for, if his/her real interests are being adversely affected, unbeknownst to him/her, then he/she is being subjected to power (1974). Later, Lukes defines these real interests as welfare interests, interests that promote the good for a person in any case, whatever their beliefs or wants may be. These are distinct from ultimate interests, which are liable to change along with the agents' focal wants (1986). Thus, according to Lukes' conceptualisation, even if an agent, B, is unaware of the negative effect of A's (or indeed her own) actions to their welfare interests, she is still subject to the use of power. An objection to this would be the case where B consciously sacrifices her welfare interests either for the sake of C or for their own ultimate interests. It can be acknowledged that these cases are likely to be self-evident in which case, however, the question of agents being unaware of them is redundant. It can be accepted then, that in terms of welfare interests, if B is made to act, or is subject to actions, contrary to his/her interests, by A, then he/she is subject to power. There is a problem, however, in extending this unawareness of conflict from welfare to ultimate interests, which becomes apparent when we consider the second aspect of Lukes' form of non-decision.

The second aspect of an agent B not realising his/her grievance is the spectre of B's agency being manipulated and sculpted by other parties. Although one may not wish to go so far as believing that a pervasive generalised thought-

control is possible in an open environment; there is certainly a point in arguing that the general population is subjected to various forms of influence from vested interests that attempt to shape its desires and grievances, and then proffer acceptable means to furthering its attempts to satisfy its desires or deal with its grievances.

Lukes' argument is summarised in the oft-quoted passage "Indeed, is it not the most supreme exercise of power to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have - that is, to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires?" (1976, p.23). The first thing to note about this passage, is that it is not in fact an argument, but a rhetorical question that gives the answer it purports to seek. This aspect is important insofar as there is no systematic delineation of how this supreme achievement of power is actualised, nor, because of this, is there any development of how wants or desires can be formed free from this supreme exercise of power. Lukes mentions Gramsci's work, yet does not invoke the concept of hegemony to explain how an apparent case of consensus may not be genuine but imposed. This reluctance, it can be assumed, is to avoid adopting Gramsci's ideological position, however, even the limited direction Lukes takes from Gramsci – to watch for non-consensual action in an apparent consensus, in either normal or abnormal times, does not explain how this imposed consensus is achieved. Indeed, the very assumption of imposed consensus presupposes an ideological power elite, whereas this is the claim that he would need to substantiate to justify his position.

Lukes' faces of power cannot account for instances of power where there is no conflict of interests (either welfare or ultimate), yet the manipulation of

consensus that he suggests does not necessarily have to involve any such conflict, and can be the means by which such conflict is avoided. Essentially, what Lukes suggests through the third face of power is the importance of the facilitative and dispositional circuits of power, but his focus on interests, an aspect of the episodic agency circuit of power, and which assumes stable identity formations, is unable to describe such phenomena as group identity struggle, issue valorisation or technologies of subjectification.

Another aspect eroding the spectre of the totalising power of an ideological elite is the capillary nature of "a synaptic regime of power, a regime of its exercise *within* the social body, rather than *from above it*" (Foucault cited in Clegg, 1989 p.155 ital. in orig.). The capillary nature of this power also highlights that it can be subject to change by the individual and also that the direction in which it works can be transformed, as in Hegel's Master-Slave dialectic. These considerations show that the question of identity-formation and struggle is best conceptualised under the rubric of dispositional power, as the episodic agency circuit cannot easily accommodate the variety of manners in which it operates.

As noted, the problem of identifying processes in the facilitative and dispositional circuits of power as political, is because it is often not until the effects of these processes are utilised in a strategic manner, that their importance as a resource relevant to political action becomes apparent. That is not to deny, of course, that processes in both the facilitative and dispositional circuits are very often consciously encouraged, initiated or moulded to create resources for political action. Notwithstanding this difficulty, however, it is still worthwhile delineating

the processes involved in these circuits to serve as indicators of social and political power.

The facilitative circuit is concerned with the disciplines and techniques of human, material and intellectual resource development. What is at stake is not only the resources themselves, but also the means of producing or re-producing them, not simply the creation of resources, but also their identification.

Human resources are those concerned with health and inter-personal relations. The resources concerned with health involve not only the health of the population, but also the resources for the population's health and the practices followed. This is clearly related to how people relate to their own bodies, and those of others, which is a part of the process of subjectification and, potentially, of normalisation. The sum of human resources goes beyond the sum of individual resources, and involves the social networks and corresponding inter-personal skills developed between people.

Material resources exist and are developed through the identification and utilisation of various physical processes, be they mechanical, chemical, biological or genetic. Both the goods provided through the manipulation of these processes and the technologies for manipulating them are affected by the logic of how these technologies instrumentalise the material processes and conditions in question.

Intellectual resources are concerned with the schematisation or development of knowledges regarding both the episodic agency and dispositional circuits, the human and material resources, but also informal skills, the techniques and rationalities of organisation, the transmission and dissemination of education

and information, and the production of affective materials (advertising, marketing and public relations).

As well as these types of resources that may be located throughout society, it is important to take account of organisations or groups that develop their own stock of resources, and in particular the mechanisms of the state and the resources and disciplines that they produce and avail of.

Voluntary and community groups and private companies' status, as public or private is open to contention[4], what is clear, however, is that the rules and frameworks that allow, facilitate and constrain their existence and functionings are political. In a similar manner the functions of the state are not always seen as political, even though the techniques and disciplines practised by the organs of the state to a large extent influence people's experience of power, and are a major source of the state's resources (see Foucault 1979b), but the rules that govern how the state works are recognised as political.

The dispositional circuit is concerned with identity and culture. Culture is both the building-block for the construction of identity, and the result of social actions and interactions, both in terms of practices and artefacts.

Melucci argues that there are three elements to understanding identity, (1) that it is not just a reaction to social and environmental constraints but produces symbolic interactions, (2) that it involves a notion of causality and belonging and (3) that it involves a perception of duration (1995).

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[4] Most Marxists would argue that economic production is inherently political. Pateman (1970) also argues that for most people their immediate experiences of power relations are at work.

Identity is involved in action in three ways: 1) it is involved in the cognitive definition of three orders of action orientation; (a) relating to the ends of actions (the sense the action has for the actor); (b) relating to the means of actions (the possibilities and the limits of action); and (c) relating to relationships with the environment (the field in which the action takes place); 2) in the development and recreation of networks of active relationships between actors, and 3) the degree, more or less, of emotional investment in the action (Melucci 1995 pp.44-5).

Culture can be understood as the outward manifestations or products of different identities, singular or plural. Viewing identity as the construction of values and orientations, and culture as both a source and product of identity, then, clearly culture is important in understanding political action, as political action is concerned with the allocation of resources according to values, the values inherent in the framework of interaction, and the values in the processes of decision-making.

Three aspects of culture are of particular interest, firstly, the languages or codes of culture that organise information and shape social practices, secondly, the contexts in which culture operates, whether cultural practices are adapted to certain contexts, or if contexts are deployed to shape the unfolding of culture, and also the cultural practices unique to certain contexts. Lastly, the carriers and incorporations of culture, both formal and informal, and the segments of wider organisations that are assigned a cultural brief, are of interest. Cultural institutions are distinguished by their organisation on the re-production of particular cultural behaviour, or indeed of reproducing cultural institutions and thus include not

simply the institutions of the state or market, but also living groups such as families, and even street-gangs or hobby groups (Swidler 1995).

As was previously discussed, the processes of recognition described by Honneth and Taylor are important in understanding the competitive interplay of values and identities in the dispositional circuit. The public is itself a terrain of contested power. Media organisations may attempt to shape public opinion, but are themselves subject to it. The public thus contains elements within it that are in conflict over values, and also has a constitutive role in cases where the state's position is challenged by a second party, as Strydom describes

> Over and above the I and the Thou, the third point of view represents society. It embodies the societal power of definition. C has a constitutive role in that he, she or it has the power to define the situation. Whatever A and B say and do, therefore, must in principle make sense to C. From the start and throughout, A and B are subject in their interrelations to meaning as defined by society and represented by the observer. As regards contingency, A and B make their choices and take each other into account, while at the same time being relativized by a societal definition or collectively accepted representation for which the observer stands which itself becomes established only in the course of the process" (Strydom, 1999 p.11).

Having dealt at length with the nature of power, and the nature of political power, the concepts of which underlie the analysis of the case studies in chapter 5, it is necessary in the final section of this chapter to move onto the substantive concern with participation in political power.

## Participation in the Political

So far I have outlined my understanding of power as the ability to affect or sustain relations, and my understanding of political power, a subset of social power, which is concerned with the delimitation of human interaction, the allocation of public resources, and the means of deciding and implementing both of these. This crucial distinction between public and private, relevant to both interaction and resources, and which is the difference between political and social power, is in itself part of the contested terrain of power relations. Within any defined act there are three aspects of any interaction that may deserve scrutiny and may be related to the political: the motivations of the agent, the structural logic of the interaction and the effects of the interaction.

Whatever the delimitation of the political through the public/private distinction, though, we have established three aspects to power, which can then be used in understanding political power. The episodic agency circuit of political power is concerned with delimiting these roles and rules of public interaction; allocative decisions concerning public resources; and decisions relating to the systems of decision-making concerning these rules and allocations. Facilitative political power is concerned with, firstly, the techniques of discipline and production which produce and facilitate the creation of resources, secondly, the roles and relationships inscribed, prescribed or proscribed by the rules of interaction (which are however decided in the episodic agency circuit), and thirdly, with the processes and procedures which enable the systems of rule implementation and resource allocation to function. Dispositional political power is concerned with, firstly, identity and culture in the widest sense, and also with the

formation of political communities or groups, as well as the political issues relating to the rules of interaction or public resources, and secondly with beliefs and opinions concerning the systems of allocation through the constitutive role of the public in the recognition and definition of groups and issues.

In considering participation then, it is necessary to conceptualise how to schematise the actors who take part in political action, the different ways in which this taking part may consist, and we need to relate the who and the how of political participation to the different arenas in which it may take place.

At the most basic level it is, by logical necessity, individuals who take part in participation, but in many cases, and in different ways, groups are the vehicle for participation. Membership of a group, how different groups are constituted, the formality of the group, how it communicates to others and what levels of recognition it receives, all contextualise and influence the types of participation that its members have in it, and how it, as a group, participates in other mechanisms.

How to conceptualise individual participation in groups, the participation of groups in other mechanisms, and how these groups may relate to each other is schematised in Figure 2.1.
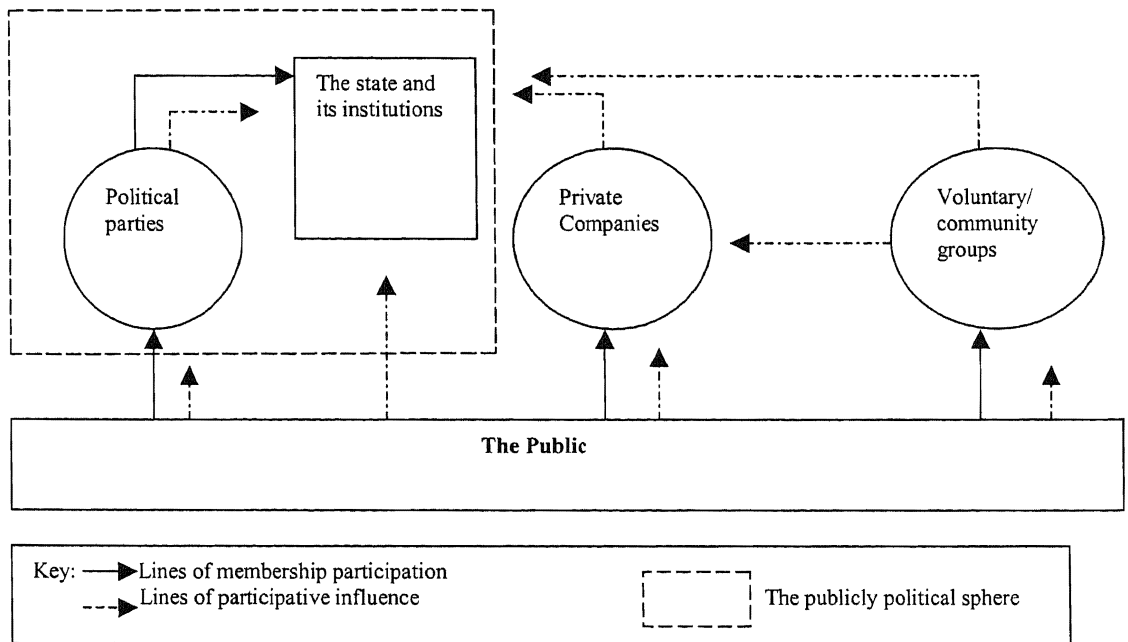
**Figure 2.1: The publicly political sphere, the public's membership of groups, and the political influence of the public and groups[5]**

State mechanisms are given a different status to the other groups as they are commonly understood in contemporary Western society as the means of allocating public resources, and as the mechanism for deciding the rules of interaction and the processes and procedures for resource creation and allocation. That is, they are seen as public institutions and not as private. Political parties are also commonly understood as political and have a special relationship to the state as a constitutive part of it, so they are located within the accepted public sphere. The other groupings, private companies and voluntary/community groups are either contested in terms of being classed as private or public, or they have aspects of both of what is understood as private and public. It must be stressed again that although these organisational forms may be regarded as being public or private,

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[5] For the sake of clarity other groups or organisations such as professional associations or trade unions have been left out of this diagram, although they too would inhabit the contested sphere of the public/private, that is, civil society.

these classifications are being attributed to them here with the perspective that these classifications are themselves the products and the processes of power. In outlining these groups and how they relate to each other, however, it is both useful and practical to do so with an acknowledgement of how they are currently understood.

The first of these current distinctions is that between political action (action performed by the indicated entities that are formed by membership participation) that takes place in the accepted sphere of public organisations, and political action that takes place outside of this sphere, there is also then political action that takes place outside of this sphere, but which is orientated to affecting the operations of the recognised public organisations of politics (the lines of participative influence).

Within these three directions of political action from these two spheres, the formally acknowledged public, and the informal or private, there are clearly different types of participation that are, however, generally of the same character.

Arnstein (1969) has produced a ladder of citizen participation ranging from degrees of non-participation and tokenism to degrees of citizen power. Burns, Hambleton and Hoggett (1994) have constructed a revised ladder moving from degrees of non-participation, to participation and on to citizen control. There are a number of problems with these evaluative frames. Firstly, there are a number of value-laden categories such as 'cynical consultation' and 'placation' that, while possibly being accurate descriptions of some schemes, do not proffer the evaluative criteria to distinguish between 'genuine' and 'cynical' consultation (McLaverty, 1999). Secondly, they only consider participation in terms of the

formal political institutions, and thirdly, leave unspecified the concrete details of participation, and do not distinguish between possible types of participation.

Clark's (1998) study of political participation involves an explicit development of a typology of participation developed from a study of a political party, a lobbying group, a tenants and resident's association, and an alternative culture collective; and a critical assessment of forms of participation from the standpoint of discourse ethics. Clark has characterised a number of types of participation, the first of which is minimalist participation, which involves individuals being formal members of organisations or groups of political action, possibly involving membership contributions, but who do not take an active part in the group's activities.

Clark's second type of political participation is administrative participation and concerns members of groups who hold and fulfil the administrative tasks and actions associated with the group's existence and aims, and who may also innovate in managerial or administrative techniques or processes in serving the group or the group's agreed aims or functions. Importantly, Clark noted that those who took a substantive role in the administering or managing of many groups tended to have an aversion towards members that raised or prioritised what they termed as 'political' issues, that is, they focussed on pursuing organisational aims or uncontroversial (in the group's view) functions. This is an important recognition of a type of participation, however, while Clark's category is accepted, it needs to be understood not narrowly as administrative participation, but as functional participation, as the internal labour required to sustain or develop a group is not always administrative in character.

Clark's third form of participation is social participation, this is not concerned with furthering the groups activities per se, but with both the socialising of members who are in the group, and, in certain circumstances, their socialisation with people who are not members. Social participation is a major factor in members identifying with each other. Clark also discusses both informal coercion between participants to coax members into roles and positions that are seen as beneficial to the group, and the learning of the rules and means of participation through socialisation processes, as important aspects of participation, but it is not clear that these are separate types of participation, and are better understood as aspects of social participation.

Clark's fourth form of participation is careerism, which is the conscious utilisation of membership roles or positions to further the individual's, or their priorities', standing in the group. Again, although there is an acceptance of Clark's category, for the purposes of an understanding of participation which describes more than simply the personal motivations of those involved, any career-oriented person furthers particular end goals through the structural logic of their action which produces effects which exist outside of any negative or positive effects on their own career. So it is more appropriate to understand this category as goal-directed participation. There is a need, clearly, to differentiate between role-filling at the lower levels of organisations which are necessary for the organisation's continuance, and the competitive filling of places higher up in organisations which contribute to decisions about the organisation's future direction. Locating actions at the micro-, meso- and macro- levels, and whether their purpose is to change a

group or its environment as opposed to sustain it, is of use in distinguishing the goal-directed role-filling type of participation from functional participation.

Strikingly, Clark does not include deliberation or discourse in his typology of participation. Whether this is because he perhaps sees it instead as an aspect of participation is not clear. Some academic approaches would dispute the possibility of describing discourse as a form of action, but it is clear, even from the common phenomena of conventional political life such as speeches, meetings, questions, rebuttals or statements, that talk, or any other form of communication, in many forms and fora, can undoubtedly be political (see Barker 2000 for a logical extension of this point that argues that thinking can be political). As Parry et al note "it is those who are most interested in politics, and above all, those who most frequently talk about it, who also learn most" (1992 pp. 294-5). Following the theory of the political that has been argued for in this thesis, all forms of discourse are potentially political, and the degree and type of their status as political is dependent on the contexts in which they take place, their publicness, and the understandings concerning those contexts.

A form of discourse that is uncontroversially understood as political participation is that of decision-making, and most research into decision-making agrees that the associated process of agenda-setting is a type of political action. These concrete instances of participation through communication should not be understood as diametrically or necessarily opposed to deliberation, rather, in terms of critical theory, discourse can be graded as more deliberative the closer it gets to Habermas' model of the ideal speech situation (1984; 1987), and as more distorted discourse the further it fails to meet the features of the ideal speech situation. All

the instances of discourse along this spectrum, however, are, potentially, types of political participation. The social location of discourse is of paramount importance in influencing its effects. Bar-room can talk can be political in character because of its content, but the same semantic content can have very different effects in an agitated crowd. Discourse as a type of political participation, therefore, as opposed to political discourse, is determined by where and how it takes place.

These five types of participation, minimalist, functional, social, goal-directed and discourse, all understood as varying degrees of interaction, can be analysed in terms of both the realms and the perspectives of the three circuits of power.

Minimalist participation is both a facilitative and a dispositional phenomenon. Membership of even the most minimal type, of an organisation or group, adds to its numerical size, which in turn is a potential resource, in that the group can point to its size as an argument for its legitimacy or justification. Membership can also be facilitative if it involves contributing resources, most often financial, to the group, as it then enables the group to act. It is also clearly dispositional as it shows the disposition or the sympathy of the members to the group or cause, even if this level of identification only goes so far as a direct debit or a signature and does not lead to or imply further action.

Functional participation is clearly facilitative as it involves the utilisation of discipline and techniques to continue the existence of the organisation, further its set aims or to expand the organisation's activities. Clark also notes that those who are heavily involved in administrative participation identify very strongly with their activities (pp. 158-61) and through them to the organisation or group,

and as such can be seen as having important dispositional effects, in that this identification means the group is, to an extent, a part of these members.

Social participation is the glue that holds some members of a group in place, and lubricates the interactions of other members. It can have an important effect from the perspective of all three circuits of power. In terms of disposition, the social experience of a group will attract some members, and drive others away. Different levels of the group can interact socially, and this can lead to a flow of information in either direction. Clark notes in fact, that often discourse in a social setting is more deliberative than in formal channels (p. 170). Social participation is an important resource from the facilitative perspective, including the informal coercion and socialising of the skills and processes of participation already mentioned. The ability to network develops the bonds between members, and social participation may also be a resource to develop the group's networks in wider society. This can be of particular importance from the view of the episodic agency circuit, when access to options or resources for strategy are achieved by those in the decision-making levels, and can materially affect the decisions that are made.

Goal directed participation is of interest primarily from the episodic agency circuit and the facilitative circuit, depending on the level of the position held by the member and its strategic possibilities. At the lower levels, the filling of roles is essentially for the continued functioning of the organisation or group, and as such blends into functional participation, but at the higher levels of organisation the opportunity for strategic decision-making or innovation in organisation or policy,

as well as the decisions regarding roles and rules, are very much aspects of the episodic agency circuit of power.

A simple, but still useful tool for distinguishing strategies brought to bear to develop the understanding through the perspective of the episodic agency circuit on both the goal-directed and discourse types of participation in the decision-making arenas is Hirschmans' typology of exit, voice and loyalty (1970), and Clegg's addition of assault (1989), outlined in Table 2.1.

| Strategy | Action | Mode of participation |
|---|---|---|
| Voice | deliberative/constructive assent | positive participation |
| Loyalty | consent | participation via presence |
| Exit | non-consent | non-participation |
| Assault | destructive dissent | contrary action |

**Table 2.1: Hirschman's and Clegg's typology of participation.**

Voice can be used to express support or engage in deliberation. Judging participation via voice and loyalty, the variables to watch for include whether participants are able to voice their preferred options, at what level, what options are then narrowed into a number of choices, and then which option, or number of options are chosen. Clearly, the corollary of the expression of voice, choosing of options, and choice between options, is the suppression of voice, the limitation of choices and the curtailing of the possibility of particular choices, the non-decisions, which are important to chronicle.

Loyalty is simple assent to the options chosen and set through voice, while exit can be a discrete option to disagree with a particular option, or more fundamentally to leave the decision-making forum. Assault is the pursuance of action contrary to that decided upon in the decision-making forum.

The final type of participation, discourse, is, like social participation, important from all three perspectives. People attach themselves to, or agree with certain themes in discourse, and conversely take a negative view of others. People without affiliation may be permissive in the discourses they use, reject common discourses, or find that discourses they identify with are not reflected in wider groups or organisations. In contrast those who are affiliated, become affiliated through discourse. When groups use discourse that attracts members, or are able to create a discourse and get it accepted by wider society, discourse is a facilitative resource. The logical structure of the discourse that an organisation or group uses or avails of both empowers and restricts them, so that there is likely to be a number of discourses that an organisation or group will use, not all of which may be consistent. The discourses that organisations or groups employ, can also be used against them. As Scott (1990) describes, the logic of an ideology can be extended or subverted for purposes to which it was not originally intended. As Jordan (1993) comments, however, Scott overstates the strategic element in resistance practices, while the importance of interactional roles supports the appearances of power. It has already been argued that discourse at the social level of disposition may be deliberative in character, or at least that there may be relatively few material restraints upon it, whereas discourse at the decision-making level, from the view of the episodic agency circuit, is often constrained.

**Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter has been to specify an abstract understanding of who takes part in political interaction, the structures within which this participation takes place, and the types of participation that take place within these structures.

As such the chapter has argued that in the first instance participation is partaken by individuals, but in many cases this participation is facilitated by groups or organisations. These organisations are the structures that mediate participation whether it be via state structures, non-state structures or via non-state structures to influence state activities.

The types of participation that have been argued for are minimalist, functional, social, goal directed and discourse participation, and the realms in which they operate and the different perspectives from which they can be analysed from have been discussed in terms of the episodic agency, facilitative and dispositional circuits of political power, operative at different social levels.

This understanding of participation was built upon an understanding of political action, the episodic agency circuit of power consisting of action in decision-making arenas. Facilitative power concerns the disciplines and techniques of resource production and utilisation, and dispositional power concerns the identities and cultures immanent in society and how issues and communities gain recognition.

These circuits of power were applied to the understanding of the political as being concerned with the framework for social interactions, the allocations of resources and the systems for making decisions regarding both these frameworks and allocations. The importance of the contested distinction between the public

and the private was highlighted as the logic of the difference between social and political power.

The nature of power through its immanence in social relations was developed, and its broad potential for existence beyond conflict to consensual or instancing acts by individuals interacting in the structures of society. Power, its essence being the ability to affect relations, was thus understood in how it relates to participation. From this it is seen that social or political power does not exist without participation, that participation is an attempt to effect power and that participation, in its many guises, levels and arenas is what constitutes political interaction.

This development of the relationship between participation and power is heavily influenced by Foucault's work on power as relational, but has avoided, so far, a discussion of the mechanisms of governmentality, such as action at a distance or problematisation, that were acknowledged in chapter 1. Introducing these elements may have skewed the understanding of the development of the framework developed above, which is intended primarily as an analytical tool, whereas the framework of governementality is primarily interpretative. These two elements will be brought together in the later chapters.

Having developed this theoretical understanding of political participation, in chapter 5 we use the analytical frames and perspectives outlined to investigate initiatives that are designed to promote participation. Before moving onto this theoretically informed empirical analysis, however, it is necessary to move onto the second major concept in this thesis, social exclusion.

# Chapter 3: Exclusion and the Social

## Introduction

Having in the previous chapter discussed participation and its relation to power, in this chapter I move on to the second major concept in this thesis, social exclusion. The concept of exclusion needs to be tied with a broader paradigm of inequality. Social exclusion became the dominant term in discussing social problems in the UK in the Labour government's first term (see SEU 1998; 2001a; 2001b), but a large part of its dominance came from the situation of its having a variety of different analytical and moral connotations. The contested nature of social exclusion as a concept is frequently acknowledged but is seldom tackled.

The purpose of this chapter is to argue for a specific conceptual tie between social inclusion and social exclusion. The first step of this approach involves outlining the spread of the concept of exclusion and its uses, and discussing the analytical and moral discourses surrounding the concept. The fundamental problem is that the analytically coherent paradigms of social exclusion are predicated on moral paradigms of inclusion. The concept of exclusion proposed here, in contrast, is developed on an analytical paradigm of inclusion based on the philosophical anthropological principle of identifying and ascertaining the social

contexts, interactions and processes of those categorised as socially included and excluded.

These concepts are developed by looking at the immanent conceptualisations of inclusion implied by the various concepts of exclusion, and tying their positive analytical elements to an interpretative schema that delineates the evaluative criteria used to structure human life. Utilising these aspects a philosophical anthropological model of inclusion and exclusion which is related to Doyal and Gough's theory of human needs and Sen's theory of capabilities is developed. The mediating nature of the concepts of inclusion and exclusion, in relation to both poverty and inequality, and personal and critical autonomy, is then outlined

**Spread of the concept**

Exclusion first became a topic for debate in France in the 1960s, but did not become a widespread discourse until the French economic, social and political crises in the 1970s and 1980s (Silver 1994). It became widespread throughout the EU during the Delors' presidencies through the social policy interests of DG XV and later through DG XVI (Atkinson 2000; Atkinson and Davoudi 2000), and was a core focus of both the Quartier en Crise initiative (Dawson et al 1993) and the EU Community initiative URBAN. In the UK the concept was first neglected politically and academically in the 1970s as it represented a continental concern with social integration whereas the Anglo-Saxon concept of poverty was preferred. The term has since been adopted and appropriated by New Right theorists of the underclass (see Murray 1990), communitarians (see Mead 1986), but also theorists

who wanted to get away from a narrow focus on material poverty to a conceptualisation of broader social effects (see Townsend 1997), as well as a growing recognition and acceptance of the relational factors involved in the concept. The term first appeared in a party political statement in the UK in the mid-1990s by the Labour party, who have since incorporated it into their core political vocabulary, in particular through the setting up of a cross-departmental 'Social Exclusion Unit' (SEU) which is responsible for co-ordinating and ensuring the implementation of a national strategy to tackle the problem of exclusion (see SEU 1998, 2001b). There has since been a shift away from the use of the term towards such concepts as social capital and community cohesion (Kearns 2003), but social exclusion still remains a core political and policy term of the Labour government.

**Paradigms and discourses**

There are at least six broad traditions of discussing social exclusion, which can be compared in terms of, firstly, their theoretical paradigms and, secondly, the moral discourses associated with them.

The multi-dimensional concept of exclusion (Geddes and Benington 2001) broadens out from the notion of material poverty to include various conditions such as health and educational deprivations, geographical disadvantage and particular disadvantages such as ethnic discrimination and problems that disabled people have encountered. These concerns could still be labelled as material bases of exclusion, but sometimes the multi-dimensional concept is used to include different aspects of exclusion such as from financial services or from political

participation (see Room, 1995; Whelan and Whelan, 1995; Percy-Smith, 2000). This theoretical paradigm neatly echoes the Government's definition of social exclusion as "a shorthand term for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health and family breakdown" (SEU, 2001b).

The multi-dimensional approach to exclusion is naively heuristic in that it identifies social problems and then labels them as aspects of exclusion. It is not guided by any particular social science paradigm or theorisation of what either exclusion or inclusion is, or what, if anything, the various aspects of exclusion have in common. Its lack of theoretical rigour, however, means that the absence of a strong ideological orientation allows a diagnostic approach to identifying exclusion, even if its symptoms and conditions are not systematically understood.

A development upon the multi-dimensional concept of social exclusion is operationalised by the Centre for the Analysis of Social Exclusion (CASE) based on its definition of exclusion as being where an individual (a) is geographically resident within a society, (b) cannot participate in the normal activities of citizens in that society, and (c) would like to so participate, but is prevented from doing so by factors beyond his or her control (Richardson and Le Grand 2002, p.3). CASE's operationalisation of this definition is based on identifying four dimensions of normal activity: consumption, production, political and social; and defining thresholds in each dimension, under which, if an individual or family falls, they are then regarded as socially excluded (see Burchardt et al. 1999).

CASE's definition is conceptually rigorous, but a number of particular points related to it will be discussed later. As an academic discourse it does not focus a great deal on a moral attitude to exclusion, but in essentials it shares the multi-dimensional identification of social exclusion as a negative social phenomenon that needs to be tackled.

Silver (1994) identifies four traditions of understanding exclusion - three social science paradigms and a naturalistic organic approach. Levitas (1998), in comparison, concentrates on the moral discourses surrounding the three social science paradigms, so these two perspectives will be discussed together.

The organic tradition is based on a naturalistic conception of the organic integration of subsidiary units or communities (such as families or regions) that make up wider society. Exclusion then occurs as a result of not fitting into the natural order of things. The moral understanding underpinning such an approach is identity-laden and dualistic, where identity is first formulated in opposition to those considered as outsiders or as profane (see Cohen, 1989). In such cases an identity of inclusion is dependent on there being an excluded other. Silver recognises that there are different streams of thought that can be labelled as organic, but they conform in seeking "to construct a social order based on groups, be they functional, regional, or primordial (on ethnic, religious or linguistic bases)" (1994 p.546) and they all "reflect to some degree the principles of 'community' and 'subsidiarity'" (p.547). "Thus, this paradigm recognises the exclusion of those not organically integrated into the various smaller, autonomous units of society that make up the greater whole – families, communities, classes, nation-States, and so on – but is less cognizant of gender and economic inequality

as causes of exclusion" (p.547). The moral discourses associated with this approach emphasise the natural 'rightness' of the established community, (examples being nationalism, or closed traditional communities) and oppose deviance from these norms.

The first of Silver's social scientific paradigms is that of specialisation, which sees exclusion as associated with barriers to individual freedom. According to its neo-liberal analysis, "the liberal State is under no obligation to bring the excluded in" (1994, p.556).

> Because individuals have diverse personal values and psychological motives for engaging in social relations, specialisation arises not only in the market but also among social groups ... Much as market competition erodes discriminatory practices, individual freedom to choose group affiliations and competition between groups for members create cross-cutting loyalties that break down tendencies towards social closure. Conversely, exclusion results from 'discrimination', that is, from the inappropriate exercise of personal tastes or the enforcement of group boundaries that individuals are not free to cross (p.556).

The specialisation paradigm "views joblessness as a rational, self-interested reaction to the work disincentives in welfare policies" (pp.554-5). Therefore, the only exclusion that is of concern to the liberal state is that caused by illegal discrimination.

The moral discourse aligned with the specialisation paradigm is that of the underclass and dependency theories. These neo-conservative ideas are not a necessary logical corollary of neo-liberal economic ideas, but in practice they are symbiotic. The moral underclass discourse stresses the moral and cultural

character of the poor themselves (Levitas 1998). Levitas notes that whereas those

reliant upon benefit were always separated into the deserving and the undeserving

poor, economic dependence on 'welfare' became construed as 'dependency', a

pathological moral and psychological condition created by the benefit system itself

that sapped personal initiative, independence, and self-respect. "The focus had

shifted from the structural basis of poverty to the moral and cultural character of

the poor themselves" (1998, p.15).

Although the term 'underclass' is used in the media with both structural

and cultural meanings, it is usually used in New Right literature as a cultural

distinction. As such, it ignores inequalities amongst the rest of society, does not

acknowledge unpaid work, and thus, is a gendered discourse about idle, criminal

young men and socially and sexually irresponsible single mothers (Levitas 1998,

p.21).

The monopoly paradigm focuses its analysis on the structure of the

economy. "Powerful 'status groups' with distinctive cultural identities and

institutions use social closure to restrict the access of outsiders to valued resources.

The overlap of group distinctions and inequality is at the heart of the

problematique of this paradigm" (Silver 1994, p.562). The groups that are able to

assert their monopoly receive 'rents' that perpetuate their unequal economic

position. There are also two levels of inequality, between those in highly paid

secure jobs and those in low-paid insecure jobs, and also between the employed

and the jobless. An extension of this paradigm has focused on the move from

Fordism to post-Fordism and the resultant de-skilling and proletarianisation of

previously secure workers, which Byrne (1999) sees as the creation of a new reserve army of labour in insecure, part-time and low paid jobs.

The socialist solution to exclusion, the moral corollary of the monopoly paradigm, promotes citizenship and the discourse of social rights. Exclusion "is combated through citizenship, and the extension of equal membership and full participation in the community to outsiders" (Silver 1994, p.543). Importantly,

> while participatory democracy is an essential part of the social democratic vision of citizenship, it is not directed towards a form of solidarity based on national consensus ... direct participation in local associations and social movements [is advocated] as a means of connecting the excluded to the larger society through organised opposition and challenges to powerful interests (p.567).

"Locally based 'insertion' and integration policies should create 'a political space of belonging'. Integration is a project seeking to reconstruct an active citizenship" (Silver 1994 p.569).

The redistributionist moral discourse sees material inequality as the most important infringement of social rights; but social (including gender), political and cultural inequality are also recognised. The processes that produce these various inequalities are highlighted with the aim of challenging or changing them, as redistribution of power and resources is futile if the processes that create unequal conditions continue to operate (Levitas 1998). The topic of rights will be returned to below, but it is important to note that, in Britain at least, rights as a tool for social change have been challenged by the responsibilities discourse of the Conservative and Labour parties.

The third social scientific paradigm of exclusion, and its original source, is that of solidarity from the french republican tradition. This tradition values a cohesive society based on the fundamental equality of citizens in an external, moral and normative social order, so that exclusion is understood as a rupture of this social bond and a failure of the republican state (Silver 1994).

Silver notes that the concern with social exclusion, and the concomitant question of how to promote social integration or insertion were first conceptualised by the tradition of french republicanism, which, since before Durkheim, has been centrally concerned with the idea of social solidarity. Silver quotes Rosanvallon to stress the aims of the French Republic,

> this 'Jacobin' State – strong, unitary, centralised, egalitarian, universalist, and secular – actively sought to assimilate regional, national and religious culture into a single, distinctive conception of citizenship and national civilisation. The State incorporated mediating institutions in order to reconcile and synthesise separate interests and memberships (cited in Silver 1994, p.538).

The 'General Will of the Nation', which is identified with a public life of fraternity and is to be defended by the state over the interests of communes or ethnic groups, gains its moral precedence due to the republicans' conception of the social order as "external, moral and normative, rather than grounded in individual, group or class interests" (p.541).

Exclusion, then, as understood by the French Planning Commission "is conceived not simply as an economic or political phenomena, but as a deficiency of 'solidarity', a break in the social fabric" (p.537). The social and symbolic bonds

that normally tie the individual to society are broken down, threatening the loss of collective values and the destruction of the social fabric (p.534). Like organic approaches, however, the solidarity paradigm "lays heavy emphasis on the ways in which cultural or moral boundaries between groups socially construct dualistic categories for ordering the world." (p.542) The republican commitment to equality has practical consequences for the state in that "the Republic must promise citizens subsistence or assure them a right to work. In return, assisted citizens have a duty to work and to participate in public life" (Silver 1994, p.537).

In contrast to the monopoly and specialisation paradigms, the moral discourse associated with french republicanism, social integration, is internal to its analysis of exclusion, whereas the neo-conservative and citizenship discourses are external to their analytical counterparts. Levitas (1998) argues that the social integration discourse focuses narrowly upon integration as participation in paid work. Levitas sees the social integrationist discourse as being predominant in Europe, but as being intermingled with the moral underclass discourse in England. She sees its further characteristics as including the obscuring of the inequalities between paid workers, and of that between those who own the bulk of productive property and the working population. It is also unable to address adequately the question of unpaid work (such as parenting, housework and other care) in society and its gendered distribution. Nor does it recognise the legitimacy of non-participation in paid work and does not address the poverty of those who are not employed (1998, pp.26-7).

As Spicker (cited in Atkinson and Davoudi, 2000) points out, however, there are two variants of the social integrationist discourse, the one Levitas

identifies as a 'new Durkheimian hegemony' which justifies differences between groups, and a more republican version which identifies solidarity as transcending individual, class, ethnic and regional interests which she fails to take account of.

Postmodernist accounts of exclusion are a further school of thought, which, as one would expect, eschew an overarching moral position. Whereas the previous traditions have a common tendency to be reduced to a concern with paid work as the primary means of inclusion (Yepez Del Castillo 1994), a post-modern perspective would argue that not only is work reduced in terms of time, but also as a means of providing identity, with the erosion of the work ethic. The current defining aspect of exclusion is as much exclusion from commodity consumption as from production (see Bauman 1998). The result is "a growth of segmented identities and social divisions on ethnic, sexual or local lines" (Geddes and Benington 2001 p.23).

What emerges from this survey of approaches to social exclusion is the need to look separately at the analytical paradigm that identifies exclusion from the moral norms and ethical values operative in a society, while recognising their interpenetration.

Looking firstly at the analytical paradigms, to build a comprehensive picture of exclusion, it is useful to compare and contrast the different analytical frames. The multi-dimensional model of exclusion suffers from an under-theorisation of what the causes of exclusion are, this is a result of the fact that there is no comprehensive analysis of the many different types of exclusion this model

identifies, and thus there is little possibility of developing an integrated or systematic analysis of exclusion from it.

The CASE model does have a clear and workable concept of exclusion. Respondents in CASE's own research, however, have questioned their criterion of political engagement for social inclusion, "Food is a necessity but if people chose not to vote then its their choice" (respondent in Richardson and Le Grand, 2002 p.18). CASE argue that the respondents' own belief in the importance of political engagement for society at large and their acknowledgement that non-participation in politics is not always voluntary, justifies the dimension of political engagement in their definition, but there is clearly a difference between believing that political engagement is good for society, and believing that political engagement is a necessary requisite for social inclusion.

A more far-reaching problem with CASE's model, and one it shares with the multi-dimensional concept in general, is that it is essentially an operational concept, that is, particular indicators are chosen for each dimension of engagement (for example, having someone to rely upon for social engagement) but any such chosen indicator will, by its nature, miss other types of exclusion that categorically belong to that dimension of engagement. Even though this may be considered as an objection against the operationality of their concept as opposed to the concept itself, I would argue that the problem of operationality is exacerbated because they start with a concept of exclusion instead of a theory of inclusion.

A third problem with both the multi-dimensional concept and the CASE formulation, is that they focus on levels of individual activity, to the detriment of accounting for the means by which social activity is actuated. Any examination of

exclusion needs to relate levels or types of social activity to their processes of re-production.

The organic conception of inclusion is clearly particularist, so that the causes or types of exclusion cannot be universalised from any one culture to another. The versions of inclusion, too, are bound up with particular moral or ethical belief systems, and may promote or sustain unequal relations or systems within their own culture (Silver 1994). Such an approach is clearly in fundamental disagreement with the possibility of developing a broad schematisation of the nature of exclusion.

The specialisation paradigm views exclusion solely as the result of illegal discrimination. This individualist version of exclusion is too narrow and fails to account for systemic relations of inequality. The monopoly paradigm, in contrast, draws attention to systemic economic exploitation as a root cause of exclusion, but does not sufficiently account for other aspects of exclusion that are identified in other paradigms or accounts of exclusion.

The solidarity paradigm also suffers from a lack of sufficient analysis to conceptualise the causes of the rupture of the social bond, while the post-modernist paradigm holds that the bond is now irreversibly fractured. Post-modernism highlights the variety of identity constellations, and also draws attention to the activity of consumption as a societal identifier. A post-modernist analysis of exclusion, however, has the potential to fall into relativist particularism.

Reflecting on the predisposition of the above mentioned analytical frames to conceptualisations of exclusion, they highlight the logical necessity of first having an analytical model of inclusion before specifying the types or mechanisms

of exclusion. Any model that starts defining exclusion without first defining inclusion is logically flawed, and will inevitably produce inconsistencies. Inclusion and exclusion are dialectical concepts, and the development of one to the neglect of the other impoverishes them both.

Although the preceding paradigms were not explicitly structured around models of inclusion, they do operate on implicit notions of how society integrates, so in the next section we will analyse these implicit versions of inclusion, and other work on the structures of social interaction, to see what they proffer to a model of inclusion and exclusion.

## Exclusion from? – Work, Consumption, Rights, Structures, Capabilities.

The three social scientific paradigms of exclusion all have the tendency to be reduced to the idea that work is the primary social integrator (Yepez Del Castillo 1994), and moreover, this is how exclusion is primarily prefigured by policy-makers. Thus, policies aimed at tackling social exclusion attempt to increase employment or at least break-down the barriers to employment. It is not just policy-makers that hold this view, though, a study in the early 1990s found that 55% of French people interviewed (and 69% in the 18-24 age bracket) "are afraid of losing their job and finding themselves in a situation of exclusion. These figures indicate that employment is not just a source of income, but is also considered as the main stepping stone to social integration" (Yepez Del Castillo 1994, p.619).

Yet some commentators have questioned this very assumption, and argue that as unemployment has increased

the challenge for policies to combat poverty is, above all, that of restoring the social tie and collectively re-mobilising individuals and families by devising other instruments of socialisation outside work relationships, to compensate for the growth of unemployment and the 'desacralisation' of large institutions (churches, political parties, labour unions, etc.) (Paugam cited in Yepez Del Castillo 1994, p.615).

Rees argues that the welfare systems of Europe were designed for a particular type of employment trajectory (male education followed by long-term full-time secure employment until retirement) that is no longer adequate for an ageing society with long-term unemployment and a large number of insecure and part-time jobs (Rees 1998). Thus, both the attempt to promote employment and the welfare system designed to cater for short-term loss of employment and retirement, are predicated on a theory of work as the primary integrator that is now in question. Atkinson, argues that, as such, "we need to develop a new concept of the 'social economy' which goes beyond the conventional 'cash economy' and recognises the contribution to economic life which so-called 'social activities' make" (2000 p.1052).

While Atkinson calls for the development of systems that promote social integration through a re-definition of what counts as work, Bauman argues that consumption has become the means of social identification, but that such consumption is necessarily solitary. He argues that the postmodern aesthetic has replaced the modern ethic of work and production for one of experience, desire and consumption. "Consumption is a thoroughly individual, solitary, and in the end lonely activity; an activity which is fulfilled by quenching and arousing,

assuaging and whipping up a desire which is always a private, and not easily communicable sensation" (1998 p.30). A society of consumers does not integrate, so properly speaking, there is neither inclusion nor exclusion, other than exclusion from consumption.

The obvious historical discourse that is related to a theory of social inclusion is that of citizenship coupled with its attendant formulations of civil, political and social rights (Marshall 1992). The logic of rights from the perspective of inclusion is that they are meant to guarantee, in the case of civil and political rights, the removal of barriers that can impede a number of specified and general social activities, and in the case of social rights, the material and personal conditions required to be able to avail of the opportunities to engage in these and other social activities.

There is a long history of the development and articulation of rights, and as their purpose is to act as operationalisable guidelines for social practice they have become concretised formulations of the guarantees and entitlements of the individual. It must be remembered, however, that particular formulations of rights are more or less useful in ensuring equal opportunities and minimising barriers to social activity.

There have been a number of works that substantiate the concept of citizenship with regard to social exclusion in terms of social rights. The EC Observatory for monitoring social exclusion (which was, however, disbanded in 1995) also concerned itself with civil and political rights, but

> only in so far as they are directly linked to our analysis of social exclusion. ... we
>
> define social exclusion in relation, first of all, to social rights. We investigate

what social rights the citizen has to employment, housing, health care etc; how effectively national policies enable citizens to secure these rights; and what are the barriers and processes by which people are excluded from their rights (Room cited in Yepez Del Castillo 1994 p.616).

Following this way of conceptualising rights, the Irish Poverty 3 researchers go further in categorising the societal institutions in which these rights are embedded and actualised, namely:

the domestic and legal system, which promotes civic integration;

the labour market, which promotes labour integration;

the welfare system, promoting what may be called social integration; and

the family and community system, which promotes interpersonal integration (cited in Atkinson, 2000)

A point of contention, however, is that different countries have different explicit social rights and different institutional systems for implementing them. To some extent, then, it is up to the legal machinery – legislation or jurisprudence – to expand, justify and possibly even define social rights (Yepez Del Castillo 1994 p.616).

In contrast to the notion that rights are a way of tackling or alleviating exclusion both Jordan (1996) and Byrne (1999) argue that rights are founded in the liberal conceptualisation of possessive individualism, and that as such they are ill-fitting tools for overcoming the problems caused by social structures predicated on such individualism.

Doyal and Gough (1991) argue that social justice consists in the optimal satisfaction of both people's basic needs and their ability to participate fully in their chosen form of life. Their argument is based upon an ontology of humanity that sees human nature as being one of self-development within a societal setting. All barriers to self-development, physical, social or political, are an infringement on the individual and a mar on society. Their theory thus outlines a list of objective physical needs, essential elements for critical autonomy and societal preconditions for the re-production of need satisfiers and culture.

The capability approach developed by Amartya Sen is utilised by Doyal and Gough. A further argument of this position is that

> calling for equal capabilities (or the ability to exercise civil and social citizenship rights) may necessitate extra efforts by society to provide equal capabilities ...[to people constrained by physical or mental disabilities or otherwise disadvantaged by birth or background]. An equal starting point (or 'equal opportunities') may not be enough to ensure equal capabilities" (Klasen 1998 p.2).

While the motivation behind equality of opportunity may seem laudable, its use in policy proposals, for example as expressed by Giddens (1998) in the formulation that equality of opportunity is inclusion, and that inclusion is the type of equality to be pursued, points to the need to be clear about its implications, and the quote from Klasens above details how equality of opportunity in itself is inferior to an equality of capabilities which would respect and cater for difference[6].

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[6] Or, as Sen puts it, equality of opportunities is standardly "defined in terms of equal availability of some *particular means*, or with reference to equal applicability (or equal *non*-applicability) of some *specific barriers or constraints*. ... Thus characterised, 'equality of opportunities' does not amount to anything like equality of *overall* freedoms. This is so because of (1) the fundamental diversity of

In contrast to Giddens' formulation Westergaard argues that "equality [for people] ... rests on a demand for equality, not just of opportunity but of full human respect, dignity and autonomy" (1995 p.87). Looking at needs and capabilities, therefore, disaggregates the assumptions built into the notion of equality of opportunity, while I will return to the relation between inclusion and inequality later in the chapter.

The advantage of identifying needs and the capabilities required to meet them is that it moves away from looking solely at the individual and allows for conceptualisations of collective needs and capabilities. Dean, building on the work of Sen, Doyal and Gough, and Honneth, argues that rights need to be conceptualised as claims made in a process of negotiation of co-responsibility (2003a; 2004). Rights, he argues, are of limited critical use if used in the individualist manner described above by Byrne and Jordan, but can be understood and utilised as a mediating tool in the processes of recognition. Understanding rights as claims, therefore, points out the connection between dispositional power – the processes of identity and recognition – and social inclusion, the interaction of recognised identities. Power and inclusion are implicated in the processes of identity recognition. This will be developed in terms of the empirical data in the final chapters.

From these accounts of what it is that people are excluded from, work is too narrow, consumption is, in itself, not a primary social integrator (nor is it an accurate description to argue that contemporary society is exclusively consumerist), and rights need to be understood as developmental claims in terms

human beings, and (2) the existence and importance of various means (such as income or wealth) that do not fall within the purview of standardly defined 'equality of opportunities' (1992 p.7 italics in original).

of social and institutional structures. The capabilities approach allied with a strategy involving rights is the most encompassing available approach, based on a positive model of human recognition and development and of necessary societal pre-requisites and conditions. As yet, however, the capabilities framework does not directly tackle the questions of inclusion and exclusion (although Klasen 1998 and 2001 does make some observations in this direction).

The essential elements of Sen's and Doyal and Gough's work that relate to social exclusion are of three types – the material and social context, the individual's relation to this context, and the end states of the individual from their relation to the context. The context is defined, on the one hand, by the social processes in society, and on the other, by the characteristics (that is, the properties of use or utility) of the commodities available to the individual. This context is related to three features of the individual – their needs, their capabilities (that is, the range of possibilities that are substantively open within the lived experience of the situated human subject) and their functionings (that is, the full range of activities – including productive, re-productive, caring, expressive and deliberative kinds of functionings that human beings may achieve). The end states of the individual relate not only to the subjective happiness of the individual but also their physical well-being (in terms of their physical and support needs being met) and their development of critical autonomy (that is, their involvement in the development of the social context which shapes their social functionings) (see Dean 2003b for a discussion of these elements). These three elements – the context, the individual's abilities, and the individual's end states are the locus for identifying the processes of inclusion and exclusion.

So, while the model of human need, capabilities and functionings, and the role of rights, is important and will be returned to later in this chapter as well as underlying the analyses in chapter 6, there is a need to expand this approach of using an ontology of humankind to delineate the conceptual boundaries of, and inter-relations between, inclusion and exclusion.

**Understanding human orientations – the practical, the true, the right, the good, the beautiful (the deficient, the false, the wrong, the bad, the ugly).**

Before it is possible to consider the anthropological conditions of inclusion and exclusion, there is a need to introduce the analytical/heuristic devices that will be used to structure and develop this anthropology. The evaluative categories that will be used are inspired by Habermas' (1989) concepts of the evaluative criteria of the cognitive/practical, the moral and the ethical, but differ from them in a number of key respects, primarily in that Habermas conflates the practical and the cognitive and seems to subsume the aesthetic under the ethical.

Evaluative categories are the types of measuring sticks that are used to orient people's lives. When faced with decisions or choices, individuals must weigh up the options before them, or imagine and create new ones, and act according to how they rate these options. These options are rated according to scales (the idea of scales is being used metaphorically – the worth of things or actions are not just 'read off', but the differences of value attached to them are discernible to the individual who attends to them), and these scales have ideals or vanishing-points to which the differentiations within the scale relate. There are a variety of different scales, but relatively few vanishing-points to which these

scales are orientated. The use of these scales is sometimes, to an extent, self-conscious and explicit, but usually, and in the end, even after the articulation of, and deliberation between, scales and ideals, the choice between them is part of who the individual is (that is the value judgement is immanent in them). The values and ideals that they actualise through their choices are a constituent part of their development as people (and as such their value judgements are susceptible to change).

The five categories explored here are each different in type, so that what the idea of the practical measures is different from what the idea of the beautiful measures, while within each type there is a multiplicity of competing standards, so that in the realm of the ethical different people may pursue divergent, or even contradictory aims, and yet at the same time be both pursuing their version of the good life. They are not mutually exclusive categories. An object may be aesthetically prized because of its practical utility, but the object is rated high on both scales according to different orientations even though they are oriented to the same cause (the object).

The five evaluative categories explored are not the only possible ways of evaluating social interaction, but they are put forward as the most important sociologically, in that social interaction is structured around and is manifested towards the concerns of what is practical, true, right, good or beautiful. How they are operationalised in different societies is manifestly diverse, but the purpose of the categories is to allow for comparison and contrast between different cultural constellations, while keeping the ideal vanishing point of each category in view allows for evaluation of particular cultural practices.

The practical is understood as what works, what is fitting, what produces the desired result. The converse of the practical is what doesn't work, what lacks efficacy, is deficient, unsuitable or inadequate. The practical is instrumental, but it does not necessitate any understanding by the practitioner of why or how whatever is practical is. The question of what works is appealed to in cases as diverse as DIY motor engineering, international political relations and romantic relationships, and is often taken to be the overriding question. Practical or technical solutions are envisaged as resolving the problem, but this is dependent on whether the solution is oriented at the cause of the problem or at its effects. Not only is the question of what is a practical solution or answer of importance, but also the means by which adequacy or practicality is understood as being so. Under the rubric of practicality, therefore, there are a number of sub-sets of evaluative criteria, such as efficiency, speed, economy and so on. How practicality is constructed is socially and culturally variable, and differing claims to be valued as practical contest the constituent elements of how, or ways in which, practicality is construed and understood.

Specifically, understanding what a practical solution is in any context may be construed differently according to different modes of rationality, for example, resolution of a dispute may be understood practically in one situation as overcoming an opponent in the most effective manner according to one mode of rationality, or it may be understood practically as coming to an agreement about the contentious issue with the other party according to another mode of rationality. A corollary to the modes of rationality used to assess issues of practicality is the approach taken to risk (for a discussion of the centrality of risk in contemporary

society, how it is measured, perceived and societally constituted, see Beck 1992, 1999, and Strydom 2002a). Those who are risk-averse may not avail of a practical solution to a problem, even if they are aware of it, because of their perception of the level of risk involved.

The true, is understood as what is epistemologically correct, what is in fact the case, as well as what counts as means or schemes for verifying, recognising or establishing truth. The converse of truth is falsehood, what is misleading, incorrect, a lie, fabrication, obfuscation or untruth. As discussed by Foucault (2000), there are different regimes of truth. The methods of establishing truth are contested, and institutions substantiate differing types of claim to truth. As Foucault remarked, to recognise that truth is constructed is not to say that there is no such thing as truth, but simply to recognise its social, and contested, nature. This recognition of differing modes of truth is the reason for the problematisation of Habermas' description of practical action being the result of cognitive ability, as the cognitive focus of his description is too intellectualist, whereas, potentially at least, there are other forms of knowing available.

The right, is concerned with the correct, apt, appropriate, commendable, thing to do in relation to others. The wrong is the loathsome, low, mean-spirited, blameworthy, inhuman, barbaric way of dealing with others. This understanding of the right is based upon a conception of morality that sees it as being a property of groups, and not a strictly individual phenomenon. "Morality begins with life in the group, since it is only there that disinterestedness and devotion become meaningful. I speak of the life of the group generally; there are different groups" (Durkheim 1974 p.52). Moral codes are dependent on, and particular to, groups.

They delineate the conduct that is expected from and due to members of the group, and may delineate, prescribe or be indifferent to ways of dealing with others outside of the group.

Morals, however, are not to be confused with norms. Norms are contextual and conventionalised ways of acting and judging. They may embody some moral expectations, but obeisance to norms does not make our actions moral, for morality is concerned with the right thing to do, not the conventional. Norms are imposed by the interpretative community, but their effect on orienting the individual's actions are dependent on his/her recognition of these norms (sanctions and rewards from norms, however, affect the individual's material social conditions regardless of his/her perception). The interaction between norms and values is complex in that the norm and value in question can have the same substance in view, but offer different prescriptions, the individual can value the importance of norms, or possibly invoke some other norm in their defence.

A number of writers have developed genealogies of morality or ethics, Nietzsche, Foucault, and Bauman being examples, but no genealogy can definitively categorise or encapsulate the moralities of past or present generations or cultures. The works, idealisations, or speculations that such genealogies are based upon are only ever particular expressions of the societal morality, and though they may accurately portray elements of that morality's logic, they cannot fully express how these logics of morality were appealed to or lived by.

This caution against the specificity of any genealogy of morality notwithstanding, there are some uncontroversial aspects of morality that can be observed. Firstly, it seems clear that, traditionally, morality was a feature of

kinship-groups and relations, but that it also had specified ways of dealing with particular types of strangers, for example the obligations of hospitality or the ceremonies surrounding marriages between tribes.

Secondly, as Bauman (1993) argues, morality is primarily an inter-personal impulse, and is dependent on the recognition of the Other as an Other like oneself. This moral impulse of interpersonal recognition can override moral categories of group relations (which may ossify into norms), but is, at the same time, their original source.

Bauman goes further and argues that this moral impulse, the feeling of personal responsibility, is not, in fact, reciprocal, "in a moral relationship, all the 'duties' and 'rules' that may be concerned are addressed solely to me, bind only me, constitute me and me alone as an 'I'" (1993 p.50). For Bauman morality is not based in the being-with-an-Other, but in the being-for-an-Other, so that morality is based on the individual feeling responsibility for the Other. "The substance of morality is the impulse of responsibility for the integrity and well-being of other people who are weak, unfortunate and suffering" (1998 p.77). "They become objects of a moral stance solely by virtue of having been targeted directly, as those concrete others out there, by moral concern" (1993 p.165).

For Bauman, "ambivalence resides at the heart of the primary scene of the human face-to-face" (1993 p.10) and as such, he argues that morality cannot be encapsulated in moral codes as this "substitutes the learnable knowledge of rules for the moral self constituted by responsibility. It places answerability to legislators and guardians of the code where there had formerly been answerability

to the Other and to moral self-conscience, the context in which a moral stand is taken" (1993 p.11).

Bauman explicitly argues that the moral relationship is based in the love relationship of being-for-the-Other. It is precisely this conception of morality as being an aspect of love, as solely being-for-the-Other, that is dubious and questionable. In contrast, Foucault argues that in the Greek-Roman world "the theme of the self thoroughly permeated moral reflection" (2000 p.284) and that it was in Christianity that "care of the self became somewhat suspect, regarded as self-love, selfishness, in contradiction with the interest to be shown in others or the self sacrifice required" (2000 p.285)

Foucault argues that "the main field of morality, the part of ourselves which is most relevant for morality" (2000 p.265) is constructed differently in different societies, so that for Kant, it is intention, for Christianity it is desire that is to be considered as the content of moral concern, and for contemporary society it is our feelings (2000 p.265). This helps explain Bauman's idealisation of love as the source of morality, but also shows its historical and social specificity. Bauman is not far wrong, however, when he observes that in postmodern times "our moral conscience rests satisfied once responsibility for the near and dear has been taken and fulfilled" (1998 p.218), that it is difficult to be moral at a distance, and yet, it is just such moral action over time or space that invites remark and esteem and needs to be explained.

While Bauman laments this near-sightedness of our moral impulse, Durkheim argues that there is more to morality than just impulse. According to Durkheim this impulse is the result of a command that is felt by the individual, but

in following through this moral command, the individual surpasses him/herself. Durkheim believes that in feeling a moral command we, at the same time, feel that that moral rule is desirable, and in following the command we achieve a moral actualisation of the individual in society. "[T]here are rules called moral rules which we must obey because they command and which direct our actions to ends that transcend us while at the same time appearing desirable" (1974 p.54). Morality is composed of the inter-relations between the impulse of, and command to responsibility, desire of this transcendent responsibility, and the actualisation of the responsibility.

The good is the desirable, the ideal, commendable way to live. The bad is the shoddy, mis-directed, shallow, despicable, contemptible, shameful way of living. The aspects of ourselves that are considered important and are related to different ideals of the good life, are understood here as being the realm of the ethical. In everyday use, the terms of the moral and the ethical are generally interchangeable. For Bauman ethics is a system of codification of moral impulses (and is, as such, inadequate in his view), while for Dean (2003a) ethics involve a level of reflexivity on our moral concerns. For Foucault too, ethics involves a working upon the content of morality.

As argued in the discussion of the right, of morality, any moral responsibilities require to be desired for them to have the force of command upon an individual, so clearly there is a need for an ethical commitment to any particular moral command for it to be felt. Furthermore, the historic inter-relation between morality and ethics is partly due to the form of Judaic-inspired religions which

conflate the two, and also due to the fact that in Greek thought the true, the good, and the beautiful were seen as coterminous.

It is with the introduction of toleration of religious difference, that different ethical systems can still inter-relate by observing a common moral order. When the 'individual pursuit of happiness' becomes enshrined as itself both an ethical and moral ideal, the two realms develop differing vanishing points, although they remain at base inextricably linked.

The common ethic of modern society is, as Durkheim noted, that of the development of the individual, whereby the individual becomes something sacred, protected by rights, and the justification of society itself, its means and its end, and there develops a plurality of different contingent ethical ideas and standards.

The final vanishing point or criteria of evaluation to consider is the beautiful, the exhilarating, engrossing, pleasurable, the awe-inspiring, the sublime. Its converse is the ugly, the gross, vulgar, dirty, unseemly, ill-fitting, uncouth, sickening, dull and common. The realm of the aesthetic is the most encompassing of all the evaluative criteria – ethics can be dismissed as dull, truth valorised as beautiful, and is much more immediate than an act of contemplation, but is tied into our very sense perceptions of receptivity or rejection of particular experiences and their stimuli – how we respond to an accent or inflection, or the mood the colour of the sky induces in us.

Bauman is undoubtedly correct with his observation that the postmodern aesthetic of experience and sensation has become an organising feature of society, but this is tied with the ethic of individual development precisely because it is the realm of the aesthetic where individuals are seen to develop and considered to

express themselves. This results in a plurality of standards of aesthetic evaluation, and yet, also, the current pre-eminence of the aesthetic over the other evaluative criteria.

To sum up, there are primarily five evaluative criteria that people use to orient the choices they make in their lives. The practical concerns the most effective way of achieving the desired end. The true concerns what really is the case and how it can be verified. The right is concerned with the right thing to do in relation to other people. Morality is an impulse of recognition of Others, the responsibilities that command how we act towards them, and the desire for there to be such a command, while norms are ossified or conventionalised moral impulses, general judgements or commands that circulate in society. The good is what is understood as desirable and worthy in life, and orients people's life-projects. Moral responsibilities require ethical commitment to them, and the plurality of versions of ethical life require moralities that respect them. The beautiful is what is valued for its form or affect, as desirable in itself.

Having outlined this interpretative scheme, it will be utilised in the development of the anthropological discussion of inclusion and exclusion.

**Anthropologising social inclusion.**

Any satisfactory model of inclusion to use as a logical starting point needs to be universal and abstract. Against this, arguments for relativism could be made by adherents to the organic or post-modernist versions of exclusion. These objections are referred to Wittgenstein's argument against the logical possibility of a private

language, and its essential extension to the social impossibility of totally private cultures. Cultures may be inward-looking, or insular in character, but their inner constitutions are never totally different from other cultural constellations. Social constructionism does not entail relativism, primarily because it recognises that the social is ontologically prior to the cultural.

The development of a theory or model of inclusion is based on a philosophical consideration of anthropological practices. Three abstract types of inclusion can be identified in a broader analytical model based on such a philosophical anthropology. Interactional inclusion is based on an analytical assessment of social activity, normative inclusion in terms of the norms operative in society (which includes moral and normative groups and rules), and ethical inclusion in terms of the values and aesthetic ideals promoted and respected in society.

The first of these three axes of inclusion is interactional role inclusion, that is, being actively involved in the production or re-production of products, services or information, or the re-production, nurturing or dissemination of human life and culture (which includes leisure activities). The particular forms and means of these activities vary across different cultures and times, but they are all productive of human cultural life[7].

Interaction is the process of two forms of meaning-making. Meaning-making is achieved in three ways – through making a meaning in one's work (or other activity), making a meaning in one's relations with others, or making

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[7] As a hypothetical example, an affluent educated person in society, who however, is not engaged in any of the specified inclusive roles, could not be classed as excluded, as there are no barriers preventing or hindering their inclusion, but would be classed as inactively included. An Alexander Selkirk or hermit would be classed as neither included nor excluded, but as socially isolated.

meaning in one's relation to one's circumstances (see Frankl 1985). Interactional exclusion involves the foreclosure of capabilities to be involved in work (or activity) or in relations with others. Interactional exclusion is thus variously effected when the resources or capabilities needed to orient to practices and processes involved in the practical, the true, the right, the good or the beautiful are not available. Involvement in work or activity or in relations with others does not guarantee meaning-making, but meaning-making in these two ways is not possible without these social interactions.

The dividing line between inclusion and exclusion is clearly not binary, in that there are a series of gradations along the scale of inclusion, but exclusion is identified as a number of constraints or barriers to a person's ability to partake in interactional social roles, rather than a low level of activity in them. These existential lacks are the lack of an individual's access to or control over the resources necessary to partake in social roles, the lack of capability to partake in social roles (including the capabilities provided by knowledge, skills and networks, or a lack of available jobs), or particular barriers to inclusion (mental or physical disabilities, or insufficient catering for mental or physical disabilities).

Interactional exclusion is related in type, both to the failure to meet the minimum satisfaction of Doyal and Gough's basic needs to enable freedom of agency or personal autonomy (1991), and also Held's concept of nautonomy, which refers to *"the asymmetrical production and distribution of life-chances which limits and erodes the possibilities of political participation"* (1994 p.49. ital. in orig. See also Held 1995). Both of these theories differentiate between this personal autonomy, a freedom from restraint or negative freedom which may or

may not involve reflective thinking, from critical autonomy which results from active political participation in changing or supporting forms of life. Both theories also emphasise that space for individual autonomy is created or provided for through the structures of society, and thus argue for what they call structural autonomy, which creates the spaces and provides the capacities for personal autonomy to all.

A further congruence between the theory of interactional exclusion and both Doyal and Gough's and Held's work, is the recognition that even though personal autonomy requires an abstract typology of needs and inclusion, particular groups require particular needs or experience particular barriers that have to be met, and thus, to create the same level of autonomy for such groups, they require "*additional* and *specific satisfiers* and procedures to address and correct them" (Doyal and Gough 1991 p.74 ital. in orig.)

The second scale of inclusion is normative in character, that is, what is at stake is what groups or classes are recognised as members of the normative community; what are the gradations of membership within that community; what behaviour is expected from and due to members; and how that community relates to or treats non-members or socially deviant members. Normative identification involves the codification of specific moral impulses, particular ethical values or routinised aesthetic judgements. Normative exclusion is thus effected through the institutionalisation of rules or sanctions against other versions of the right, the good or the beautiful. The level of normative identification is achieved through law, as well as institutional and administrative codification, in modern states, but the principle is the same as that embodied by tradition in other societies.

Normative inclusion then affords one a sphere for legitimate activity according to codified values, a level of treatment from others, and an expected return of that treatment and a respect for other legitimate activities. These normative claims are not always assented to, but are still demanded or expected through the external normative order.

In contrast to these processes of inclusion, normative exclusion relates, then, to the non-recognition by a community of an individual's membership of that community; to differentiated treatment of individuals according to a classification of individuals within that society; the administrative denial of membership rights to individuals or groups within that society; or the diminution of the rights of socially deviant members. In terms of normative exclusion we are concerned with how particular normative frameworks are institutionally codified in practice, how they reward, proscribe or sanction behaviour, but also how the processes thus institutionalised operate dynamically to exclude others. Legitimated exclusion involves both the legal sanctioning of those identified as socially disruptive, and administrative discrimination towards certain behaviours or classes (e.g. the loss of entitlement to benefits owing to non-compliance with rules or procedures, lack of adoption rights to gay and lesbian couples).

Normative exclusion happens at two levels, firstly at the level of the state, in terms of its laws, institutions and administrative procedures, and secondly in other organisations (whether companies, social clubs or groups) that discriminate between people on categories of classification or administration.

Ethical inclusion, the third scale of inclusion concerns the values promoted, respected, lauded or accepted in society. People are included when they aspire to or reproduce the cultures and identities associated with these values.

Unlike interactional or normative exclusion, ethical exclusion can be extremely transitive. Normative exclusion is temporally pronounced in that membership or classification is signified by events or actions (age of adulthood, benefits recognition), and although interactional exclusion obviously changes over people's life-spans, and can be marked by dramatic rises or falls, in general, changes in people's interactional roles tends to be gradual. Ethical exclusion tends, on the one hand, to be experienced discretely, that is, at particular times or instances one experiences discrimination, on the other hand, however, the cause of such instances, not sharing the values of wider society, or having one's values, identity or culture misrepresented or denigrated, can be a relatively stable context, and can disincline people towards being in situations where they are likely to feel ethically excluded.

Ethical exclusion is related to the third form of meaning-making, the making of meaning in relation to one's circumstances. People create a meaning to their circumstances through an understanding of their own life as good. This can be done via an individual ethic of self-acceptance or through cultural ethics such as taste, ethnicity or religion. Although, by the nature of this form of meaning-making it cannot be stopped, it can be hindered through being denigrated, unrecognised, scorned or not being given an opportunity, as even though ethics are attached to or instantiated by the individual, they are developed socially, and seek

social recognition. Ethical exclusion is thus effected when versions of the good are denigrated, unrecognised or stunted by the environment.

Sub-cultures both create an amount of ethical and moral inclusion for their members, but also entail an amount of ethical exclusion from wider society. In terms of the ethical, the values promoted in un-codified and wider identity formation and cultural practices can be used in distinguishing between the formal or informal values that can be accommodated within the institutional norms and are widely socially accepted, and values or attributes which are not excluded by legal or administrative codes, but can be subject to informal discrimination or denigration. These three crosscutting relations of inclusion and exclusion are highlighted in Table 3.1.

| Analytical frames | Social Exclusion | Included | Excluded |
|---|---|---|---|
| **[practical/ true/ right/ good/ beautiful]** Skills Practices Knowledges Networks Resources | Inter-actional Role Exclusion | Production/ Reproduction/ Dissemination : Human (*parenting, health care*) Cultural (*communication, sports, arts, education*) Material (*processes, networks, skills*) | Lacking skills Lacking resources Lacking access to skills/ processes/ resources/ networks/ amenities. (*Mental/ physical disabilities, poverty*) |
| **[codified right and good]**. | Normative Exclusion | State: Codified normative categories (*e.g. citizens, families*) Membership norms (*work, law-abiding*) Values codified in membership rights (*liberty, expression, protection*) Codified entitlements (*require claiming – benefits, tax breaks, targeted grants*) Non-state: Formal normative groups (*e.g. unions, faith groups, societies*) | State: Codified discrimination/ legitimated exclusion (*nationality, criminals, sectioned mental disorders, loss of benefit entitlements*) Non-state: Formal discrimination (*credit-rating, member-only clubs*) |
| **[un-codified good or beautiful]**. Cultural morals. Identities. | Ethical Exclusion | Informal values and identities (*entrepreneurs, free-born Englishmen*) Valued activities (*bread-winner*) | Informal discrimination (*age, sex, ethnicity, disability, post-code*) Denigrated groups/ cultures (*travellers, gangs, Muslims*) Unrecognised activities (*carers, housewives*) |

**Table 3.1 Analytical schematic of inclusion and exclusion**

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These categories of exclusion are interpretative schema. Any instance of exclusion may involve aspects of all three categories, for example, someone experiencing interactional exclusion because they are unemployed may then suffer normative and ethical exclusion. Being included does not necessitate an individual succeeding in making meaning of their life, but being excluded actively hinders the possibilities of this.

**The limits to exclusion.**

It is necessary at this stage to delimit the concept of social inclusion and its boundaries from other concepts concerned with relations in society, in particular, social cohesion, social integration, poverty and inequality.

Social cohesion refers to either, cohesion within cultural groups within a wider society, or between different cultural groups within a wider society and could be viewed as keeping different ethical values separate, whereas social integration is the mutual enrichment and adaptation by different cultural groups in society that could be viewed as a synthesis of different ethical systems.

The concept of inclusion that has been developed here is not seen as a replacement for the concerns with either poverty or inequality. Poverty, as material deprivation is a state that still needs to be studied, but exclusion, as a relational and dynamic process highlights other mechanisms and factors that can be seen both as an intermediate cause and an effect of, broader structural inequality (see Williams and Pillinger, 1996).

Whereas the concept of interactional inclusion corresponds to that of personal autonomy in Doyal and Gough's thesis (1991), they do not directly

discuss normative or ethical inclusion per se, but it is clear that it is critical engagement via and with these spheres that counts as their concept of critical autonomy. Likewise, social inclusion in the ethical and normative spheres does not necessarily entail democratic political participation as expressed by Held as a principle of governance.

Inclusion and exclusion, therefore, are related to the satisfaction of the individual's needs, the capabilities of the individual for inclusion, and their involvement in social functionings. Interactional inclusion is thus directly related to individuals' needs and capabilities, while normative and ethical inclusion relate to the social processes that affect both the material and social contexts in which individuals meet their needs, exercise their capabilities and develop their social functionings.

For these reasons it is clear that social inclusion is an intermediate concept at the meso-level between the micro-level of poverty and the macro-level of inequality. The concept does not express all the aims of social equality, social integration, individual development through meaning-making or democratic participation, but is a necessary analytical and critical tool that can be used to trace the social and cultural relations that are necessary to achieve any of these aims.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the development and usage of the concept of social exclusion has been analysed and critiqued. The moral discourses that have influenced the social scientific analytical frames for understanding exclusion, and the relativist cultural orientations of the organic and postmodernist accounts of exclusion, were found to

be of little use in trying to understand the broader relations of exclusion. The analytical orientation towards conceptions of exclusion without specifying what inclusion is or how it develops was criticised. The models of exclusion were analysed for their implicit notions of inclusion, and their integrating mechanisms of work, consumption, rights, structures and capabilities were compared and contrasted. The capabilities approach with its understanding of rights in the context of structures of rights actualisation and group mechanisms is the most productive approach to take towards a model of human development. The elements and relations between the material and social context of the individual, the characteristics and abilities of the individual and the individual's end states are the locus for identifying social exclusion.

An interpretative schema for understanding human action is developed to delineate the types of evaluative criteria that structure human interaction and relations and provide the contexts for meaning making. The five criteria discussed were the practical, how utility is prefigured; the true, how verisimilitude is understood; the right, how proper relations with others are instantiated through impulse, command, desire to obey the command of transcendent responsibility, and the instantiation of morality through the actualisation of these responsibilities; the good, how the good life is understood, and its relation to the need to desire responsibility for the right to be recognised; and finally, the beautiful, how objects or experiences are valorised for their affect upon the individual.

A philosophical anthropological account of inclusion was developed to supplement Doyal and Gough's approach to needs and capabilities, and from this tri-partite understanding of inclusion three different types of exclusion were

proposed and operationalised; activity exclusion in terms of interactional social roles, structures and barriers; normative exclusion in terms of social recognition through laws, institutions and administration, both by the State and non-state entities; and ethical exclusion in terms of cultural and identity values and versions of the good life; all three of which are often interconnected.

The relations between these three types of exclusion and the five types of evaluative criteria were outlined. Interactional exclusion, as the existence of barriers or lack of opportunities to engage in social interaction in the spheres of production, re-production or dissemination of human or cultural life, is understood as the occlusion of possibilities to act in all five spheres of activity. Normative exclusion, as the delimitation of action through laws, institutions and administrative practices is primarily the occlusion of moral (the right) and ethical (the good) alternatives that do not comply with the normative structures built into State or non-state rules. Ethical exclusion, as the denigration or non-recognition of alternative ethical identities is thus an occlusion or non-recognition of other possibilities of defining the good or the beautiful.

These models of inclusion and exclusion were differentiated from the concerns with cohesion and integration, and the concepts of poverty, deprivation and inequality. Inclusion and exclusion were related to the satisfaction of the individual's needs, the capabilities of the individual for inclusion, and their involvement in social functionings. Interactional inclusion is directly related to individuals' needs and capabilities, while normative and ethical inclusion relate to the social processes that affect both the material and social contexts in which

individuals meet their needs, exercise their capabilities and develop their social functionings.

The relations of this model with Doyal and Gough's theory of human needs (1991) and Held's work on autonomy (1994, 1995) was sketched, in particular the relationship between interactional inclusion and personal autonomy and between engagement with the structures of normative and ethical inclusion and critical autonomy. Inclusion and exclusion are thus mediating concepts, on the one hand between poverty, deprivation and inequality, which focus on lack, and on the other, between personal autonomy and critical autonomy, which focus on development, both personal and social. The dual structure of inclusion and exclusion, so often neglected by theorists, is thus the key to linking participation and exclusion.

The types of inclusion and exclusion – interactional, normative and ethical, map for us how participation can mitigate exclusion, and yet it is perfectly logical that someone who does participate in political interaction, can at the same time be interactionally excluded in some ways, included in others, but still suffer from either or both normative and ethical exclusion. To be included in the structures of power does not necessitate that one effects power in these structures.

Before moving on to discuss these relations between participation and exclusion, there is a need to look at the discourses of exclusion from the experience of those who may be classed as socially excluded in chapter 6. Their insights may give broader detail to the concepts outlined here, and develop the feelings of the consequences of being, or being understood as, excluded.

This empirical work needs to be preceded, however, with an explication of how these experiences were collected, collated and understood. Thus, before I can look at the empirical data relating to either the participation schemes or the experiences of the excluded, I need to explain the theory, methodology and methods employed in the research that substantiates this thesis.

# Chapter 4: Methodology

**Introduction**

A number of methodological constructs and considerations have already been introduced in the preceding chapters, namely in chapter 2 the focus on social interaction, the structural logics of such interaction, as well as the heuristic nature of the theory introduced; and in chapter 3 the analytical categories of exclusion, and the interpretative themes of the practical, the true, the good, the right, and the beautiful. It is necessary, therefore, to outline how all these various different methodological components sit together. To do so there is a requirement to outline and defend the ontological and epistemological framework that holds these methodological components in a wider concept of methodology.

This is one requirement of any discussion of methodology, to be clear about the ontology and epistemology at work. The second requirement relates to the actual nature of the object being investigated. How this object is manifested, what can be observed or inferred of this object, the limitation of observations, inferences and deductions, and how the object can be systematically investigated within the constraints of any spatio-temporally confined study need to be explicated and developed.

These two aspects of methodology are not separate, but equally essential approaches to the subject, one from a broader conception of ontology, epistemology and methodology, the other from the immanent there-being of the object and the investigator. It is necessary, therefore, to link these two perspectives together and to show their contiguity.

The final aspect of methodology to be addressed is the critical function of investigation, and this runs through both of the previously mentioned aspects of this chapter. The methodological approach utilised is heavily influenced, on the one hand, by critical realism, and on the other, by critical theory. The influences from critical realism affect the pragmatic use of methods of investigation to observe social phenomena and their interactions, and how to schematise these phenomena in concepts and theories; while the influences from critical theory affect the focus on contestation of meanings of social phenomena, the ideologies and discourses used, and their critical interpretation. The critical aspect of methodological investigation, therefore, runs through this chapter and ties the ontological and epistemological concerns of the first part to the methods of investigation detailed in the second.

## Ontology, epistemology and methodology

It is necessary to lay bare the basic assumptions that underlie the idea of conative agency within social interaction, that such interaction is discernible by means of both individual motivation and structural logic, and that these structural logics accrete into the contexts in which social interaction takes place, facilitating it and constraining it. These assumptions are drawn from the ongoing interface between

realist and social constructivist debates that converge upon a form of weak naturalism allied to a degree of social constructivism (for fuller explorations of these debates and issues see Keat and Urry 1982, Delanty 1997 and Strydom 2002a). These assumptions of ontology, in their simplest form, are that there is a world that exists outside of human experience, although it is only known through experience and hypotheses based on these experiences, and that this world can both be affected by human action and interaction, and that there are mechanisms, both stable and generative, in this world that can affect humans. The there-being of the world and human agents and the meaning-contexts which shape social activity and structure social experience are also assumed. The world does not determine the agent, nor does the agent have conative control of the world.

Experience involves two polar entities, it requires an agent to experience and a world to be experienced, but it does not fully disclose or exhaust either of these entities. This dualism is evident in a number of experiential relationships, in Mead's (1964) I/Me dualism, where the I is the spontaneous emergent experience of self, and the Me is the schematised self of identity-representation. The dualism is also evident in Schutz's (1967) Thou/They distinction, where the Thou is the directly socially experienced other, with whom one "grows older", whereas the They has an ideal character, a whatness, or like-thatness.

At the base of this dualism is the difference between the thusness of immediate experience and the thatness that is involved in schematising such experience. As has been noted, meaning contexts are pre-given in the world, but they do not exhaust it, and the agent, though always influenced by prior meaning-contexts, is nonetheless able to innovate and adapt. Thusness and thatness are the

poles of experience of knowledge, but are always intermingled to some extent; that is, no experience is totally pure or transcendent, nor is any experience fully and exactly articulated in any expression or codification of knowledge.

The implications of this ontology for epistemology relate to the conception of knowledge proposed. Knowledge is the forming or having of experience or identity by an agent with some aspect of the world. Knowledges can thus be both immediate, in terms of an experience, or schematised in terms of the symbols used to represent and convey aspects of the world (Jensen 1995, van Dijk 1985a; 1985b). Again, neither immediate nor schematised knowledge fully exhausts or discloses either the agent or the world.

It seems clear from the sciences of biology and psychology that this identity of experience is facilitated by cognitive events, processes and structures (Bowers and Meichenbaum 1984) and that they have not only an ideational component, that is an architectonic map of world relations, but also an affective component, whereby emotions, desires and feelings are formed and related to states of being (Turk and Speers, cited in Bowers and Meichenbaum 1984 p.284).

Everyday knowledge is not normally subjected to epistemological concerns, that is, it is taken-for-granted, and is generally only questioned when agents experience disruptions or lacunae in their understanding of themselves or with their relations with the world (Habermas 1989). Learning or re-interpretation involves the re-casting of the past in terms of the present, the use and/or adaptation of other interpretative resources, and is achieved by the re-cognition afforded through immediate experience (Habermas 1989; Honneth 1995; Eder 1999).

It is through cognition and re-cognition that agents try to determine relevant structural logics of action pertinent to them. There are clearly a wide variety of structures that make up the context of any action, but they are all accessed and prefigured in terms of symbols, language or discourse (Habermas 1984, 1987; van Dijk 1985a, 1985b; Delanty 1997; Strydom 2002a). Epistemologically we are confined to the sense impressions and representations of reality, but these can be tested against our experience of reality, not to verify them, but to contextualise them, or in the case of hypotheses, to show that they have not yet been falsified. Hypothesis construction, prediction and testing of predictions are thus an important element in epistemology, but they are applied differently across the realms of science (Keat and Urry 1982).

Before going into the different realms of science, it is necessary to look further at the cognitive events, processes and structures that enable and shape the construction of knowledge. Epistemologically some commentators see these structures as the outer manifestation of agents' actions, and thus treat any discussions of them as entities in their own right as reification (see Harré 2002). The argument then is that there is a fallacy involved in using a concept, such as class, from being a categorical description, to having some sort of causal efficacy. In one sense this objection is correct in that a class does not act of its own volition independent of its members, but it is incorrect in that it does not recognise that members of a class, conscious of their commonalties, or even unconscious of them and acting individualistically, may act in quite predictable and similar ways according to the structural opportunities, constraints and desires of that class (Swidler 1986). Such cognitive structures are real in the sense that they have real,

discernible effects, and they have these effects because people are orientated towards these structures, whether self-consciously, sub-consciously or unconsciously.

These structures can be identified at macro-, meso- and micro- levels, differing in their levels of abstractness and the entities to which they relate (Eder 1993, Strydom 2002b), and again, are not simply ideational in character, but also have affective and emotive components and counterparts. Although these structures may be interpreted differently by various agents, and are changeable, in general they set the boundaries for interaction (Strydom 2002a), as they enable and constrain intersubjective interactions and relations.

Returning to the question of epistemology in relation to social phenomena, as opposed to purely physical processes, it is clear that the questions of hypotheses and testing are also relevant. In the social realm, however, there is the added component of meaning that complicates these questions considerably (Keat and Urry 1982). There is the meaning of an action for an agent or agents, the inter-subjective meaning of that action to a wider community, and a subset of the latter is the social scientific interpretation of the action's meaning.

Whereas the prediction of phenomena is the aim of positivist science (Keat and Urry 1982), this leaves out the individual or collective motivations that are involved in social interaction, which can only be approached through attempting to understand them

> We [social scientists] can accomplish something which is never attainable in the
> natural sciences, namely the subjective understanding of the action of the
> component individuals. The natural sciences on the other hand cannot do this,

being limited to the formulation of causal uniformities in objects and events and the explanation of individual facts by applying them, we do not 'understand' the behaviour of cells, but can only observe the relevant functional relationships and generalise on the basis of these observations (Weber 1966 p.103).

Interpretation of the meaning of an action can have three focuses, it can focus on the immediate reason for the agents' actions, that which is immediately transparent to the agent, what Schutz (1967) terms the 'in-order-to' motive. As compared to this, there is what Schutz called the 'genuine-because' motive which involves an appreciation of the agent's history, her past actions, what has brought her to this action, and her future orientations, that is, the action explained in terms of the agent's life-project. The third type of meaning of an action is not concerned so much with the individual's motivations for an action, but the social motivations embodied in the structural logic of the action. These structural logics are inferred from hypotheses or models of human motivations and desires and how they are embodied in cultural practices or institutions, and are thus speculative interpretations that can be disputed, but their capacity to enable the understanding of otherwise discrete and unintelligible phenomena makes them a useful component of social analysis.

Social science, like any other interpretative scheme or structure works in an ideal-typical manner, that is it is primarily concerned with the object's whatness, but seeks to refer its articulation of the whatness to the object's thusness. As the tools of social science, as of any science, are essentially the same as of everyday knowledge, the difference between them lies in the systematic method and application of science. Whereas everyday knowledge only develops to the extent

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where it allows agents to cope, scientific knowledge seeks to exhaust, as much as is possible, the possibilities of the entity in question, so that as much of the entity is knowable, in any case, and not just its immediate whatness. In the physical sciences it seems that the conditions of their objects of study are predictable, and thus generalisable. In the social sciences, however, meaning is not universal but context-dependent, and so we are as concerned with idiographic knowledge as with nomothetic knowledge.

The systematic nature of social science does not come from generalised validity, but from inner validity, that is, that the scientific constructs are valid within their meaning-context, but not necessarily outside of them This type of validity is achieved by cross-checking data and categories in a systematised manner, and by collecting data in a manner which does not pre-determine their nature. In an investigation where the meanings of those involved in the study are given importance, this is achieved by asking open-ended questions, and checking the meanings ascribed to them by the investigator with those studied.

The process between theoretical development and data collection is not a simple matter of stages, however, as interpreting the data collected points out flaws or gaps in the theory, so the theory needs to be adapted to reflect this, and this then affects the data collected. Research is neither totally inductive, in terms of hypothesis formulation, nor totally deductive, in terms of hypothesis testing, rather there is an inducto-deducto dialectic as empirical research refines the theoretical tools that then influence the data collected.

The step between analysis and interpretation, where one moves from a theoretically informed schematic analysis with internal validity to an interpretation

about what this analysis shows us about the phenomenon, is much more tentative in the social sciences. The theoretical categories introduced to analyse the phenomenon in question do not predetermine the interpretation, but provide the tools for interpretation. These theoretical categories operate by breaking actions into component parts, to allow for their comparison and contrast. These analytical theories ask what are the elements of the phenomenon, whereas the interpretation is orientated to answering what is happening with the phenomenon and why. This interpretation may thus have recourse to broader theoretical frameworks to further our understanding of the phenomenon in question.

Even though this step from analysis to interpretation moves beyond the internal validity of the theory and data, and as such is open to debate, at the same time, the use of the theory in terms of developing an understanding of the phenomenon, is dependent on the interpretation having argumentative force and clarity. Thus, while the theoretical analysis is concerned primarily in developing our understanding of the phenomenon through categorical lenses, the interpretation, although it cannot be strictly scientifically generalisable, is concerned with offering an understanding of the phenomenon in question.

Interpretation, however, is not neutral. What is to be interpreted, and the theoretical frameworks to be used in its interpretation, are shaped by the investigator's choices. The factors that have influenced the choice of phenomena – political participation and social exclusion, and the interpretative concepts and theories developed in the first three chapters have been drawn from the school of critical theory's concerns with the processes of power and inequality. The aim is to

untangle the contested processes and meanings of power and inequality in order to show how they are socially constructed, and thus, changeable (Alasuutari 1998).

Before summarising this scientific version of ontology, epistemology and methodology and using it to approach the object of investigation from its immanent groundedness, it is first necessary to take account of possible objections from other versions of science.

*Reductionism*

There are two types of reductionism, one reduces the legitimate concern of science to strictly material or physical processes, the other, although it respects the human mind as an entity for study, only studies the social in so far as it can be reduced to the individual. Both of these approaches treat society as an "epiphenomenon of individual life (organic or mental, it makes no difference)" (Durkheim 1974 p.33). For the purposes of the critical methodology proposed here, there is no need to reject the idea that the physical and the mental are linked, nor that social forces are instantiated through individual actions, for as Durkheim held

> The formation of mental images is to some extent dependent on the structure, not only of the nervous system itself, but of the mind, the more abstract the concept, the larger the number of non-organic factors which will have to be taken into consideration. When these abstract representations, that is ideas, have come into being, new associations are constantly formed between them, and this constant synthesis follows principles which are but partially dependent on the organic matrix of the mind. Images combine to form ideas and ideas become part of a complex system of concepts. The higher the level of synthesis, the more distant from the

organic substratum, the smaller the degree of its immediate organic dependence and
the higher the degree of social influence (Peristiany 1974 pp xxii-xxiii)

That is, that one cannot explain the superior in terms of the inferior, and in relation to society this means that "the structure of society and of its system of values ... is something other than the structure and development of individual minds" (Peristiany 1974 p xxiii). These considerations show the limitations of reductionist approaches.

*Rational Choice Theory*

Rational choice theory is based on the premise that human actors always act in the way that they think best (see Dowding 1991, 1996). If this premise is broadened out to acknowledge that actors are not always strictly conscious of what they think is best and sometimes that they may not be decided as to what is best, then there is little in this premise that can be contested.

The limitations of rational choice theory occur with the attempts to define what is best for the human agent. It is essential for the theory that it is what agents themselves decide what is best for them, but in practice most users of rational choice theory only concern themselves with economic, or at best status-related, self-interests, but do not account either for other concerns that the agents may have themselves, or for interests or values in the group outside of the individual that that individual may consider more important than self-interest.

Rational choice theory is useful in predicting outcomes in situations where the actor has a limited number of transparent options and his/her preferences are known. It is not good at understanding the meanings that actors attribute to their

actions, and so has little to say about situations where plural meanings and options are open to actors. So although there is no objection to the rational choice premise as such, great care needs to be taken in operationalising it properly.

*Radical Constructivism*

Radical constructivists believe that human knowledge is divorced from any outside reality and that human agents are enmeshed in an eternal social construction of their own reality (see Delanty 1997). Types of radical constructivism can be discerned in a variety of different theoretical approaches, such as post-modernism and post-structuralism, but plays a different role in their approach, or is constructed differently, so this discussion of radical constructivism is restricted to an indicative treatment of this area.

In agreement with the approach of radical constructivism, there is an element of interpretation in all knowledge constructions, and knowledge is indeed relational, meaning that it is both legitimate and fruitful to examine the relations between synthetic concepts and to inquire into their relational logics. This is not to say, however, that this is the only legitimate concern of human enquiry. Radical constructivists seem to forget that although knowledge is constructed it is concerned with relating not only to itself, but also to reality, however restricted it may be in doing so. Laclau and Mouffe's discourse analysis (1985) may accept that there is this reality, but holds that all constructions of it are limited and limiting. This is correct, but it neglects that knowledge constructions do not only embody the whatness of phenomena, but also an element of their thusness, and this experience of reality, however mediated, gives science a means of adjusting its

knowledge constructions outside of discourse. Although we may be confined to using the tools of discourse in dealing with reality, reality can be used to affect these tools.


*Structural determinism*

Although few theories are completely structurally determinist, elements of structural determinism are invested in a number of general theories, most notably Marx's historical materialism that foretells that communism is the mode of economic production that will succeed capitalism (Marx and Engels 1987). Although, as has been made clear, the structures of society do constrain possibilities for social interactions, they also enable them without determining them. Moreover, with the variety of social forces and motivations and the ensuing complexity of society, the contingency of many socially transformative events, that in turn have ramifications for the structure of society, cannot be neglected by any adequate social theory.

A variant of structural determinism is Luhmann's autopoiesis or systems theory, which refers to self-generating, or self-creating systems. System theory does not see any connection between constructivism and agency, rather society is composed of quasi-independently existing sub-systems which reproduce themselves independently of social agency (Delanty 1997 p.123). Rather than communication being seen as a system used by agents, Luhmann's autopoietic theory of communication does not need to have recourse to an acting subject, "on the contrary, it takes communication as a recursively closed autopoietic system, and actually as a structurally determined system that may be specified only by its

own structures and not by states of consciousness" (Luhmann cited in Delanty 1997 p.125).

Systems theory thus rejects the truism that it is actors who act, but it does not proffer good reasons for this rejection. To deny the effects of states of consciousness or communication on other systems, is to neglect the fact that the motive forces for communication and other social systems are developed through the interactions of states of consciousness of agents. Systems theory is itself a closed system (Stevenson 1974), but it does not give good reasons for understanding the rest of society as one.

*Critical Realism*

Compared to constructivists, realists place much greater stress on an outside reality (whereas schools of constructivists diverge on whether there is an outside reality or whether it is socially constructed, see Delanty 1997). Critical realism has three defining characteristics. Firstly, it defends the possibility of causal explanation, there are generative mechanisms in reality, but both these causal mechanisms and the events they give rise to are not necessarily reflected in experience, thus, science is concerned with identifying phenomena, investigating them, developing hypotheses and propositions, and testing them empirically. The causal laws which are in the depths of reality, and which it is the aim of science to uncover are, however, never context-free and remain falsifiable (Delanty 1997 pp.129-131).

Secondly, critical realism accepts the hermeneutic notion of social reality as communicatively constructed, but does not accept that these constructions are completely removed from reality, and moreover stresses the need for social

constructions of knowledge to address causal mechanisms. Thirdly, there is a critical dimension to most versions of realism, which sees the role of science as critiquing concepts, conventions and modes of domination (Delanty 1997 pp129-131).

For critical realists science is ultimately explanatory knowledge and it has the power to provide knowledge of reality as it really exists. It is not clear, however, what status this knowledge of reality has in relation to reality itself. As I have argued, knowledge is about an outside reality, and it can succeed in expressing aspects of reality. Kant's caveat, however, that we cannot know the 'things-in-themselves' still holds, while the 'things-as-they-appear-to-us' needs to be understood as meaning that the appearances of things constitute a part of their reality which can be investigated. Knowledge of any phenomenon is both real and constructed, and there is a constant interplay between reality, sign-systems, interpreters, and the interpretative communities in which they are situated (Jensen 1995).

The critical approach to concepts and theories entails mapping the discourses and paradigms associated with them, while employing a democratic empiricism (see Barker 2000) to interrogate them. Democratic empiricism entails treating all empirical data as potentially revealing, and legitimates the use of a variety of research methods to uncover or develop different types of data that can be used to evaluate concepts and interpretations.

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|          ANALYSIS          |      INTERPRETATION      |
◄──────────────────────────►◄──────────────────────────►
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| Critical<br>Realist<br>observation of<br>empirical data<br><br>Actions<br><br>Events<br><br>Processes<br><br>Meanings | Constuctivist<br>categories<br><br>Circuits of<br>power<br><br>Types of<br>participation<br><br>Types of<br>inclusion/<br>exclusion | Hermeneutic<br>interpretative<br>schema<br><br>Evaluative<br>criteria<br><br>Power<br><br>Inequality<br><br>Hegemony |
|---|---|---|
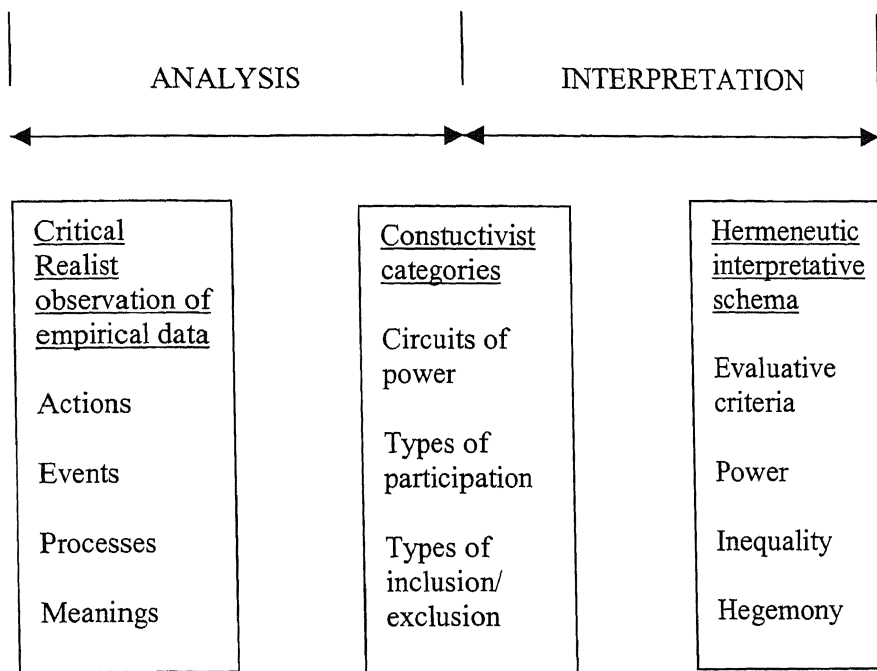
Figure 4.1 **Relation between analysis and interpretation.**
(inspired by Wolcott 1994)

As illustrated in Figure 4.1 the two aspects of the methodology are analysis and interpretation. Critical theory is often very abstract, and thus, difficult to operationalise or apply, so the concepts developed in chapters 2 and 3 are outlined in Figure 4.1 to show how they are operationalisable. Analysis spans the observation of phenomena, such as actions, events, processes, meanings and social interaction, and the concepts used to schematise such interactions, in the case of this thesis, the circuits of power, the typologies of participation and inclusion/exclusion and their organisation in terms of the micro-, meso- and macro- levels. Interpretation spans the information provided by these concepts and their inter-relationships as expressed and understood by theories of power, hegemony, inequality and the perspectives of the evaluative criteria.

## Investigating participation and exclusion

*Methods of data collection*

There were two phenomena to be investigated in this research. Firstly, the process of participation via voluntary and community groups in the three area-based initiatives – the Single Regeneration Budget Round 6, the Luton Health Action Zone, and the New Deal for Communities. Secondly, the experiences of social exclusion in the areas in which these initiatives were based. In this section I detail how these two investigations were undertaken according to the methodological principles and approach outlined.

The first choice to be made was the levels of analysis. The study of participation is the study of individual interaction within collective action. Microanalysis of collective action focuses on the 'group': the pressure on members, the mechanisms for integrating members, individual motivations, and the "social construction produced by actors drawing boundaries between the collective action they contribute to and its environment" (Eder 1993 p.53), and refines these concerns to a theory of the self-production and self-reproduction of group identity through cognitive practices (p.53). The groups established through collective action can then be considered as collective actors. There is also the possibility of collective learning processes resulting from the reflective creation of a group identity, *"moral learning processes* that thematize and change the normative context of strategic co-operation, and *strategic learning processes* that use and instrumentalize moral arguments in a rational-choice situation, in a co-operative game" (p.54 italics in original).

The meso-level is concerned with the normalisation and stabilisation of collective action through organisation, specifically in relation to the political opportunity structure, and the expansion of material and symbolic resources. Social movement organisations (SMOs) "are oriented toward the patronage of constituencies who do not act on their own" (Eder 1993 p.54), which constitute a social movement industry that develops a professional division of labour both within and between collective actors, and implies unequal capacities in mobilising resources. The interaction of organised collective actors can lead to collective learning processes and possibly, changes to the rules of the game, in terms of controlling and regulating the interactions between different collective actions, including the state.

The macro-level of analysis looks beyond collective actors as processes of social production and reproduction to their effects on the social structure, and whether such collective actors, through their effects, can be described as historical actors.

The analysis of participation via voluntary and community groups, as it focuses on the types of participation and the circuits of power affected, therefore, is geared to the micro- and meso- levels of group organisation and interaction within the initiatives. The social phenomena relating to the members themselves, and the socially excluded, are primarily at the micro-level. As the groups are essentially local in their activities, they were not operative at the macro-level as such, but as we will see, some of the groups do have alternative philosophies of social organisation which points out the inter-relations between the macro-, meso- and micro- levels.

Participation was investigated by three means, interviewing those involved in participating and/or facilitating participation, observing a number of fora or meetings in which participation took place, and examining documents produced by or in relation to the initiatives. There were 20 semi-structured interviews with either workers involved with the initiatives, or members of voluntary and community groups that were variously involved in the initiatives. A schematic breakdown of their involvement in the initiatives, and of their gender and ethnic backgrounds is included as Appendix 1. A total of 6 NDC meetings of different types were observed, and 5 other public meetings in the conurbation which were not part of the initiatives, but which were parallel to them. A large number of documents, both formal (minutes, policy documents and so on) and informal (advertisements, newsletters) produced by the voluntary and community groups, the press, the initiative bodies, and the statutory sector, were analysed.

These three methods were chosen for their ability to access the phenomenon of participation. Participation is facilitated through structures and mediated relationships. The interviews allowed the respondents to describe their own views and to give their own account of their experiences of participation via the episodic interviewing structure described below. The observations allowed me to view the interactions and development of members within groups, and their interactions with representatives from other groups and bodies. The documentary analyses allowed the examination of the central artefacts of initiatives – policy documents, decisions, frameworks and communications between bodies and from the bodies to their publics.

Sometimes inter-relating three types of research method is referred to as triangulation. Clearly, however, specific bits of information are not always capable of being accessed by all three methods, and as such are not verified by the other methods. Not all the research data, therefore, have been triangulated via the other methods employed, even though the majority of it relates to common phenomena viewed from different means, and the vast majority of it has, as such, been cross-checked.

Social exclusion was investigated by two means, firstly, interviewing those who work with or represent the socially excluded; secondly, 10 semi-structured interviews with those who could be classed as 'socially excluded'. These methods were chosen for their suitability for the exploration of exclusion. In its simplest terms exclusion has to be understood in terms of non-activity, barriers to activity, stigma or difference, and these can only be accessed qualitatively through the accounts of those who experience it or who have directly observed them. The episodic interviewing structure was not suitable for these interviews, so an alternative structure was used, described below.

There is a variety of statistical information on poverty levels, health rates and other standard ways of measuring exclusion, and there is little doubt that Luton, classed as one of the 88 most deprived areas in England, does experience a significant amount of social exclusion. Most of this material, however, casts little light upon what the excluded experience as exclusion, so only elements of it were reproduced as a contextualisation of the interview data.

The participation interviews followed an episodic interview structure following Hermann's model

> First the initial situation is outlined ('how everything started') and then the events relevant to the narrative are selected from the whole host of experiences and presented as a coherent progression of events ('how things developed'), and finally the situation at the end of the development is presented ('what became') (Hermanns in Flick 2000 p.76).

This was operationalised by asking people about their groups, how they got involved in them, how the groups became involved in the initiatives, the mechanics of the group and the initiatives, and any events or outcomes. The initiatives were at different stages in their life-cycles, so whereas the HAZ was coming to its end and 'what became' was quite a retrospective account of the initiative, in the other two initiatives 'what became' was still part of a developing process. The interview questions for the participation interviews are included as Appendix 2.

The episodic interview structure was not suitable for the 'exclusion' interviews because it would work on a causal process model of exclusion that could not be assumed. Instead, the first set of questions focussed on getting a cursory description of the respondents' routine activities, this then provided material to explore these activities and their role for the respondent, before delving

deeper into the respondents views, opinions and the meanings they attached to their experiences and circumstances. The interview questions for the 'exclusion' interviews are included as Appendix 3.

Both sets of interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, so that a rigid pattern of questions was not imposed, rather, general topics were explored. Not all of the questions were relevant for particular respondents, and topics brought up by the respondents were followed up with prompting questions. The accounts and overviews provided were probed for examples, both in terms of aspects the respondents highlighted themselves, and also in terms of the theoretical categories being investigated.

In both sets of interviews the information provided through this process of questioning led to a review of the theory. In the participation interviews there was an attempt to operationalise Hirschman's typology of exit, voice, loyalty and assault in all three circuits of power, but it was found only to yield significant results in the episodic agency circuit. In the 'exclusion' interviews the respondents put an emphasis on the affective aspects of exclusion not anticipated in my original theorisation, which primarily looked at interactional role exclusion. There was, thus, a need to extend the theory into terms of the moral and ethical components of exclusion to account for these findings.

*Selection of respondents*

The selection of respondents was influenced by a number of factors. In the participation interviews it was necessary to interview representatives of groups that sat on the decision-making structures of the initiatives in order to get a view of

these processes. There was also a need to interview as much of a cross-section of groups as possible. This was achieved by accessing a directory of voluntary and community groups and selecting groups according to different modes of operation and areas of interest. There were a number of limitations to this approach. Firstly, groups not on the directory were excluded, although other groups that came to my attention were included for consideration. Secondly, during the time of the study, there was another research project in Luton specifically orientated on social exclusion in the South Asian community. The other researcher reported that a number of groups she was in contact with already felt over-researched, and the Asian groups contacted by myself did not respond to my invitations to take part in the research. The second major limitation was that there was very little response from groups that were totally voluntary (only two outside of Marsh Farm). It is only possible to speculate on the basis of the characteristics of the groups that did respond. A possible explanation was the lack of time, personnel and other resources that the uninvolved groups would have had to expend for the research with no obvious effect on, or benefit to, the groups' aims or objectives.

In both sets of interviews the limitations in accessing respondents restricted the possible systematicity of reaching respondents. Within these limits, however, it was possible to get a reasonable geographical spread of respondents throughout the areas being studied, and of types of both initiatives and exclusions.

Letters of thanks were sent to all the respondents in the participation interviews and the groups involved in accessing the excluded. Most of the transcription was done by myself, with all of the interviews being fully transcribed. The average length of the participation interviews was 60-70 minutes,

and for the 'exclusion' interviews 40-50 minutes. Some of the interviews, however, where transcribed by a part-time transcriber. In these cases the transcriptions were corrected for minor errors by myself.

*Making contact*

For the participation interviews, contact was made in a number of ways – by letter, by telephone, meeting people at meetings, or calling to their base of operations. These various methods had to be used, as contact information was not always available for the groups. In some cases people responded to the letters by mail, phone or e-mail. In all cases, however, the aim of the research was explained in an informal manner without recourse to technical jargon or perspectives in case this would influence the interviews. Making personal contact was the most effective way of establishing contact with potential interviewees, but even a couple of these then missed arranged interview times and proved difficult to contact again. These were the only cancelled interviews.

Contact with 'the excluded' was made through a number of groups. In some cases leaflets outlining the broad area of interest were circulated by the group or advertised in their newsletters, or I attended some groups at times they felt there would be people available to talk to me, and I informally introduced myself and my research.

The obvious problem is how to contact 'the excluded', and this seemed the only practical way of doing it, even though it meant that the respondents had to have some contact with voluntary or community groups and thus may not have been as excluded as others. The problems accessing the South Asian community

were replicated. Supplementing, but not supplanting the accounts of 'the excluded', the views of those who work with them in the voluntary and community groups were also explored. Due to the wide variety of types of exclusion this supplementation was necessary, as it would have been impossible otherwise, in a case study this size, to get a broader overview of exclusion. A small percentage of those interviewed as excluded were also active members of groups or schemes, and even though they were not as interactively excluded as some of the other excluded interviewees, they were firm in their articulation of how they felt they were excluded.

*Location*

The locations where the interviews took place were influenced by the type of interview. The locations of the participation interviews were chosen by the respondents. Almost all of them were in the voluntary and community group premises, or the respondents place of work, although two of them were in the respondents' homes, and one was in the University as the respondent was there for another meeting. The location of the exclusion interviews were influenced by the means of making contact, that is, those respondents who were approached in the setting of their group were interviewed in the group's premises. The other respondents who replied to advertisements chose where to meet, mostly in a group's premises, although one was at their place of work and the other in their home.

One reason for organising the locations around the respondents was practical, in that it made participation easier for them, and this increased the

likelihood of their contribution to the research. A second reason was to give them a role in setting up the interview process and to allow some degree of reciprocity between interviewer and interviewee. In both sets of interviews seeing the sites of mediation, of both participation and exclusion, was an important means of contextualising their responses and helped me to understand their inputs better.

There were problems of communication with some of the excluded respondents, either in terms of them not understanding the purpose or limitations of the research, or in my failure to make things clear enough for them. A number of people invited to take part in the research during visits to some of the groups were very unwilling to take part for a variety of personal reasons, and of course they were not pursued, while other people were very happy to be interviewed.

*Interviewee bias and moral/ethical concerns*

There are a number of concerns commonly raised in relation to possible interviewee biases. The first concern is that interviewees self-select themselves. I did not consider this a major problem with either set of interviews for a number of reasons. Firstly, in relation to the participation interviews, participants in groups also self-select themselves, so self-selection is part of the process of participation that was being studied. Secondly, groups and the individuals in them were selected according to the criteria of accessing respondents at different levels of the participation processes, and of different types of groups. These groups with contact details, therefore, were not self-selected. Not all of them responded, but letters were followed up with phone calls or personal visits when possible, so that most of

the groups selected that I had correct contact details for, did have a member that was interviewed.

In the 'exclusion' interviews seven of the 10 respondents responded to the advertisement, while the other three were asked if they would take part when they were attending a group, and agreed. A number of people who were asked to partake in the interviews declined. Arguably, therefore, there is potentially a problem with self-selection and of those people who declined to be interviewed. There is no way, however, of getting information from those who do not wish to take part in a study. As the respondents, however, are not taken to be a representative sample of socially excluded people, but as illustrative cases, the problem of self-selection does not invalidate the data.

A second possible problem with regard to interviewee bias is that interviewees may say what they interpret the interviewer as wanting to hear. More broadly this could entail that "how interviewees appear or represent society in specific situations has less to do with how they, or reality, really are … rather, it is about the way they temporarily develop a form of subjectivity" (Alvesson and Sköldberg 2000 p.193). In the participation interviews this problem was countered by inter-method triangulation of data with the documents analysed and meetings observed, or the other interviewees, so that the argumentative devices they both used and discussed in the interviews were evidenced by the other research methods.

In the 'exclusion' interviews this inter-method triangulation was not possible. Rather, the diversity of contradictory repertoires on which they drew was explored. Ultimately, the researcher must make a judgement as to the quality and

authenticity of this 'rich data' (see Geertz 1993). In order to enable this judgement topics were discussed from different angles throughout the interview to get a more rounded and developed view of what they were saying.

One problem with some respondents for the 'exclusion' interviews was that there was a communication problem between the interviewer and the interviewee. Five interviews that took place have not been included in the analysis of social exclusion in chapter 6. These five interviews, for different reasons, provided very little about exclusion, as the responses were either very short, factually based and not expressive, or wandered from the topics to other subjects that did not seem related to exclusion. The reason for not including these interviews in the analysis is pragmatic, as there was little reason for analysing data that added little to an understanding of exclusion. A problem with this pragmatic justification, however, is that precisely this problem of communication or articulation is a very important aspect of exclusion. One interview, therefore, which did not follow the topic guide, but in which the respondent does list a succession of his opinions and experiences is included in the analysis. Beyond including one of these interviews in the analysis, however, and noting the difficulties of an academic discipline recognising the full nature of exclusion because of the difference in styles of communication, there was no way of overcoming this inability within the limits of this study.

The previous concerns of communicating with people who may be classed as 'excluded' show up the obvious moral/ethical dilemmas involved in working with vulnerable people. The power-relationship between the researcher and the researched (which works both ways, although the researcher has a structural surfeit

of power) cannot be avoided. At best it is possible to limit the effects this relationship can cause by being as explicit and transparent as possible, and through the semi-structured nature of the interviews to give them a productive role in the interview process, which hopefully reduced the levels of intrusion and exploitation that took place.

All interviewees were explained the purpose of the interviews and the research, and signed consent forms which detailed the research and the rights of the interviewee. After any queries and these forms were signed, the interviews were recorded.

*Supplementing the interviews*

As well as the interviews, it was necessary to also examine a variety of documents related to each initiative, and, where possible, observe meetings related to the groups or the schemes. The documents examined included minutes, annual reports and plans, internal reports, reports to Luton Borough Council, web-sites, newsletters and updates, as well as government documents. Most of these documents provided background or topic information and did not address the theme of participation. They did, however, afford an overview and provide details of aspects of the schemes, providing a framework for understanding the initiatives. A variety of information did also correspond to the theoretical categories and were coded as such. No perspectives, however, were developed or negated by the documentary analysis.

Observing meetings gave me the opportunity to see how groups' members interacted and developed their ways of discussing and engaging with the schemes.

Also there was much more detailed discussion of various particular aspects, both of the groups and of the schemes, so that the observation both enriched and supplemented the interview and documentary analyses. Extensive notes were taken during these meetings to code. The only ongoing regular public meetings during the time of the study were those of the New Deal for Communities, so it was only possible to include their data.

As well as these three sources of data, it was also necessary to enquire about specific points or unclear data from key informants. This was only done to clarify points or to fill in missing data, and did not override the source material, but was used to augment it.


*Coding*

Having compiled these three sets of data, transcribing the interviews and compiling the notes, it was necessary to code them. They were coded according to the theoretical categories being operationalised in each set of interviews, the circuits of power in relation to the participation initiatives, and the types of exclusion in the 'exclusion' interviews and parts of the participation interviews. The data were coded both for discursive instances and for particular features. Once they were initially coded, the instances of specific codes were compared, contrasted, and if necessary, revised, that is some sub-categories were collapsed together, or sub-divided according to the similarities or dissimilarities in the data. Negative instances, those are, data that disproved or invalidated the theoretical categories, were not, as such, encountered. Rather, data that did not fit well were

accommodated through refining the theoretical categories or by using other perspectives.

The data were also examined from a number of other perspectives, in terms of time-events, in terms of the different types of actors, from the point of view of voluntarism, and from recurring narrative themes in the exclusion interviews. These perspectives put a structure on the theoretical categories and supplemented them. Computer software was not used to code the data, owing to concerns with the constraining nature of computer packages (Seidel 1991, Kelle and Laurie 1995). Instead, the coding was done manually with the use of highlighter pens and cutting and pasting the transcripts.

The codes for the participation interviews are listed as Appendix 4 and for the 'exclusion' interviews as Appendix 5. While a number of these codes were originally devised by the researcher before the analysis, a large proportion of them were developed while analysing the data. Such emergent codes were developed as they occurred, and as such some logical counterparts to some of these codes are not listed because they were not evident in the data. The codes that correspond to a phenomenon of lack are included as this is the way they are referred to by the respondents, and are significant. Particular bits of data have been coded under more than one category, and some of the category codes do have similar elements. The multiplicity of significances of data is a reflection of the multiplicity of life, and the similarity of aspects of categories again reflects that phenomena can have a variety of different significances beyond some shared features.

To be able to extrapolate from the findings, there has to be internal validity, and this was achieved by checking, cross-checking and refining the theoretical

categories and perspectives. Investigating three different initiatives, moreover, allowed comparison and contrast between these three cases to build a broader picture than implied in investigating the three separately.

The internal validity can only be vouchsafed by the experiences of the interviewees, and so copies of the draft analysis of the participation initiatives were sent to the respective interviewees. Time constraints and difficulties contacting the 'excluded' respondents prevented feedback to them. Comments from the participation respondents, positive and negative, were used to correct, amend and improve the analysis, primarily in terms of data correction and analysis. Despite these comments, however, the analyses, interpretation and conclusions can only be that of the researcher, and although this mechanism of feedback is a positive indication of internal validity, it is dependent on the reader accepting the evidence and arguments presented in the research.

**Conclusion**

The methodology has been presented in two parts, firstly an account of the background ontology, epistemology and theory of method, and secondly in the specifications of the methods employed from a consideration of the situatedness of the phenomena being investigated. In both parts the critical focus on contestation of meaning is emphasised as a guide to socially relevant interpretation.

The ontology focussed on the poles of knowledge, the thusness, or immediate experience of reality, and the whatness, or codification, of experience. The inseparability of these poles results in experience never being totally free from being theory-laden, nor in knowledge ever being divorced from the context

through which it is developed. This dual nature to experience and knowledge is precisely how we mediate through reality and social constructions of it.

The cognitive ordering of experience and our schematisations based on it has a profound influence on epistemology, which then has to acknowledge the situatedness of both the object of knowing and the knower and the mediation of this process through language communities. In any social interaction, both the meaning of the action to the agent, and the meaning ascribed to the action by the language community, are relevant. As well as these perspectives, an observer may be interested in inferring the structural logic of the action, which may or may not be congruent with the other meaning-contexts.

Social research has the added component of meaning to account for in establishing its role in explanation. Meaning is context-dependent, and as such, social science needs to develop methods that can map out the contexts in question and be sensitive to the meanings of agents within these contexts. Sensitive and sensitising social research thus necessarily involves an element of induction, and is rarely purely deductive. As social research is typically interpretative, analysis is enabled by breaking down the phenomena in question into categories, establishing relations between elements of these categories, and interpreting their inter-relationships. This knowledge is thus idiographic as well as nomothetic, and as such is not generalisable, despite its internal validity, but elements of it can be extrapolated to contexts which share certain features when care is taken to be sensitive to the factors similar and dissimilar in each context. The relation of critical observation to conceptual categories and to critical hermeneutic interpretation was outlined in Figure 4.1.

This model of ontology, epistemology and methodology was then contrasted with a number of rival models: reductionism, which simplifies away the very phenomena that social research is primarily concerned with; rational choice theory, which as yet has not been operationalised in a manner that regards the reasons of the agents themselves as the motive for choice; versions of radical constructivism that deny an outside reality or that it can be adequately represented in language; structural determinism which neglects the agency of actors; and critical realism, influential to the model proposed, but not quite explicit about the relation in which knowledge stands to reality.

The second part of the chapter was concerned with working out from the phenomena in question to develop the best methods for investigating them. In the case of both phenomena, participation and exclusion, semi-structured interviews were selected as the most appropriate method for developing an understanding of the phenomena, as they allow pertinent aspects to be examined and cross-checked, and also for the respondent to have a formative input into the understanding of the phenomena. These two applications of method were supplemented. In the case of participation by documentary analyses and participant observation, and in the case of exclusion by background research and elements of the participation interviews with those who work with the socially 'excluded'.

The logic behind the way the interview questions were organised was recounted. The review of the theories resulting from the data collected, the concerns and restrictions involved in the selection of respondents, the location of the interviews and the moral/ethical and interviewee bias problems were discussed. The additional methods of documentary analysis, participant observation and use

of key informants was detailed in the way they were used to contextualise, supplement and cross-check the interview data. The logic of coding was made explicit, as well as the rationale behind manual coding, allowing immersion in the data.

Finally, the internal validity of the research was discussed in terms of the internal consistency in coding, as well as the feedback from the respondents in the participant interviews, and finally in the way the analysis can be utilised in interpretation.

Having detailed the methodology and the methods informing the research and how the concepts developed in chapter 2 and 3 fit into this critical scheme, I move on in the next two chapters to the substantive research. In chapter 6 we discuss the data relating to exclusion, but firstly in chapter 5 I turn to the data relating to participation via voluntary and community groups in area-based initiatives.

# Chapter 5: The processes of participation in Area-Based Initiatives in Luton

## Introduction

This Chapter is concerned with theoretically analysing three initiatives based in or around the Luton conurbation that each contain a concern with promoting public participation. A number of important elements need to be explained before this analysis can take place, firstly an outline of the structures of government which relate to these initiatives, an account of government views and policies on participation, a history and description of the initiatives themselves and finally a theoretical description of the initiatives. The theoretical frames for the analysis were developed in Chapter 2 and will be utilised as a means of categorising and understanding important features of the initiatives.

## The Structures of Government relating to the initiatives and participation.

How the structures of government relate to these initiatives is best schematised through a development of Figure 2.1
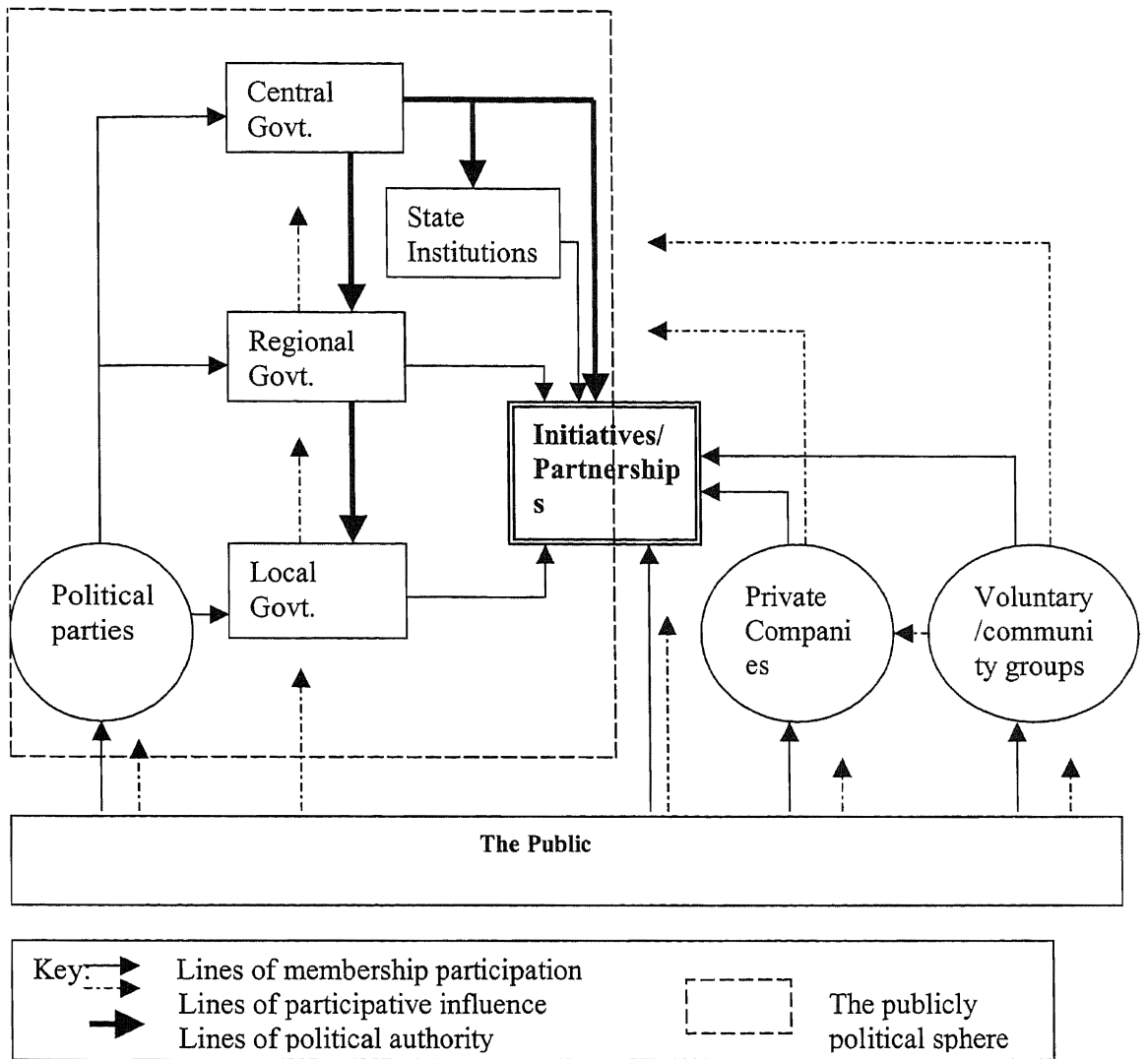
Figure 5.1: The relation of the structures of government to initiatives.

The initiatives/partnerships with which this thesis is concerned are located both in and out of the publicly political sphere since, even though they are in a number of ways subject to political authority, the partners or members from the private company or voluntary/community sectors are not subject to political authority in regard to their involvement in the initiatives.

For the sake of clarity a number of additions or possibilities have been omitted from Figure 5.1. Each initiative or partnership is constituted differently, so that some may exist more in the publicly political sphere than others. Also the level of government from which political authority is exercised is different for a number of the initiatives, and has been depicted as flowing from central government only for simplicity. The different entities that share the same general levels of government have not been differentiated (for example Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) and Government Offices of the Regions (GOs) at regional government level), nor have particular institutions that are not of primary concern to this thesis, such as quangos or trade unions, been included in the diagram.

The three directions of political action remain the same, firstly, political action directed at and within the publicly political sphere which is constituted by membership participation. Secondly, political action on the groups and organisations outside of the publicly political sphere through participative influence. Thirdly political action by these groups or organisations outside of the publicly political sphere oriented to affecting it, either wholly or any of its parts, through participative influence.

**Government policies of participation**

Participation is a theme that enjoys periodic popularity both among politicians and academics, and has been incorporated into many different schemes and services that serve varying purposes, for example in terms of the Community Development Projects of the 1970s or of tenant participation. Prior to the 1990s, four focuses of

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participation can be discerned, that to do with urban regeneration schemes (not all of these schemes, however, encouraged public participation); that of representative group participation, such as tenant and resident organisations; individual participation in delimited spheres of decision-making, for example statutory requirements for public consultation in Structure Planning in the 1970s; and finally to do with service-user participation as a part of the New Public Management focus on treating users as consumers (see Gyford 1991).

The development that signalled a change in the importance of participation was the 1992 Rio Earth Summit and the requirement for all its signatories to develop Local Agenda 21 partnerships which included the public being involved in developing plans and strategies for the development of their areas. Young (1996) notes that in the UK there were generally one of two types of Agenda 21 forum set up, free-standing fora where the forum recommendations were then interpreted by council officers, or fora that were built into the committee structures of the local council. Also, whereas in the 1980s the Conservative government had focussed on property-led regeneration, by the mid-1990s they had streamlined the many various funding streams into the Single Regeneration Budget and had begun to include voluntary and community representatives in the organisation of regeneration projects.

With the election of a Labour government in 1997 participation became a theme of a number of their stated objectives - regeneration, urban renewal, modernising public services, modernising local government, and tackling social exclusion. It is important to note, however, that arguably participation is itself not

a government policy, rather it is reflected or pointed up in various different government policies[8].

Participation is variously described in government publications as "vital to enhancing the democratic legitimacy of local government, the development of community leadership and in improving service delivery" (2001 Local Government White Paper: Strong Local Leadership – Quality Public Services), or the lack of it as a dimension of social exclusion (see SEU 2001b). Participation is often promoted through the development of partnerships that involve representatives from local government, statutory organisations, private companies, voluntary and community groups and, possibly, members of the public.

While partnership is part of the Government's conception of participation and part of its modernising plans, the Government also instigated a number and variety of area-based initiatives across a wide range of policy areas. The logic behind this was firstly to engage people on the basis of their locality in these initiatives, and secondly that they would experiment and innovate in their operations, so that successful projects could be mainstreamed in the future (that is, projects that adapted public services at a local level would, dependent on their success, be implemented across the country).

The Social Exclusion Unit, a cross-departmental working group located in the Cabinet Office, was instrumental to the development of the National Strategy for Neighbourhood Renewal which was developed in a number of stages from

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[8] The civic renewal agenda (see Blunkett 2003) may be interpreted as incorporating participation as a government policy, but despite the existence of an Active Communities Unit (ACU), the Active Citizenship Centre and the urging of civic involvement there is a lack of direct public policies addressing political participation. The then DETR's (1998) Guidance on Enhancing Public Participation in Local Government, for example, concentrated primarily on consultation rather than participation.

1997 and published in 2001. This strategy recognises that part of the reason for weak services in poor neighbourhoods includes "too many special programmes and short-term initiatives rather than a comprehensive, sustained response through mainstream services" (SEU 2001a p.19).

In response to this, and other reasons, the strategy for neighbourhood renewal is based on three main elements.

1. New national policies on problems such as unemployment, crime, health, housing and environment, which, however, specify targets for identified poor neighbourhoods.

2. Local drivers, particularly the development of Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) which should include all sections of the community, and extra resources to empower community representatives to be active within them. Neighbourhood Management is recommended as a possible mechanism for addressing poor services by giving a single person or organisation direct responsibility for services in the locality.

3. National and regional support through increased funding, and teams and units resourcing neighbourhood renewal through statistics, skills and changing the way central government bureaucracy co-ordinates with local partners (SEU 2001a).

Apart from the funding streams for community and voluntary groups, and the requirement for LSPs to engage in dialogue with them, the strategy does not mention participation. The strategy addresses the theme of capacity-building that

was brought up during the consultation preceding its publication as follows, "The concept of capacity-building is seen as a huge opportunity but one fraught with challenges both to the community and the system in general. *The strategy recognises that sustainable renewal can only be achieved if it has community ownership. Full community involvement, starting where the community is, and with its priorities, is as important as improving public services.*" (SEU 2001a p.71 italics in orig.).

It is difficult to square this avowal of commitment to community priorities with the outline of how an LSP might go about developing a Local Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (see Figure 5.2).

**Step 1: Identify priority neighbourhoods**

Are areas in the 10 per cent most deprived wards?

Are areas falling below 'floor targets'?

Are these neighbourhoods that should be renewal priorities for other reasons (e.g. to prevent decline)?

**Step 5: Implement and monitor agreed action**

Implement agreed changes

Monitor changes in outcomes and ways of working

Adapt strategy in response to risks and opportunities

**Step 2: Identify and understand problems of priority neighbourhoods**

What are the baseline statistics?

What are the key problems in the area(s)?

How have they changed over time?

What are the causes?

*Consult with residents and practitioners*

**Step 4: Agree on what more needs to be done**

Agree goals and make commitments, e.g. to:

Set targets;

Change the way existing services work;

Introduce new services: e.g. Neighbourhood Wardens;

Join up services: e.g. co-location;

Expand existing services;

Try Neighbourhood Management;

Consider the most effective use of assets;

Rationalise activity;

Bid for new money/explore new flexibilities with central Government.

*Consult with local people on what they want*

**Step 3: Map resources going into priority neighbourhoods**

How much time and money do organisations including community and voluntary groups spend in the area(s)?

What other assets exist? - volunteers, buildings, facilities, organisations, community groups or networks not currently involved in regeneration?

**Figure 5.2: Steps to develop a local strategy.** (Adapted from SEU 2001 p.47. Italics are not part of the original diagram, but are included in its development pp.117-121)

This outline clearly prescribes how to identify and understand priority neighbourhoods, how to plan, implement and monitor changes in them, with community consultation or involvement only mentioned in Steps 2 and 4 out of 5. Local government minister Barbara Roche has argued "Government should specify the outcomes it wants to achieve. Local communities should determine the means to get them" (2003). Public participation is clearly not central to all aspects of this strategy.

In contrast, public participation has been addressed as a specific theme in relation to the modernisation of local government (see Lowndes et al 1998, DETR 1998). These reports on how to enhance public participation recognise a variety of the problems that have bedevilled participation, and that have been commented on by a range of academics (see Atkinson and Cope 1995, Davoudi and Healey 1995). For example, it is recognised that "the heart of the challenge is to develop a strategy which ensures that participation becomes a mainstream feature of the activities of the authority and not a bolt-on extra" (DETR 1998), as well as the need for participation to have "appropriate connections to the political and managerial process" (DETR, 1998). Such "participation cannot be seen as an alternative to the representative political process but is rather seen as an essential element in that process and managerial and professional efforts to improve service delivery" (DETR, 1998). Underlying both this conception of and role for participation as an element of representative democracy is the aspiration that "open and in-touch councils will be at the centre of their local communities. And at the heart of council's role will be leadership - leadership that gives vision, partnership and quality of life to cities and towns all over Britain" (DETR, 1998).

Recent government research on public participation in local government shows a steady and significant increase in local authorities seeking public participation (see Figure 5.3).



**Trends in the take-up of types of participation by Councils**
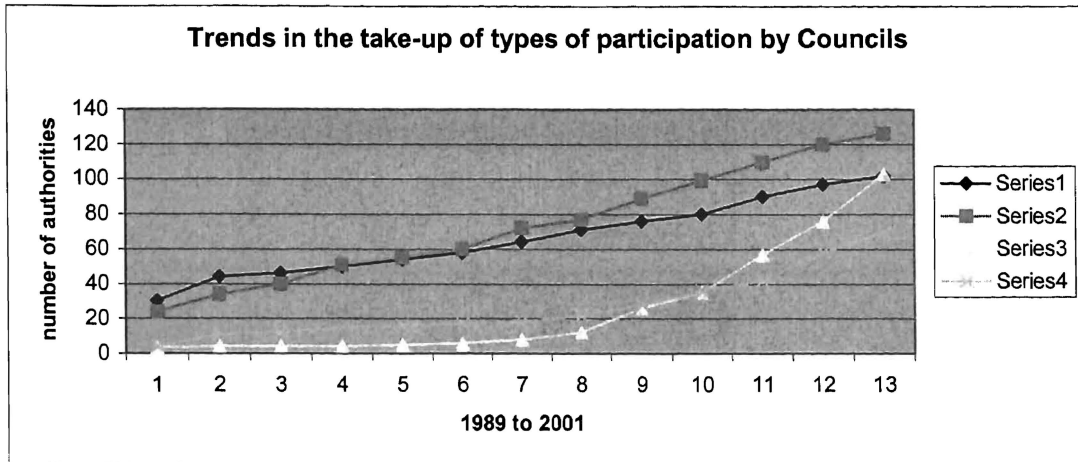
*Key*[9]:
Series 1: Traditional methods of public participation: co-option/committee involvement, consultation documents, q and a sessions, public meetings.
Series 2: Customer oriented consultation: complaints/suggestions schemes, service satisfaction surveys, other opinion polls.
Series 3: innovative methods of consultation: interactive website, citizens' panels, referendums, focus groups.
Series 4: innovative methods of deliberative participation: citizens' juries, visioning exercises, community plans/needs analysis, issues fora.

**Figure 5.3: Trends in the take-up of types of participation by Councils**
(adapted from ODPM 2002 pp.14-16)

All forms of participation have increased significantly, but the largest is customer-oriented consultation followed by traditional and innovative forms of consultation, and least popular are innovative methods of deliberative participation. What the local authorities report as the main benefits of participation initiatives is also striking (see Figure 5.4).

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[9] The numbers on the x-axis in Figure 5.3 represent the years as follows: 1 is 1989, 2 is 1990 and so on.

## Main benefits of participation initiatives
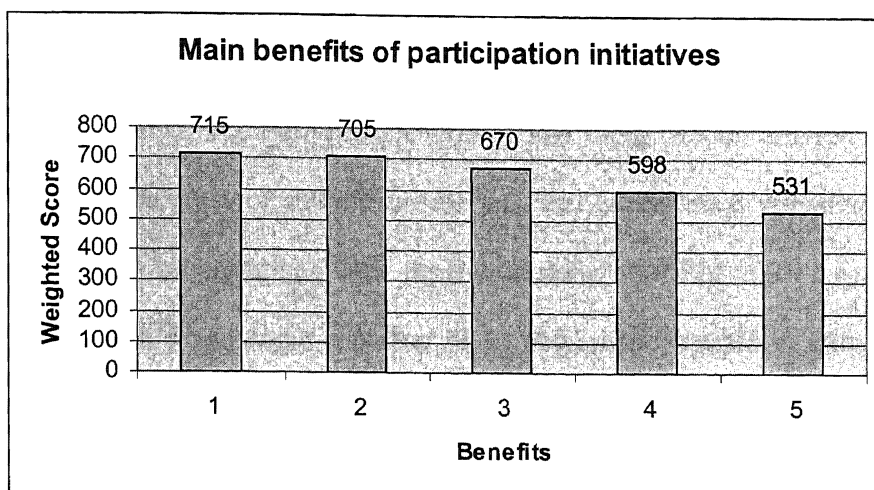
Key[10]:
1: Improvements in services
2: Better decision-making on specific points
3: Better policy-making
4: Greater citizen awareness
5: Community development/empowerment

**Figure 5.4: Main benefits of participation initiatives in local government**
(ODPM 2002 p.41)

The three most valued benefits are improvements in services, better decision-making on specific points and better policy-making, perhaps reflecting central government policy on improving service delivery and the leadership role of local authorities, while the two least valued benefits of the five presented to respondents were greater citizen awareness and community development/empowerment.

As well as this, however, "56% of authorities are concerned that participation exercises may simply capture the views of dominant, but

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[10] Figure 5.4 provides a weighted score for each factor. Weightings were calculated by multiplying the number of times a factor was ranked first, second, third and so on by a simple weighting (e.g. where five factors were ranked, those factors ranked first received a weighting of five, those ranked second a weighting of four and so on (ODPM 2002 p.39)

unrepresentative, groups. This is compounded by the fact that 44% of authorities report having experienced difficulties in engaging people from certain social groups, particularly, those from ethnic minorities and young people" (ODPM 2002 p.6). Nevertheless, 70% of authorities reported "that participation initiatives are 'often' or 'fairly' influential on final decision-making" (ODPM 2002 p.6), and previous research found about a quarter of all authorities engaged in initiatives which gave citizens direct control over the management of some services (Lowndes et al 1998).

To summarise what can be taken from the evidence of these government documents, participation is seen as an important theme, but primarily for what it can contribute to delivering better services and enabling good leadership. There is a strong drive to increase participation in local government, but mostly in the form of consultation (customer-oriented or conventional) or traditional forms of participation. Participation in the new urban governance of partnerships is not as strongly driven, as is evidenced by the strong focus on baseline information and categorical priorities, and is envisaged as occurring primarily through voluntary and community groups. Money has been allocated for the development of community capacity and LSPs are obliged to consult with community groups, but there is little indication of the role to be given to voluntary and community groups in these partnerships.

Finally, although the government argues that the emphasis "is on giving residents and community organisations opportunities for influence, rather than imposing responsibilities that they do not want" (SEU 2001a p.72), the

requirement for areas to compete for the status of area-based initiatives in the recent past has given these areas, if not a responsibility to participate, then an opportunity, which, if not taken by an area, will leave it out of the processes aimed at improving urban life.

**Area-Based Initiatives**

Although it is necessary to understand the context of the manifestation of participation in government policy, and how participation is prefigured in terms of local governance, in particular in local authorities and LSPs, the other side of participation in government policies and programmes is that developed in the aforementioned area-based initiatives.

Government-sponsored research into area-based initiatives has found that, despite the intention for them to lead to mainstreaming, that "most ABIs represent a distraction from mainstreaming rather than a contribution to new ways of thinking about and responding to core problems in mainstream services" (NRU 2002). Importantly for this thesis, the "evidence from all ABIs is of the marginalisation of community interests and/or of their difficulty in gaining an equal seat at the table of partnership" (NRU 2002 p.24) and in recognition of this argues that there "remains a major need for capacity building - in the statutory sector as much as in the voluntary/community sector - if collaborative working is to become a reality" (NRU 2002).

The aim of this part of the thesis is to investigate participation in three of these area-based initiatives, to see how the process of participation is experienced by those resident in, or representing, excluded/deprived communities, how it has

developed and to develop both the details of the problems involved in these initiatives, and the participants views of their achievements. As such, the aim is not to judge the effectiveness of these ABIs in delivering regeneration[11], but to further develop our understanding of the process of participation in them, and in the later chapters to link this with the concern with social exclusion.

*Luton Health Action Zone*

Luton HAZ was the result of a successful bid to become one of the eleven first-wave HAZs that were set up in April 1998, based on the geographical area of Luton Borough Council, a unitary local authority with an estimated population of 183,000 in 1999 (Shah, 2002 p.6).

> As the preliminary review of the HAZs 'Learning to make a difference' (1999) states, HAZs were expected to be 'trailblazers', 'pioneering innovative approaches to reducing health inequalities'. Three broad strategic objectives for HAZs were set out. These were
>
> • To identify and address the public health needs of the local area;
>
> • To increase the effectiveness, efficiency and responsiveness of services;
>
> • To develop partnerships for improving people's health and relevant services, adding value through creating synergy between the work of different agencies (Shah, 2002 p.7).

HAZs were, therefore, explicitly about improving service delivery, but allied to this was a recognition of the need to tackle the wider determinants of

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[11] The cross-departmental Government Intervention in Deprived Areas review in 2000 "recognised that successive phases of area-based intervention had failed to reduce inequalities or achieve regeneration objectives" (NRU 2002 p.2).

health and a stress on community development. In January 2001, however, national priorities changed, with a focus on tackling cancer, coronary heart disease and mental health becoming the main priorities. Accordingly, Luton HAZ's approach to modernisation had to reflect the changing priorities (Shah 2002 p.7).

There were five strategic groups, into four of which discrete projects fed – Health and Social Care, Capacity for Health, Structural Inequalities and Healthy Environments (the last two merged in mid 2001), and an Evaluation and Needs Assessment group whose role was to develop means of evaluating these projects. Both those involved in running these projects and the target groups of these projects were involved in developing what would be considered as success and failure for the projects.

The projects were represented by the lead organisation running them at the Strategic Group meetings. Both the Chairs and the Change Managers of the Strategic Groups were all members of key partner organisations. The Strategic Groups reported to a Project Control Group, that reported to the Executive Team, which in turn was accountable to the Health Partnership Board. Voluntary and community groups were thus represented either on the Strategic Groups if they were a lead organisation (of the 67 listed projects under the four strategic groups, only nine were led by a voluntary or community group, see Shah 2002 pp.114-125) or on the Health Partnership Board as representatives of the voluntary and community sector (from the minutes of the Health Partnership Board there appears to have been three voluntary and community sector representatives from an approximate total of 19 board members). The only other means of public

participation in the HAZ, other than in the projects themselves, was via a User and Carer Participation Group that fed into the HAZ Executive Team.

One particular HAZ project 'Healthy Living in Luton' was a funding opportunity for voluntary and community groups with their own projects to avail of HAZ and New Opportunities Fund (NOF) funding. 53 community projects were approved in the year '99/00, the vast majority of which were led by voluntary or community groups. These projects only had representation on the Strategic Group through the HAZ-funded lead. Originally these projects were approved by a HAZ committee, but in 2001/2 the funding was put in with Voluntary Action Luton's Community Funding Initiative, with HAZ representation.

As an indication of the interest and involvement in the HAZ, 130 people attended the first stakeholder conference in September 1998 to discuss the draft implementation plan. 127 attended in November 1999 to discuss its progress. In December 2000 there was a first stakeholder event engaging statutory agencies, to develop the Luton Health Improvement Plan (HImP), and in May 2001 there was a second stakeholder event, for community and voluntary groups, for the Luton HImP, with 75 attendees.


*Single Regeneration Budget/ Luton-Dunstable Partnership*

The Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) was originally set up in the early 1990s to replace the many different government funding streams for regeneration and renewal and put them into one system. There have been six different rounds of the SRB, where funding for a maximum of seven years can be bid for by a local partnership under set strategic objectives:

The Strategic Objectives in SRB6 were:

SO1: Enhance the employment prospects and education and skills of local people.

SO2: Address social exclusion and enhance opportunities for the disadvantaged.

SO3: Promote sustainable regeneration, improving and protecting the environment
and infrastructure, including housing.

SO4: Support and promote growth in local economies and businesses.

SO5: Tackle crime and drug abuse and improve community safety. (LBC 2000
p.25)

The local partnership for Luton is the Luton-Dunstable Partnership (LDP)
which encompasses the entire conurbation of Luton, Dunstable and Houghton
Regis, and not just the area of Luton Borough Council. SRB bids can specify
different areas in the different round bids. The original SRB1 bid by the LDP was
successful, while the SRB5 bid was largely unsuccessful except for money for
community capacity building, while the most recent bid, SRB6, accepted in
August 2000, was successful.

The SRB is being given a more economic focus by government, and as a
delivery partnership is envisaged as operating as a subset of LSPs in the future.
SRB bids are "required to show that they can lever in matching funds from sources
outside the SRB, both from the private sector and from European Union Structural
Funds" (Hill, 2000 p.32).

The government institution at the regional level which judges and
administers the bids, including approval of the partnership's annual Delivery Plan,
is the East of England Development Agency (EEDA). Approved projects in the bid

are run through project managers who are responsible for monitoring and evaluation, to be reported to both LDP and EEDA.

In 2000 the LDP Board had three community and voluntary representatives out of a total of 17 board members, and there were three voluntary and community groups represented on the LDP's Executive Committee out of a total of 13 members. The three community representatives on the LDP Board are elected from among the Community Liaison Group (CLG), which is a group comprised solely of community and voluntary groups, but these groups do not necessarily have to be running an SRB project.

Six areas have received allocations under SRB6, five in Luton and one cross-conurbation strand.

It is envisaged that each of the five priority neighbourhood areas will form itself into some form of NAP (Neighbourhood Area Partnership) or Community Trust. For the Cross Conurbation strand the LDP Community Liaison Group will represent the communities across the conurbation and will monitor the delivery of the projects within the strand.

The NAPs and the CLG will be involved in the development of the Delivery Plan, the project appraisal process for the projects in their area, and continuing monitoring of progress. All projects will be monitored and evaluated by the community structure for their involvement of local people and the reflection of their concerns in delivery.

In a similar way to the current operation to LDP's CLG, it is envisaged that the NAPs will be the catalyst for sustaining and building on participation keeping residents informed about the scheme on a regular basis. This will also involve a number of presentations from organisations delivering projects informing residents about delivery and ways in which they can continue to be involved. The Action

Workers will also be locally accountable to this group whose working priorities would be determined through the community structure (LBC 2000 pp.8-9).

As an indication of the executive structures of the SRB, members of Luton Borough Council's Regeneration and Citizenship Scrutiny Committee "expressed concern at what they consider to be a lack of accountability concerning bids, they also expressed concern at reports that SRB bids had been amended by Senior Officers without prior consultation with community groups, ward councillors and volunteers" (LBC 2001 p.3).

*New Deal for Communities (NDC) – Marsh Farm.*

There have been three phases of the New Deal for Communities scheme, originally announced for 17 areas in 1999. In phase one, the justification for NDC status was made to Central Government. Luton was identified as one of the authorities that could put forward a bid. Two areas corresponding to the NDC criteria of being deprived and of comprising roughly 4,000 households were selected by Luton Borough Council to compete for the status of being Luton's bid, which would entitle the area to access to funding of just under £50M over ten years.

Community representatives involved in approving and monitoring projects as an SRB1 area committee, as well as from other groups in the area, were invited to become involved in the Marsh Farm bid. In 1999/00 Marsh Farm beat the other contender for NDC status from Luton, Bury Park, and moved onto phase two of the programme where, firstly, proposals for the renewal of the area were developed, which had to be approved by GO East and Government Ministers, and secondly, nine 'Quick Win' projects were funded in Marsh Farm.

At this stage the community was represented by a shadow board of residents and service partners; five themed advisory groups covering Crime, Health, Employment, Education, and Housing and Environment (these themes reflected government guidance on priority issues for all NDCs); and two fora, one for service providers, and one for street co-ordinators (a plan whereby 100 local residents would act as information and feedback conduits between the board and the residents of Marsh Farm) and community groups.

In the Delivery Plan that was accepted in 2001, the Marsh Farm Community Development Trust (MFCDT) board was set up as having 16 resident directors, six from community partners, and two from Luton Borough Council – two councillors from the electoral wards that Marsh Farm straddles. Targets and milestones were set under seven headings, Employment, Education, Crime, Health, Housing and Environment, Building Community Capacity and Tackling Racial Disadvantage, and Better Neighbourhood Management and Local Services. The flagship project in the delivery plan was the purchase of an old disused factory to house the Trust, support business enterprises and provide a community centre. One of the aims in the delivery plan was that "ideally we are looking to community enterprises to become the established local businesses for the future" (MFCDT 2001, p.24) in a strategic attempt to ensure that regeneration funds do not seep out of the community, but the plan recognised the risks associated with this strategy. Other aspects of the plan included work to help 'design out' crime; to put a hold on any Neighbourhood Warden scheme for a number of years following further consultation; to drive down youth crime without driving young offenders

off the estate; and development of the Neighbourhood Management of local services, centred in the proposed Community and Enterprise Resource Centre.

Luton Borough Council agreed to be the accountable body for the New Deal and to forward-fund the Trust, since the Trust, although it was incorporated as a company with limited liability in October 2001 (the effective start of phase three – delivery) and was then able to draw down money, it did not itself have delegated spending authority, so that all projects and expenditures had to be agreed with both LBC and GO East. Another requirement in the set up of the New Deal was the hiring of a delivery agency, Renaisi, to assist in the administration and organisational operations of the Trust.

In the GO East review of Marsh Farm NDC 2001/02, it was attributed the status of "satisfactory progress but with some difficulties". The two areas over which GO East expressed concern were, firstly, the involvement of partner agencies (compared to other NDCs, there was not a great deal of match-funding being spent in the area, which was one of Central Government's priorities); and secondly, the involvement of the wider community in the process, especially hard-to-reach groups (so that GO-East arranged the provision of a Neighbourhood Renewal Adviser to report on Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) involvement in the process). Finally, the review held off granting MFCDT delegated authority until the partnership continued "to make satisfactory progress in addressing identified deficiencies in respect of project development and appraisal" (MFCDT 2003).

**Analysis of the data**

The data relating to the initiatives are presented according to the theoretical categories presented in Chapter 2. In terms of each theoretical category there is a discussion of the elements, instances and quotes related to them. The detailed exposition of the theoretical categories developed here is then used in the later chapters to structure the argument of the thesis.

*Episodic agency circuit*

As detailed in Chapter 2, investigating the episodic agency circuit requires specifying the entities at the different levels of government involved in putting forward and making decisions, as well as the types and substances of their decisions, such as allocative decisions, entitling decisions, rule and role decisions and non-decisions.

The decisions made in the three initiatives via the episodic agency circuit, and who made them, are summarised in Table 5.1 before they are discussed in terms of each particular initiative.

|  | HAZ | SRB | NDC |
|---|---|---|---|
| Central Govt | Setting initiatives Change of criteria | Setting round 6 Strategic objectives Role for voluntary and community groups | Setting initiative Additionality |
| EEDA |  | Rejection of SRB5 bid, except for capacity building Blocking of forward-funding. |  |
| GO East |  |  | Not delegating spending authority Neighbourhood renewal advisor Appraisal mechanisms |
| LBC |  |  | Problems with approving projects |
| HAZ Board | Determinants of health agenda/community development |  |  |
| LDP |  | Area panels |  |
| CLG |  | Bid for support worker |  |
| MFCDT |  |  | Make-up of board. Community control of community building. Cautious on projects from statutory bodies. |
| Groups/members | Some user involvement in planning | Cases for forward-funding, cross-conurbation area, BME funding. | BME issues. |

**Table 5.1 Actors and decisions in the area-based initiatives**

<u>HAZ</u>

Central government was instrumental in initially setting up Health
Action Zone initiatives, and was also responsible for the significant change in

direction of the criteria to be pursued in HAZs in 2000. These macro-level decisions can be traced as a change from an allocative and entitling decision in terms of the development of an integrated healthy living focus, towards more prescriptive rule decisions in terms of targets.

In contrast to the government's change of direction in terms of the HAZ programme, there were mixed views as to whether the Luton HAZ board had developed the original wider determinants of health agenda, one HAZ worker felt that it had become downplayed with the change in the government's priorities

> At the time when HAZ started ... the most exciting thing was that finally, finally, people have recognised that health and inequality were linked and we were actually going to do something about it and we weren't just ... blaming it on poor people because they ate too much chips, we were looking at the wider determinants. And that was really exciting ... although I feel its slipping away again ... it felt really radical at the beginning and it doesn't anymore (respondent in Shah, 2002 p.31).

While a senior member of the HAZ felt that the "partnership board never opened into the wider determinants agenda, so it never moved to thinking beyond managing the HAZ programme, so that, in a way, I think is a disappointment" (respondent in Shah 2000 p.31). Another respondent felt that within the Luton HAZ structure the strategic groups were not where decisions were really made

> I think the real decisions about where the money was going to be spent by HAZ have not been taken by that group, they've been taken elsewhere and rubber-stamped by the group, and I think that has been a frustration and I think that's why a lot of people stopped coming (respondent in Shah 2000 p.24).

Working below the HAZ board structure, voluntary and community members have limited direct access to the strategic decision-making process, but users have been involved in designing a number of projects

> There is evidence of user involvement in the planning stages of this work. For instance in the development of the chronic disease management programme, the workshop involved ex-patients and some relatives of the patients. In fact identified as good practice is the way this project has had a very participatory approach to its work (Shah 2002 p.92)

The launch of the Healthy Living project was cited as a successful process of consultation, with 70 – 80 people attending

> Basically you drafted something, you went back to the community and said look this is what's going in, we want your comments, and I thought that the launch was a really good way of hearing what people had to say (HAZ worker)

Out of this consultation changes were then made

> Some of them wanted to be identified as a separate group, like the Indians, they didn't want to be identified as just South Asian … they were concerned that we were going to spend too much money on salaries, so we cut it down to two workers part-time rather than four full time (respondent in Shah 2002 p.97)

The HAZ evaluation report, though, noted that there were problems "getting steering group members to be active members of the group. On average 7 people turned up to most of the meetings. Community representatives were least likely to turn up" (Shah 2002 p.96). The report concluded that "Whilst it is recognised that every effort has been made to have community representation on the steering group, this has in reality been difficult." (Shah 2002 p.96)

At the interrelationship between the micro- and meso- levels, therefore, the HAZ board had displayed contradictory tendencies in terms of the initial role of the wider determinants of health agenda. Furthermore, although the decision-making structure of the HAZ was quite insulated from community members and users, there were instances of seeking community views and responsiveness to these views in terms of micro-level operational decisions being changed.


SRB

The government's decisions relating to SRB were, firstly, the allocation of money to regeneration activities, and secondly the stipulation of the strategic objectives. Central government also set the necessity for greater voluntary/community involvement in successful bids. The macro-decision of the strategic objectives were quite broad, so that the negotiation of bids could take place at the meso- level between the partnerships and the regional agencies.

In terms of the rejection of the SRB5 bid except for funds for community capacity-building, however, EEDA followed central government guidance. A proposal from voluntary and community groups during SRB6, backed by the LDP, to allow the forward-funding of approved SRB projects was rejected by EEDA

(appraised projects thus had to fund themselves for 3 months before claiming the funds back, and the payment process takes approximately 4 weeks, so in effect groups have to be able to fund themselves for just over 4 months). This example highlights the importance of rule decisions.

Following on from the rejection of the SRB5 bid, voluntary and community groups campaigned for greater involvement in the SRB6 bid process. This was facilitated by the setting up of area panels for scoring and approving projects. These panels included representatives from voluntary and community groups and members of the relevant communities (approved projects still had to go through an appraisal process by LDP/EEDA).

Two respondents reported that in this scoring process, project proposals from statutory organisations that scored low on the scale, kept being scored until they became approved. These projects also received a greater proportion of funding than their scoring, in relation to other projects, would suggest. The relative weakness of the voluntary/community sector is also shown in its proportionally low direct input to the LDP boards compared to the statutory sector

During the SRB6 bid preparation phase a number of voluntary/community groups campaigned and argued that the five proposed wards would not cater for dispersed communities within Luton, and so a cross-conurbation strand was included in the bid. Also, although EEDA turned down an LDP recommendation for forward-funding for voluntary/community projects, LDP itself investigated other means of forward-funding projects.

One of the projects in the SRB6 bid was for a support worker for the CLG to help it in its administration, promotion and to run activities for the benefit of the

voluntary/community sector. Although three CLG members are represented on the LDP board, it was commented that the CLG is treated as having more of a second-hand consultation role, and that it needed representation on the Executive board to properly represent the voluntary/community sector "because in translation much of the concerns of the voluntary sector are lost" (voluntary group manager).

Individual members of groups brought up the issues of greater involvement in SRB6, which was taken up, the case of forward-funding which was not, the need to cater for dispersed communities, which was taken up, and against the low level of projects and funding being awarded to BME groups, which it was felt had had some limited effect. One of the projects approved was to delegate a pot of money to Voluntary Action Luton (VAL), a voluntary umbrella group, to distribute funding to voluntary/community groups through their Community Funding Initiative (CFI).

The macro decision regarding strategic objectives had meant that allocative and entitling decisions were made more in the interface between the groups, the LDP and EEDA, than by central government, despite this though, the major rule decisions were made by EEDA. The rule for community and voluntary involvement did facilitate meso- level changes in the structure of the bid as well as micro-level independence in terms of the individual projects, but the sector remained under-represented in the higher level structures of the LDP, and 're-decisioning' undermined the role of community members at the meso-level of the area panels.

## NDC

Central government had a major role in structuring the NDC process: the NDC criteria; for the areas to comprise approximately 4,000 households; for the categorical themes that had to be addressed by every NDC; the necessary stages of the bid; the appraisal mechanisms; the necessity of partnership working and attendant match-funding; and operating according to equality principles, were all set down by central government. Furthermore, the government set down not simply the aim of bending mainstream services into the deprived areas, but the added requirement that any such bending resulted in 'additionality' that is, that there is some added benefit or synergy that delivers greater service than in monetarily equivalent normal mainstream delivery. Central government also recommended the strategies of neighbourhood management and neighbourhood wardens as elements of the New Deal process although it did not make these requirements.

In contrast to both the HAZ, where since 2000 direction has been given through targets, and the SRB where direction was given through broad strategic objectives, the level of direction from central government in the NDC extends to allocation, entitlement and a plethora of rule and role decisions and guidance, not simply at the macro-level but extending into the meso- and micro-levels.

GO-East were involved in the selection of Marsh Farm as an NDC area over Bury Park; enacted the requirement for a delivery agency to be involved, and, during the study, had so far desisted from awarding MFCDT delegated spending authority. In some cases GO-East have backed MFCDT in discussion with LBC

over particular projects, but have also blocked several proposals because they "fail our appraisal requirements" (GO East officer cited in Wainwright 2003). GO-East also decided on the need for a neighbourhood Renewal Advisor to investigate and report on BME involvement in the Marsh Farm New Deal.

LBC were reported as

> Seeking to run the New Deal arrangement by the accounting route rather than letting the Board get on with what it needs to do. ... [R]eally their responsibility is purely for the money, but you can make the money responsible for everything (MFCDT board member from partner organisation).

LBC were regarded as being unnecessarily restrictive in project approval. LBC have given appraisal guidance to MFCDT, but MFCDT have felt that the various departments in LBC have not sufficiently sought ways to work with the Trust, although MFCDT stated in a review that they were improving. In this review MFCDT also argued that LBC, when imposing regulations and procedures on MFCDT, did not do so in a constructive manner, that is, they were blocking proposals and were not suggesting other ways or means that may enable MFCDT to progress. LBC agreed to address this (MFCDT 2002).

MFCDT has been committed to the principle of community control. This is reflected in the composition of the board which gives the resident directors a 2/3 majority and in their acquisition of the disused factory site, when they resisted pressure from GO-East to put a Trust with a minority of residents as directors in charge of the site.

MFCDT has been cautious in approving project proposals from statutory organisations for funding. The Trust is applying the criterion of additionality quite strictly, as they do not want to use NDC money for services which they believe LBC or other statutory organisations should be providing, although MFCDT did step in to fund the Jubilee Centre and Marsh House (local community venues) when LBC withdrew its funding of them because of budget cuts. The low proportion of resulting match-funding is in tension with the government's desire for extensive bending of mainstream services into deprived areas.

There is a certain tension within the board as to whether it should act as a corporate body overseeing NDC money in match-funding and neighbourhood management, or a belief in the need to promote a participatory people-focused means of self-government. This was reflected in different opinions over whether enterprises should be promoted via a Business Development Fund, or to promote community enterprises as a means of renewing the community and sustaining regeneration past the time period of the NDC. The government's professed desire to encourage 'bottom-up' strategies is not so far reflected in action to promote, develop and support community enterprise projects. MFCDT also looked at delegating some of the community chest funding that they provided to either VAL's CFI or the local SRB trust, to prevent duplication, but the board decided the community chest was a way of engaging smaller projects into the NDC process.

A major issue expressed through some board members and members of the community is the level of targeting of activity at the BME community. The Neighbourhood Renewal Advisor requested by some members and brought in by

GO-East found that although the MFCDT board does have equality principles and a recognition and commitment to minority ethnic issues, it has not acted on these principles sufficiently to address them adequately (Brown 2002). In particular the advisor reported that there was a lack of ethnic monitoring of beneficiaries of projects; a lack of projects emanating from within the Trust to tackle ethnic minority issues; a lack of adequate consultations with the BME communities; and no clear strategy to tackle these issues. There was a high proportion of BME-supported projects through the Community and Youth Chests, but little of the main projects specifically address BME issues. The Neighbourhood Renewal adviser recommended an action plan to address these issues (Brown 2002), but despite urging by members to implement this action plan, it was not being implemented at the recommended rate.

The tension evident in the MFCDT board reflects that between the government's avowals to support bottom-up action and their constant presence through rules and their subordinate agencies in the strategies and plans of the initiative. Despite the fact that MFCDT in theory should have control over major allocative decisions at the micro-, and to an extent the meso-, levels, in practice only those congruent with GO- East and LBC have been effected.

*Facilitative Circuit – capacities, capitals and actualities*

As detailed in Chapter 2, the facilitative circuit concerns the techniques and processes that provide the material sources of power. These processes are both subject to decisions from the episodic agency circuit while also enabling decisions to be made. It is necessary, therefore to examine each initiative in terms of the

human, financial, cultural and infra-structural capitals and processes involved in them.

HAZ

Although funding voluntary and community groups was not a main priority of the HAZ, funding was available through a number of means. The ability to access this funding, however, needed to be developed. In a conference on community development, one project reported one of their key challenges as there being "No structured support from statutory agencies for accessing funds – relied on passionate/enthusiastic volunteers" (respondent in HAZ 2000 p.7). While in the Healthy Living project "it became obvious that workers would be needed to support groups to fill in applications, deliver on their commitments etc." (Shah 2002 p.95).

The structure of accessing funding was seen as hampering the development of agreed shared objectives among partners

> A lot of what stops partnerships working is actually the government initiatives that are supposed to promote it, because of the way that funding comes down. ... [I]ts often one organisation has to apply for funding and because the time-scales are often short it doesn't allow for good partnerships to develop, so often partnerships are thrown together for the sake of being able to apply for funding. And they're not really partnerships founded [on] willingness to work together, they're partnerships founded on "we've got to work together to be able to apply for money". Apart from getting the money, there might not be any joint objectives (respondent in Shah 2002 p.23)

The lack of joint objectives was then identified in the evaluation report as a problem in a number of projects, because there was no shared vision, objectives were not agreed and set, and the workers were left without the necessary structure to organise their work

## SRB

The capacity to access funding and the capacities that funding generates, are the primary features of these initiatives. A 'chicken and egg' situation in relation to funding is described by a number of respondents.

> One of the main stumbling blocks to access a proper project, SRB, project, is that they pay in arrears, so you've got to do three months work and then claim, and then it probably takes another six weeks for that claim to come through so you're actually working over four months without any money. Now that's okay for councils and the like and big organisations, but it isn't for community groups, because how can you do that if you haven't got any reserves? (CLG member)

In relation to the Voluntary Action Luton Community Funding Initiative, where they administer small grants of funding to community and voluntary groups, it is not clear whether the availability of funding stimulates community activity or makes it more visible: "it's the pot of money that, actually, it's a honey pot, which enables you to view, because unless you can put that money out there you don't see who comes for it really". It was also felt, however, that because there was such a wide variety of funding streams beyond the SRB, such as lottery money and different charity commissions, that this gave groups able to access them a level of

autonomy and had alleviated the problem of patronage whereby some groups had been dependent on favours from councillors or council officers.

The community groups were critical of the bureaucratic processes of the SRB,

> They [LDP and EEDA] do what's necessary sometimes to rubber-stamp something and then the reality is that actually the delivery is done slightly different, and I think one of the problems is that they never do touch base with, too closely with the delivery, and so they can be as frosty as they like (project manager).

The groups, however, were very mindful of stressing their own internal structures and procedures for the purposes of propriety and professionalism. There is a clear recognition among all the community groups that they require structures, systems and bureaucratic capacity to interface with the SRB process: "we have to have the bureaucracy, that's about good governance". But at the same time they feel that "we've got to be ... user-friendly ... and then we deal with the more sort of bureaucratic end behind closed doors."

The most commonly cited benefit of the different initiatives and other fora, was facilitated by the ability to network

> Well I've learnt so much about all the different organisations that exist in the town, the networking, the finding out, the information that gives me personally, and also the information that I can share with the client group and colleagues (project manager).

The converse aspect of networking, however, is that groups or communities that do not do it, or do not have the capacity or resources to do it sufficiently, are always behind in knowledge: "if people aren't going to committee meetings and knowing what's going down then I'm afraid you're always going to be outside the door" (group chair).


NDC

The inflexibility of the requirements of the NDC programme is a common theme

> Some of the timetables are far too unrealistic, some of the project application processes are far too stringent, and far too tight, and they're not flexible enough. They could be a lot more flexible, there could be a lot more support that could be given. If I think back about what we do, a lot of it I can easily do now because I now see what the government has asked for, what the council can do, and if I'm doing it again its easy to put templates in place ... guidelines, but we didn't have any of that (community Trust board member).

> The community hasn't got the right support or training, a number of them, we are losing some of the businesses, or perhaps the agencies that we shouldn't be losing, and that's through them getting frustrated with things not happening the right way (community Trust board member)

The corporate structures required by a Trust engaged in the variety of activities that the MFCDT is is quite substantial: the main Trust board; five boards with delegated powers and responsibilities; five Advisory groups (which must have non board members involved in the design and prioritisation of projects); project appraisals and monitoring; liasing with other organisations in the local

area, as well as three different tiers of government and other NDCs; regeneration projects and community groups – all of which require strategies, policies, discussion, consultation and scrutiny before and during implementation.

The difficulties in getting these structures and procedures in place have taken up a great deal of time and effort, and the Trust is still developing. The effects of this were evident in the limited success of the Quick Wins in Phase 2, the majority of which did not progress as planned, and the slow progress of its Phase 3 projects. In the second year 11 out of 26 projects had not spent even a third of their allotted funds. The major problem was identified as the appraisal process – projects have to be appraised three times (an independent technical appraisal, a community appraisal, and appraisal by GO East) (Wainwright 2003 p.134) – but it was not always clear whether this was a delay internally in the Trust, or externally with GO-East (as reported of some projects at board meetings) – a further symptom of the needed improvement in both internal and external processing.

A number of the board members felt that other board members lacked the necessary skills for the NDC to function as well as it could. Some emphasised technical and professional skills, while others stressed the need for a more people and values orientated approach.


Across initiatives

A feature common to all three initiatives was a concern with community spaces. Six SRB projects were for community centres, with four more planned, and they are predominantly to be run by local trusts, and, as has been seen, Marsh Farm's

flagship project was the acquisition and development of a Community Enterprise and Resource Centre. In contrast, the projects under the Capacity for Health HAZ strand utilised the idea of 'Healthy Living Centres' that were not about building new community spaces, but utilising space that could potentially be, or was already being, used by the community to run projects. A number of Marsh Farm board members criticised the locked expenditure that LBC had in existing community centres and the cost involved in running and maintaining them. The number of projects for new centres is a clear criticism of the lack of current community space, or its accessibility and usage, and a clear statement of belief (if implicit) that their own self-run centres will provide a better resource.

*Dispositional Circuit – Culture, Identity, Belief*

As detailed in Chapter 2, the dispositional circuit is concerned with the cultural beliefs and identities which are both a source of social power, and are affected by decisions in the episodic agency circuit. In examining the features of this circuit in each of the initiatives, therefore, we need to pay especial attention to the values expressed by the objectives, rules and members of the initiatives.

HAZ

The theme of health improvement was itself seen as an energising theme, one which could enable partners to work towards a common vision, and one which, because of its tangibility, could be used to engage the public, this then enabled some groups in their operations "the HAZ status allows us to have leverage with

venues and get them free of charge ... being part of HAZ, it makes people more aware of the project as well" (respondent in Shah 2002 p.75).

Community development was a strong theme within the HAZ, with a day conference dedicated to its discussion. All of the interviewed HAZ respondents reported being happy with the community development approach, and the HAZ evaluation report details its implementation in a number of projects. This was expressed by one HAZ worker in relation to working with voluntary and community groups

> Patience and certainly for me an understanding of the fragility of the voluntary sector, ... recognising the need to build up trust, ... with the bigger organisations in the town; recognising peoples' strengths and building on them ... it takes a lot of tact and a lot of diplomacy and it requires a dropping of egos (respondent in Shah 2002 p.20).

There is also an element of instrumentality in this use of community development approaches. "Community involvement was seen as integral to developing the plan as this leads to increased ownership and a higher probability that the project will be successful" (Shah 2002 p.95), while in one project the public network meetings did not follow the HAZ aims: "Attempts to get the network meeting to discuss the wider implications of the project have been seen as distracting from looking at 'what the people in the project want to talk about'" (Shah 2002 p.11). Also,

It was expressed by a number of projects that although projects have to feed back progress into HAZ, HAZ have not been very good feeding back down to the projects – about what they think about the progression of projects for instance (Shah 2002 p.30).

One of the advantages that the HAZ had provided for the statutory sector was the development of ways of engaging more successfully with ethnic groups through a greater understanding of their cultural preferences and habits. This was enacted in one project when they

Found that with recruiting established workers as club leaders a lot of 'gatekeeping' was going on, that is "seeing the same people over and over again". To prevent this from happening it was decided club leaders needed to be recruited from amongst those "who necessarily hadn't been working in any sort of health context before, but were interested." In this way the clubs have been accessed by the wider community (Shah 2002 p.78).

Inevitably, however, there were disagreements of opinion relating to cultural understandings and perceptions

There was a statement in the bid that a steering group member wasn't too happy with, about Asian women being socially excluded … she wanted me to use the term friendly or unfriendly … but I didn't think that word was strong enough to make an impact to New Opportunities Fund so I tried to explain that to her … but she felt we were trying to secure money by saying Asian women are socially excluded … on false grounds … that Asian women aren't socially excluded … she threatened to resign from the steering group because of that comment … I took advice from

others, asked them how they felt about the word socially excluded and they said it is true, they are ... (respondent in Shah 2002 p.96)

## SRB

The respondents felt that statutory bodies do not respect voluntary and community groups and that they are not treated as equal partners,

> One particular member of the board (LDP) felt it wasn't worth having these small groups applying because it would be more trouble than it's worth, and I pointed out that any small groups that were getting funding were actually getting their stuff on time and it was the big boys who weren't ... When it's a big organisation they're late in supplying their reports (project manager, representative on CLG and LDP)

It was argued that statutory bodies get large amounts of SRB money. The respondents were focused on gaining a level of independence from statutory organisations, wanted a greater say in regeneration activities, and wanted to be treated as equal partners in their relationships with statutory bodies. These views show a strong 'us' and 'them' attitude by voluntary and community groups towards the statutory sector. The members of the CLG reported that it had taken a while for its members to move beyond representing their own groups to developing a CLG identity. This indicates not simply the evolutionary development of a form of intersubjectivity by those involved in the initiative, but also the way in which the existence of the CLG had governmentality effects in terms of re-orientating the members' attitudes towards their relations to the statutory sector.

There was a reported dissatisfaction by one project manager that after the projects were approved, that there was no mechanism for them to then report back to the community on their progress, and thus no way for the community to give further comments on the project.

NDC

The respondents felt that statutory bodies were overly prescriptive and inflexible. The people of Marsh Farm have a strong sense of locality. The Marsh Farm riots of 1995 were mentioned by all the local respondents as a common cultural reference point as a part of the negative image other people have of Marsh Farm ("Marsh Farm has become like a leper colony"), and at the same time were referred to by other respondents as part of the reason for Marsh Farm getting NDC status.

The awarding of NDC status had exacerbated parts of this negative image, also within Marsh Farm itself

> Because with £50M everybody wants a chunk of it, in the wider world you can never explain the document that is 117 pages [the MFCDT delivery plan], the community would never understand that. The government guidelines, there's seven books, the community aren't going to understand due process, why aren't things happening, you've got, not infighting, but people are saying some really bad things, and it's very hard to address it (MFCDT board member).

Furthermore the awarding of NDC status had caused resentment in other parts of the town. A lot of people outside of the NDC process are not aware that it

gave MFCDT access to funding over a ten-year period but with many conditions attached to it (that is, an entitlement decision rather than a straightforward allocative decision). The way the government announced the money and the way it was reported gave people the impression that the money was directly given to Marsh Farm. Furthermore, it was argued by a number of the respondents, and in various meetings, that other organisations were unwilling to invest in Marsh Farm as they felt it had gotten New Deal money, despite the fact that New Deal money is dependent on inward investment from other organisations in order to be utilised.

Finally, the need for identity to be represented by groups was expressed thus, "because local authorities very rarely listen to individual people, they love talking to groups, they're a group, they love talking to groups, it's all about power" (MFCDT board member).

There were significant differences of opinion in the Trust board as to what the strategy of the MFCDT should be. Whereas a number of members believed that they should focus on influencing services in the area through 'joined-up thinking' and financial clout, another group believe that they should be more radical in promoting 'bottom-up' community enterprises and developing a level of self-government.

*Facilitative and Dispositional*

A number of themes reflect both Facilitative and Dispositional traits

There were varying degrees and types of voluntarism in the different groups that were a part of this study:

● Five salaried staff/support workers. Two of which were employed by statutory agencies. Three of which were time-limited posts funded by initiatives – two line-managed by statutory agencies, one by a community trust.

● Two umbrella groups for voluntary/community groups. Salaried workers were funded through grants and awards. These umbrella groups had voluntary Trust boards.

● Six voluntary Trusts. Salaried workers were funded through grants and awards. These Trusts also had voluntary boards. Three of the groups had active voluntary workers as well as paid workers.

● Three community groups. No-one in these groups received remuneration. Activities or projects were either self-funded by the group, or through fund-raising, grants, and so on.

None of the community groups were represented on the HAZ or SRB decision-making fora, although two of them were involved in other fora.

● Six members of MFCDT board who received no remuneration for board work or other associated duties. Projects were funded through NDC money and match-funding, while project and general administration were funded through NDC money.

Those who are involved in voluntary or community work and receive no remuneration are accorded greater legitimacy by their users and members, as one voluntary respondent said of their group "everybody is a volunteer, as soon as we start getting paid, and our community aren't being paid, then we're moved up a level, and we're not the same as them anymore" (MFCDT board member).

In Marsh Farm even fringe benefits to board members were criticised by board members. It was agreed at one board meeting to let people leaving the board retain computers, but this was not uncontroversial, and after advice from the Trust's solicitor at the next meeting the proposal was left hanging.

Although voluntarism gives an organisation a certain type of legitimacy, and volunteers within an otherwise salaried group are considered especially valuable, the problem with voluntarism is that it can be transitory and demands cannot reasonably be made of volunteers by the group.

> We have a number of volunteers, our volunteers are so important, and they're so dedicated, and we really couldn't do without them, but they certainly enhance the work that the staff do. When you have a paid member of staff you have expectations of them, they've got to be there at a particular time, they can't just call in and say 'Oh well, I don't want to come in today', or whatever it might be. (Group manager)

Paid workers provide a reliable and steady level of activity for a group and as such greatly increase the groups' capacities and abilities.

It is important, also, to note the limited access to decision-making that community groups have.

The level of public participation in these initiatives, other than as clients or users of services, is negligible. The community liaison group of the SRB has space for up to three non-affiliated individuals, but during the study had only one. While voluntary groups have access to the decision-making structures of the HAZ and SRB through their representatives on the boards, otherwise the public does not. In the NDC, so far, the public involvement in decision-making is pretty much

restricted to the trust board, advisory groups and sub-committees, about 40 to 50 people are variously involved. A scheme to recruit 100 street co-ordinators has foundered due to different ideas of their role both within the board and the original volunteers to the scheme. The NDC Trust board, unlike the other Trusts, is very active in making the strategic, and being involved in the operational, decisions, but the majority of the respondents were open in admitting that if they do not significantly increase the public involvement in the NDC it will be a failure.

In both the SRB and the HAZ the major recipients of the funds made available through these initiatives are statutory organisations. One voluntary group respondent felt that this was partly because "they have the knowledge and the skill and the expertise to write the funding applications and to go for it". A local councillor agreed that the majority of money did go to statutory bodies, but argued that there were a number of reasons for this. Firstly, in some instances project leaders or support workers were line-managed or housed through statutory organisations simply because they were able to deal with the necessary employment legislation and requirements, secondly, a number of the projects were requested at local meetings, and were only really projects that a council could do, for example traffic-calming, and thirdly, a number of areas had requested community centres, so although the money and building operations were being overseen and administered by the council, the community buildings would then be handed over to local community trusts.

The difference between this councillor's and the SRB respondents' understanding of the reasoning behind funding decisions is another clear sign of the dichotomy of views between the statutory and voluntary sectors.

The level of funding going to BME targeted projects, and particularly those targeted at the black population, was criticised in all three initiatives. In Marsh Farm, although there is a significant number of BME members on the board, this had not solved the aforementioned BME issues there. Through the challenging role of black representatives they felt that they had increased the number of projects by the SRB and the HAZ targeted at the black population.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I have looked at how participation is structured within the framework of government, and how it is actualised, firstly, as an element of a number of government policies, and secondly and more specifically, in three area-based initiatives situated in the Luton conurbation.

The space that these initiatives occupy in the structure of government straddles both the publicly political sphere and the uncontested political realm. In the publicly political sphere, these initiatives were constituted through involvement by the three tiers of government and other state institutions, while also being subject to political authority by them, while these elements were in turn constituted and influenced by political parties and the public. In the uncontested political realm these initiatives were constituted and influenced by private companies, voluntary and community groups, and the public.

Looking at the way that participation occurs in government documents and policies, it is primarily seen as being useful in delivering better services and good leadership. Participation is primarily accommodated through partnerships, and developing the capacity of community and voluntary groups is a government goal,

but the exact role of the public in these partnerships is not clear. Participation is not integral to all stages of policy consultation, design, implementation and evaluation, as the government places the structures of representative democracy and its priorities in authority.

After a brief historical overview of the acknowledged deficiencies of ABIs in the past, and of the particular histories of the three selected ABIs in Luton, a theoretical description of these initiatives was developed.

In the episodic agency circuit, the types of decisions and the levels at which these decisions were made by the various actors involved were discussed. The prescriptive role of government criteria is evident in all three initiatives, although the existence of the initiatives is clearly an active government commitment to these schemes.

In the HAZ the change in Government priorities materially affected the types of project that were being pursued. In the SRB the government insistence on more voluntary community involvement facilitated the greater role for those groups in SRB6 as compared to SRB5. Importantly, voluntary and community groups, through some of their national and regional associations, were involved in lobbying Central government over precisely this principle. In the NDC the government criteria and principles were even stricter than in SRB, enabling those concerned with tackling the BME issue in Marsh Farm, but creating a strong tension between the idea of 'bottom-up' working and requirements for match-funding, bending and additionality that focus the Trust into collaborative working and decrease its space for autonomous action.

In the SRB and the NDC the roles of regional and local government agencies, EEDA, GO-East and LBC are seen as restrictive in their dealings with voluntary/community groups, acting in a prescriptive manner, not an enabling one. Voluntary and community groups have had success in affecting rules and processes of governance; the area committees and the cross-conurbation area in SRB6; in NDC the make-up of the Board and the strategies of engagement. In terms of affecting material decisions, however, such as allocation, their influence has not been large (other than in being involved in the dispersal of streamed funds). This was evident in SRB in the failure to gain forward-funding and in the NDC in the problems getting projects accepted by LBC and GO-East.

Thus, while there were some successes by voluntary and community groups in terms of affecting the rules and processes of interaction up to the meso-level of these partnerships, as yet they have only succeeded in achieving relatively minor devolved power in allocating resources.

In the facilitative circuit, bureaucracy was a major theme. On the one hand, it curtailed some aspirations and imposed high levels of work to ensure compliance, for example as Wainwright commented in relation to MFCDT "Appraisal remains a useful and undemanding means … for government officials to exert control from a distance" (2003 p.135). On the other hand, the development of bureaucratic capacity was seen as enabling voluntary and community groups to engage with the statutory sector, establish some independence, and as a positive organisational goal. This capacity became evident in accessing the major feature of these initiatives, the funding. The need for, and benefits of, networking, the need

for personal capacity among members, and the importance of space as a resource were evident throughout the three initiatives.

In the dispositional circuit, whereas the SRB and the NDC showed signs of a 'them' and 'us' relationship between the statutory and the voluntary and community sectors, in the HAZ this was less evident as there was an identification with the theme of health improvement. In the SRB and the NDC, however, the development of and identity among and between the voluntary and community members, even if there are disagreements on strategy, is clear, whereas in the HAZ there is little development of that type of identity, while the concern with community development was intermingled with its instrumental use in supporting involvement in its projects.

Aspects which crossed the facilitative and dispositional circuits included the ambiguous nature and contested nature of voluntarism which afforded groups a certain type of legitimacy, but at the same time was a possible restraint on their capacity; the low level of public participation which again affected identity in terms of legitimacy, and also affected the capacities of the groups. Finally, not only was funding the focus of decisions and a source of capacity, its allocation in terms of ethnic communities, and between the voluntary and community sector as compared to the statutory sector, is another powerful symbol as to which identities are valued through the systems of these initiatives.

The preliminary conclusion to be drawn from this analysis is that the structures of these initiatives are over-determined on the side of the statutory sector as opposed to the voluntary and community sector. Although it is clearly the

legitimate priority of a democratic central government, and its arms of regional and local government, to set the objectives and specify the principles of operation of these initiatives, the way that these are implemented unnecessarily constrains the voluntary and community sector. The control of the macro-level decisions in terms of allocation, entitlement, rules and roles, mirrors the features of bureaucratic control in the facilitative circuits. The proportionately low representation of the voluntary and community members on most of the initiative boards thus constrains their effective contribution towards the higher level decisions. There is a clear tension between the principle of voluntary and community groups working in partnership with local and regional government while at the same time being answerable to them both in terms of bureaucracy and financial dependence.

Allied to this subordinate position in the decision-making process is the comparative weakness of the organisational structures of the voluntary and community sector, not simply in terms of less bureaucratic capacity, which is the case in many instances, but also in terms of the lack of capacity in regional and local government to adopt user-friendly systems of organisation. Bureaucracy channels and affects the type of participation that takes place. Those groups with bureaucratic capacity are represented higher in the decision-making levels, while the groups that adopt bureaucratic practices become dependent on funding to support the ongoing necessary staff to engage with bureaucratic processes. Meanwhile, both the adoption of a semi-professional cadre within groups, and the bureaucratic processes themselves, create a difference between the groups and their constituencies. Without bureaucratic capacity, however, groups are not able

to engage in the initiatives, and are thus unable to translate or feed in the concerns of their members or constituency.

What is evident from the third circuit of analysis, regarding the identities, cultures and beliefs of the communities represented by the voluntary and community sector, is that there is a diverse resource of groups and opinions willing to develop their own community enterprises and activities, but at the moment it is not being facilitated, owing to the structural processes of bureaucratic superiority and hierarchy of the statutory sector in the decision-making processes in these initiatives, to realise its' potential.

While the initiatives have been described theoretically, the interpretation of these initiatives is carried over until after the theoretical description of experiences of social exclusion in Chapter 6 so that the two themes can be inter-related.

# Chapter 6: Social Exclusion in Luton

**Introduction**

After analysing participation initiatives in terms of the theory of participation developed in chapter 5, I move on in this chapter to analyse the contours and experiences of exclusion in terms of the theory of inclusion and exclusion developed. The first part of this analysis involves a review of the statistical and other data on various aspects of exclusion in Luton as compared to the national and regional contexts. The second part will reconstruct the experiences of the 'excluded', firstly in their own words, and secondly in terms of the model of inclusion and exclusion developed in chapter 3, and the third part of this analysis looks at the opinions and views of those who work with people that are often classed as excluded in the voluntary and community groups involved in the participation initiatives.

**Data on exclusion**

The data on exclusion come from a variety of sources, but is not encompassing. Standard measures of exclusion cover many of the significant typifiers of exclusion common to most definitions of it, but do not cover most of the elements as discussed under normative or ethical exclusion. Most of the information

available is limited to aspects of interactional exclusion. These aspects will be dealt with individually, but again, these indicators are only aggregations of interaction, and thus can only give a rough indication of the context and structures of exclusion but do not tell us anything about its experience.

Employment: The unemployment rate for Luton in 2002 was 3.9% as compared to a rate of 3.0% in Great Britain and a rate of 2.1% in the East of England (LBC 2003), although the TUC projected a 7% rate of people wanting to work in Luton, the second highest rate in the East of England region (TUC 2002). In Marsh Farm the ILO unemployment rate was 22% in 2000 (MFCDT 2000 p.92). Luton had lower percentages of unemployment in both the under 24- and over 45- age ranges, than both the East of England Region and Great Britain as a whole, but a higher percentage in the 25-44 age range (LBC 2002a). During a period of economic growth in England in the late 1990s "employment in Luton and South Bedfordshire ... [had] increased by just 1% between 1996-9, in comparison to +8.7% for the region as a whole" (Kalantaridis et al 2001 p.5). In 2002, the percentage of people classed as ILO unemployed in Luton for more than one year, however, was only 11.8% compared to a rate of 16.3% in Great Britain (LBC 2002a).

Unemployed respondents in Bedfordshire and Luton listed factors that acted as obstacles to their finding work in the future: employer related barriers - age discrimination 9%, low wages 7%, personal related barriers - lack of training or qualifications 9%, lack of experience 9%, and other barriers - cost of childcare

or other care facilities 17%, access to childcare and other facilities 13% (BMG 2001 p.7).

Income: In the 2000 Indices of Deprivation Luton had the highest scores for Employment and Income deprivation in the East of England (LBC 2002b 3.4). In the East of England 34% of households had an income of £15,000 or less per annum (OSEP 2002). In 2000 MFCDT calculated that 45% of incomes in Luton were £15,000 or less, that in England the rate was 57%, while in Marsh Farm the rate was between these two figures at 53%. The average income in Marsh Farm, however, was calculated at £16,000, compared to averages for Luton of £18,000 p.a. and England of £22,000 p.a. (MFCDT 2000 p.93).

The national average rate for the number of children per ward under 16 years of age living in families claiming means tested benefits (the government's indicator of child poverty) is 26.74%, while Luton has an average of 36.88% and the worst scoring ward on this scale has a rate of 59.23%. "Among those who are consistently poor, more people belong to lone parent families and to non-working families with children" (Burgess and Propper cited in OSEP 2002 p.3).

Health: In the 2000 Indices of Deprivation, as compared to the national average of a zero score for health deprivation and disability[12], the Luton average was +0.19, while the five worst wards in Luton had scores from +0.68 to +0.51. In comparison the best rated ward in Luton scored -0.85 (LBC 2002b 8). In Marsh

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[12] Calculated on indicators of comparative mortality rates, people receiving attendance or disability allowance, incapacity benefit or severe disablement allowance, ratios of long-term illness and proportions of births of low weight.

Farm the rate of respondents stating that their health was good in 2000 was 70% as compared to a national average of 76% (MFCDT 2000 p.102).

Housing: In the 2000 Indices of Deprivation, as compared to the national average of a zero score for housing deprivation[13], the Luton average was 1.10, while the worst five wards ranged from +2.55 to +1.12. The best ward in Luton, in comparison, the only ward in Luton to score better than the national average, scored -0.20 (LBC 2002b 10). In 2000 the percentages of households by types of tenure were: Owners - Marsh Farm 48%, Luton 82%, England 69%, Social Rented Council - Marsh Farm 44%, Luton 8%, England 5%, Registered Social Landlord - Marsh Farm 2%, Luton <1%, England 5%, Private Rented - Marsh Farm 4%, Luton 7%, England 10%, Other - Marsh Farm 2% (MFCDT 2000 p.94). The rate of properties classified as 'unfit' as a percentage of total dwellings in 1999 was 10.3% in Luton compared to a national average of 7.3% (LBC 2003).

In a study of homelessness in Luton, Doheny and Dean found that "the number of applications to Luton Borough Council for assistance by persons claiming to be homeless has been increasing in recent years and the rate of this increase exceeds national trends" (2000, p.2). They argue that "there appears to be a 'stock' of over 500 young single homeless people who are currently using the services of homelessness organisations in Luton" (p.2), and moreover, that "projections based on national statistics suggest there may be a 'flow' of over 900 young single people becoming homeless in Luton in the course of any one year" (p.2). In terms of the problems facing homeless people they point out that "rents

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[13] Calculated on indicators of homeless households in temporary accommodation, household overcrowding and poor private sector housing.

for self-contained single person accommodation substantially exceed the levels of rent that may be afforded by young single people within the Single Room Rent restrictions under the housing benefit scheme" (p.3), and that although affordable accommodation in multiple occupation is available, "the supply of such accommodation falls well short of the numbers of young single homeless people in need" (p.3). In conclusion, they argue that as well as these problems of cost and availability "Landlords are generally reluctant to let to young people and to those on benefits and it can be especially difficult for young single homeless people to meet landlord's requirements not only for deposits, but also for references and credit checks" (p.3).

Ethnicity: The percentage of the population of Luton estimated as White in 1998 was 77%, with the largest ethnic minority groups estimated as Pakistani with 8.5%, Indian 3.8%, Black Caribbean 3.7% and Bangladeshi 2.8% (LBC 2003). "Unemployment rates for some minority ethnic communities and people with disabilities are twice the regional rate, in large part due to discrimination" (OSEP 2002 p.1)

Disability: The percentage of households with a disability or long term illness in 2000 was estimated at 15% in Marsh Farm, 10% in Luton, and 9% nationally (MFCDT 2000 p.90).

Services: 64% of respondents in Luton and Bedfordshire had access to a computer at home, while 47% had access to the internet at home (BMG 2001 p.11). 1 in 6

had no access to either a computer, internet, digital TV or cable TV (BMG 2001 p.11). 52% had tried to access information on public services in the previous year, and 4% experienced difficulty in obtaining information about local services - 36% reported the reason as restricted access time, 32% the limited information available, and 30% the time taken to answer questions (BMG 2001 p.13).

In the 2000 Indices of Deprivation, as compared to the national average of a zero score for geographical access to services[14], the Luton average was -0.58, while the worst five wards ranged from -0.73 to -1.74, while the best ward, the only to be better than the national average, scored +0.20 (LBC 2002b 11). The rate of respondents stating that they were satisfied with the local services and facilities in their area of residence was only 35% in Marsh Farm compared to a national average of 85% (MFCDT 2000 p.102).

As noted above, the most commonly cited barriers to finding employment among Bedfordshire and Luton respondents were the cost of, and lack of access to, childcare or other care facilities (BMG 2001 p.7)

Education and skills: In the 2000 Indices of Deprivation, as compared to the national average of a zero score for education skills and training[15] the Luton average was +0.73, while the worst five wards scored from +1.68 to +0.95. The best scoring ward, the only in Luton better than the national average, scored -0.59 (LBC 2002b p.9).

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[14] Calculated on indicators of access to a post office, to food shops and to a GP for people on low income and access to a primary school for everyone.
[15] Calculated on indicators of working age adults with no qualifications, children over 16 not in full time education, proportions of 17-19 year olds who have not successfully applied for HE, Key Stage 2 primary school performance data, primary school children with English as an additional language, and absenteeism at primary level.

51% of unemployed respondents in Bedfordshire and Luton were not and had no intention of acquiring new skills (BMG 2001 p.7). 11% were currently acquiring skills, 21% intended to acquire new skills, and 17% were unsure as to whether they would try to acquire new skills (BMG 2001 p.7). 7 in 10 learners cited barriers that have prevented them from participating in learning - 31% highlight a lack of need to participate, 20% a lack of time, and 16% a lack of interest (BMG 2001 p.9). 25% of future learners indicated that they would not be prepared to borrow from any source to undertake a course. 13% of future learners have a course of study that they would have liked to have taken up in the next twelve months but thought they were unable to do so. Barriers cited were lack of time (41%), couldn't afford to (27%), and the impossibility of getting time off work (15%) (BMG 2001 p.10).

A study into employment structures after the closure of the local Vauxhall plant found that "there is a significant gap in education, training and subsequently qualifications between the study area [Luton and South Bedfordshire] and the region" (Kalantaridis et al 2001 p.4). One third of the respondents admitted that they had no plans for the future (p.4), while the authors concluded that "the area has a greater number of claimants per 100 inhabitants, as well as a lower number of vacancies per 100 claimants, than both the region and Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. In such a setting (all other things being equal) one would expect hard-to-fill vacancies to be lesser of an issue in Luton and South Bedfordshire than the other two areas under investigation. Empirical evidence however, suggests otherwise. This could be interpreted only in terms of the balance between the skills available locally and the skills sought by expanding enterprises in high growth

industries" (Kalantaridis et al 2001 p.5). In particular this was a result of the fact that the majority of Vauxhall employees possessed skills specific to the automotive industry.

In Marsh Farm, the percentage of pupils attaining 5 GCSEs from grades A to C was 33% compared to 39.7% in Luton, and 49.2% nationally (MFCDT 2000 p.96). The percentage of working age residents with no qualifications was 48%, compared to 51% in Luton, and 18% nationally (p.97).

Crime: In Marsh Farm the rate of all recorded crimes per 100,000 people was 12,288, compared to 12,610 in Luton, and 9,785 nationally. The rate of crimes of violence against the person were 1,989 in Marsh Farm, 1,288 in Luton, and 963 nationally (MFCDT 2000 p.104). The percentage of residents interviewed stating local crime to be a problem locally was 81% compared to 69% nationally (p.105). The percentage of residents interviewed feeling unsafe walking alone in the area after dark was 44% compared to 32% nationally (p.105).

Marsh Farm: As noted above, Marsh Farm scores badly in comparison with Luton as a whole, and also nationally, for example the percentage of workless adults in the NDC area is 13.1% compared to 8% nationally, and the percentage of households on low income is 29.1% compared to 13.3% nationally (NRU 2003a p.26). It is worth noting, however, that Marsh Farm scores very favourably compared to other NDC areas, it has the lowest score of all 39 NDC areas in terms of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (NRU 2003b p.31).

In summary, while Luton is ranked 88th in the Indices of Deprivation nationally, it is ranked as the sixth worst in the East of England. As most of the East of England scores better than the national average, therefore, Luton is comparatively disadvantaged compared to the area around it. Also, within Luton there is an evident polarisation between wards that score persistently poorly and those that score persistently well (LBC 2002b p.14). Marsh Farm, as an example, is thus a comparatively disadvantaged area in an already comparatively disadvantaged conurbation.

From the foregoing information we can see how these measures of deprivation affect and shape interactional inclusion. In terms of employment, Luton has a lower unemployment rate than England as a whole, but it did not benefit from the economic boom of the late '90s nearly as much as the rest of the East of England. There is also a mismatch between the types of jobs available and the skills that people in Luton have, so the prospects of increasing employment among those already resident in Luton are not good in the immediate future. The barriers from inclusion that create exclusion from employment are thus the lack of suitable employment opportunities (including the contributory phenomena of age discrimination, lack of training and experience) and problems associated with childcare. The types of exclusion that are not expressed in unemployment figures, though, include such things as those in training schemes, or drug rehabilitation schemes, and the prospects they have of integrating into the interactions of society.

The disparity between the average annual income in Luton (£18,000) and nationally (£22,000) is a clear barrier to interaction. Luton is clearly disadvantaged both nationally and regionally in terms of health, housing, services, education and

skills, which highlights the lack of opportunities that people in Luton have. Luton has a higher proportion of residents with disabilities and from minority ethnic backgrounds, which create their own issues for interactional inclusion, including discrimination towards disabled and ethnic minority residents. Particular barriers noted, were, in terms of homelessness, the lack of suitable affordable accommodation and landlords' requirements, in terms of services, problems of access to modern technology, and in terms of skills, the problems foreseen by people wishing to take up learning new skills such as time and cost. A further symptom of a lack of interactional inclusion is that although the national turnout in the 1999 local election was 33%, in Luton it was 29%, and in Marsh Farm 15% (MFCDT 2000 p.91).

The overview afforded by these data clearly indicates, therefore, that not only is there a general lack of opportunities, and of the resources that create opportunities, in Luton across all the indicators, it also suffers from distinct problems, which exacerbate its poor position, such as the proportion of ethnic minority and disabled residents, the mismatch of skills to available jobs, and the lack of suitable affordable accommodation, and that these problems are further concentrated in particular areas, such as Marsh Farm.

It is important not to take an overly structuralist view of exclusion, however, and it is best put into perspective in relation to the views and experiences of those who may be classed as 'excluded'. The question as to whether people who are classed as 'excluded', either according to common definitions of exclusion, or according to the model developed in Chapter 3, actually think of themselves as excluded or would recognise descriptions of themselves as such, is a salient one.

Before analysing the interviews according to the model of inclusion and exclusion, therefore, it is useful to introduce the respondents, firstly in a description of their lives extrapolated from their answers, and secondly in terms of whether they viewed themselves as 'excluded'.

**Respondents – narrative summaries and their views**

IF1: A woman in her early fifties of Irish descent, who was orphaned as a child and brought up by cousins in Ireland. She had lived in the UK since her twenties, and had three previous marriages, in two of which she was physically abused. She had an adult working son from her second marriage, living away from home. She had had various problems with alcohol during her life, but was attending courses and clinics and did not think it was a major factor in her life anymore. She had a flat, and used voluntary services for a variety of things, such as advice, financial management, recreation, and courses. She didn't work, though she wanted to in the future, she didn't feel ready for it yet. She was in a current relationship.

She didn't regard herself as socially excluded and was happy with her standard of life. She didn't feel she had any responsibilities, and she wanted to give up alcohol for herself and to live to be a grandmother.

BM1: A British male in his mid-30s from the north of England. He had been working in a professional job, but was made redundant due to cut-backs. The major problems he experienced were restrictions on his lifestyle due to a lack of money, and he also disliked the lack of routine from being unemployed. He had a rented flat, but was in arrears, although he didn't think this was an impending

problem. He had a fairly limited social life, but attributed this to his own personality and lifestyle. He used voluntary services for job-seeking purposes and advice when needed. He was sceptical of local politicians, and had previously done voluntary work himself.

He felt he would be happy with his standard of life if he had a job, and didn't regard himself as socially excluded, but had felt discriminated against both when he had been excommunicated from his local church for being gay when he was younger, and when he had been subjected to physical assault from a homophobic gang. He felt responsibility as a citizen for people's safety and expressing concern over particular issues he felt were important.


ACF1: A lone parent of three of African-Caribbean descent in her mid-twenties. She had stopped working with the birth of her first child and was a full-time mother. She had recently started taking courses, and felt that when her children were older she would start working again, even if only part-time. Even though she attended courses run by the New Deal in Marsh Farm she had a very negative view of it – that it wasn't reaching out into the community or making any progress. She had had to get over her own dislike of it to avail of its services, but remained negative about it. She had had no problems with social services, but detested where she was living. She didn't get on with her neighbours, she felt the area was dangerous for her children, and that there was little for them to do. She had a close-knit group of family and friends and was sociable, but did not want to associate with her neighbours.

She didn't regard herself as socially excluded, although she did feel stigmatised by her neighbours. She believed that self-will and determination would see her life improve. She was happy with her life at the moment, but wanted more money to achieve more independence. She saw her primary role and responsibilities as being a good mother. She had an interest in local and national politics, but did not have the time to engage in them, although she felt she might in the future.

ACF2: A single parent of African-Caribbean descent in her early thirties. She was a trained nurse, currently working in a time-limited post recruiting ethnic minority volunteers. She had had various problems with services as a lone parent, including difficulties with the availability of childcare, travel expenses, lack of recreational facilities, and she had had arguments with a benefits administrator when she was previously on benefits. She found it very difficult to involve herself in local politics due to travel, time and location.

She did regard herself as socially excluded as a black lone parent, and felt regularly discriminated against. She had had severe problems when living in a tightly-knit community "with what I see as a different set of values" but had re-located. She was not happy with her current standard of life as "it is unfair that I work my butt off and am probably below the poverty line".

BM2: An English male in his late 50s. He had been in the army and had had various jobs since, but was now on incapacity benefit and couldn't work. He hadn't had particular problems with services as he was confident of his knowledge of his

rights. He had been homeless, but now had a flat. Previously he had been surrounded by drugs problems and this had prompted him to make himself homeless rather than stay where he was. He had a limited social life, and had no interest in educational or recreational activities. He had a limited interest in politics but distrusted local politicians. He did some voluntary work for a local group, which helped maintain his self-respect. He had little money but was content with his frugal lifestyle.

He did not regard himself as socially excluded. He wasn't happy with his standard of life at the moment, but he felt it was improving.


BM3: An English male in his early- to mid- thirties. He was a recovering heroin addict with a number of convictions, and was on a DTTO (drug treatment and testing order) as an alternative to jail. He had been in children's homes as a child, he had married young, and he had had a successful job and a child. After his wife died when he was in his early 20s he had become addicted to heroin. He stopped working, spent his savings, and became involved in petty crimes. When in prison, his son stayed with his grandmother who was at the time of interview attempting to gain custody of him. His life was organised around the requirements of the DTTO, and he was not allowed to work. He had lost his council house due to a disagreement he had had over arrears built up while he had been in jail, but he had a place to stay at his friends. His social group had changed owing to his addiction, and he was no longer able to afford a number of his previous hobbies.

He did not regard himself as socially excluded, but had felt stigmatised as a 'junkie'. He could tolerate his standard of life and was happy with his progress in recovery and was hoping to improve his standard of living.

BM4: A British male in his late twenties. This interview was very brief as he just wanted to say a number of things, and did not want to answer questions. A number of respondents not included in this analysis similarly did not conform to the interview format, however, as the interest is in exclusion, and precisely these respondents suffered extreme forms of exclusion, this one incomplete interview is used to represent them.

He was homeless, and had mental health problems. He had difficulties accessing doctors, dentists and pharmacies, and felt ignored by people. He had had difficulty getting specialist help for mental illness, and felt he would only get it if he had another breakdown. He had lost a previous flat as he had threatened people during a psychotic phase.

IF2: An Irish female in her early twenties, who had been in Luton for just over a month. She was homeless and unemployed. She had left a job and flat in Ireland to come to Luton with her boyfriend, as he was avoiding the police. She had slept rough, stayed in a hostel, and was now staying at a friend's place. She had since split up with her boyfriend. She had been a heavy drinker when younger, had no qualifications and spent a lot of her time in pubs. A lack of money hampered her interests. She used voluntary services and had met most of her current friends

through them. She had had problems getting welfare benefits, and was ineligible to apply for housing. She had no interest in local or national politics.

She had no opinion as to what social exclusion might be, and she was not happy with her standard of life. She was trying to arrange accommodation, and felt when she had that she would be able to find and secure a job.


BM5: A widowed British male in his late 60s, he was visually-impaired, which has become increasingly worse in the last ten years. He also had medical problems with his feet that had restricted his mobility over the last year. Now retired, he had never been unemployed for any length of time. He was very active in voluntary and community groups, locally and nationally. He was involved to help others, as he had overcome an inferiority complex in his youth through interaction in groups. He also got some help from other voluntary groups. He had a lot of social contacts and a variety of recreational interests. He had campaigned for more appropriate facilities, particularly of access, for visually impaired people. He considered himself involved in local politics (was on a committee for senior citizens), and had some interest in particular national issues. He felt health services were at times not organised or considerate enough in dealing with patients with particular needs.

He did feel he had been socially excluded as people avoided him (this was less of a factor now he had a guide dog) and he had felt discriminated against in some job applications. He often felt he was patronised. He was happy with his standard of life, had his own bungalow, was financially okay, and kept socially active.

BM6: A British male in his late teens. He had grown up on the edge of Marsh Farm. He had been in and out of children's homes. He was currently living in a hostel, but was lined up for a flat as a children's care leaver. He was unemployed, doing a course in Marsh Farm. He had a group of friends from childhood. He had dropped out of education twice. He had no particular problems accessing services, and had found his social worker useful for accessing some services. He was to become involved in a children's panel to liase with social services, as he had been involved in requesting such liaison to take place. Living in a hostel placed restrictions on him, and he had little money, but enough to get by. He didn't trust politicians and doubted their suitability for their jobs, although he did have a particular interest in some issues. He had limited recreational activities.

He didn't feel he was socially excluded, but did feel he was stereotyped, as someone who had been through care, as being homeless or at a hostel, and from being from Marsh Farm "but I don't let it bother me, I mean I change their opinion for the better sometimes". He wasn't happy with his standard of life, but was satisfied for the moment, although he hoped to get a job and make more money.

Most of the respondents viewed exclusion as a totalising experience of someone being severely excluded both from social interaction and services, and thus, even though most of them complained about particular problems with services, lack of money or of being stigmatised or discriminated against when asked, they did not class themselves as being excluded. Those who did class themselves as excluded thought of it not as a total experience of their life, but as

something particular to certain circumstances or conditions. This is an important consideration that will be further discussed later.

The incidents and experiences reported by the respondents can also be organised in terms of the model of inclusion/exclusion outlined in Chapter 3. This involves describing the respondents' experiences and views in terms of interactional inclusion and exclusion, in terms of groups and norms and also in terms of ethical and aesthetic judgements.

Clearly cases of either normative or ethical exclusion can result in interactional exclusion, or cases of ethical exclusion can result in normative exclusion. Ethical exclusion is thus a primary base of exclusion, but is also the hardest to get a picture of owing to the difficulty in articulating values and how they form a basis for social interaction. Despite this difficulty, however, ethical inclusion and exclusion will be discussed first, in order to see how exclusion is a cumulative experience.

*Inclusive ethics/aesthetics*

There were a number of types of ethical experience.

Self-development/respect

Nine of the 10 respondents showed elements of either wanting to improve themselves, or doing things to maintain their self-respect, but this was expressed in a variety of different ways.

Those who expressed low levels of self-development and respect included IF1, who wanted "to stop drinking again, I said a social drink is alright, but I'm not

going to say I'm doing it for this person or that. Because if I say I'm doing it for my son or my family, I'm doing it for the wrong reason. I'm doing it for myself and they can see the difference in me." This seemed her primary goal, and other goals of part-time work or education were seen as dependent on this. In response to being asked how he had benefited from going to a voluntary group, BM2 replied "What way have I benefited? Kept my, managed to keep my self-respect by coming here, and being able to help out helped me as well." The voluntary work he did was the only important thing that he considered he did, and he didn't want further responsibility: "No. I mean I used to have responsibilities a long time ago when I was in the army, but I don't want responsibility now. It's too much of a headache", nor did he see the point in him taking up any education: "At my age it would be irrelevant really, it wouldn't help me."

IF2 didn't feel able at the moment to look for a job

Ah, if I go out, I can't do anything the next day because I'm really really ill, I can't eat or nothing so there'd be no point in me having a job because if I went out I wouldn't go in the next day cos I'd just be in bits, so, that's just, I wouldn't, y'know, I haven't got my own place and that and, loads of things going on and that in my head, I wouldn't be able to even concentrate.

She had, however, held down a job before, was actively seeking accommodation and felt that "if I had a flat, yeah, I'd go out and work, cos I'd know I have to." These three respondents are interesting in terms of their feeling of a lack of responsibility, and their different desires for responsibility, both IF1 and BM2 being glad of not having responsibilities and not wishing to take on future

responsibilities, and IF2 wanting to have responsibilities that would motivate her to alter her interactions.

The second type of self-respect was self-belief in spite of the circumstances or experiences they had encountered, typified by BM4's real anger at what he saw as a failure of services to meet his needs. Thirdly, what seems related to this definition of the self that is in reaction to negative views by others or circumstances is a desire or belief to push back

Generally when I meet people, if they know I've been in the childrens' home, they sort of step back a bit and sort of give me funny looks or whatever, but that's their problem. BM6

I pestered my social worker and the council for my flat, I went out looking for jobs, I didn't wait for them to come and find me or whatever, that's something I'm doing, I just need to do things for myself really ... if I need something I'll just go out and do it, ... well sometimes I'll wake up and just be knackered and I won't do it, but yeah, most of the time I'm pretty motivated. BM6

"At the moment my recovery is the most important thing for me ... and to keep going the way I am" BM3. He also described how he took an active role in groups: "I do sometimes in groups try and get a little bit more out of people ... y'know come on give me some more ... and if they can't get it, if they don't understand the question properly I'll put it another way to them, say oh it's this, and then the penny drops". He also reacted to being stigmatised: "so I rose above it, but I could imagine what it must be like. I'm quite confident, but anyone without

confidence, it'd be terrible wouldn't it? It would destroy them, I can just see it, but it doesn't affect me, fortunately, at the moment."

> I'm on Working Families Tax Credit and that is absolutely no help whatsoever. So financially I'm not much better off as I would be on Income Support, however I'm better off in terms of self-esteem and work ethic for me and my boys ACF2

> The way I see it, is if you want to do something with your life then it's down to you as an individual to do it. There's nothing or anyone that can put anything in front of you to stop it, it's all about your own determination and how confident you are. ACF1

The fourth type of self-respect, different from the low-level respect, or the dialectical relationship between developing a resistance to negative views or experiences and using this as a spur to motivation, is an almost systemic understanding of oneself in relation to others.

> You see I found in life, if you've got something to give, people want to know you ... if you've got something to offer whether it's help, taking part in something, doing something. If you're just one of the crowd, you're blind, you'll just sit there and be ignored. BM5

And in relation to one of the groups he was involved in he commented

> I go along there and join in and have a chat more as a helper, I don't want it for myself, I get nothing out of it other than the pleasure of helping, which is one of the biggest kicks in life which I've always felt is helping others.

BM1, although not systemically involved in helping others at the time of interview, recalled former voluntary work: "it was a nice feeling being able to help out and say yes, I can help you. It also gave you avenues to other things."

These types of self-relation should not be seen as discrete or as developmental. Both IF1 and BM3 expressed a desire to become involved in voluntary work, while BM2 was already involved in voluntary work. The difference between the four types are that the minimal type involved holding on to self-respect, the identity formed as a reaction to experiences was a potential energy, which could be used for self-expression, while the systemic type was not so much concerned with the self, but the relation of the self to others.

Interest in specific values

In contrast to how the respondents valued themselves, or how they viewed their value in relation to others, they also valued people or processes in themselves. Valuing people will be discussed in relation to normative inclusion, but valuing processes is an ethical or aesthetic type of inclusion. BM5 had a wide variety of interests in various activities as well as his interest in voluntary groups. He considered his voluntary activities as being involved in politics "but not with a big P". IF1 and IF2 didn't express any interest in wider processes at all, while BM1, ACF1, ACF2, BM2, BM3, and BM6 did. This is quite a high level of interest, although the various processes or issues they expressed an interest in were not the same and a number of them expressed a lack of interest in other processes. Their

interests, however, were not actualised very much. Both BM6 and BM2 expressed a distrust of politicians in general, and BM1 a dislike of what he called "this petty point scoring we seem to have". BM3 was not ready to involve himself in voluntary activity although he wanted to, while the problems that stopped ACF1 and ACF2 from pursuing their interests will be covered later.

Relations to materialism

None of the respondents expressed an interest in a highly materialist style of life, but most expressed a lack of money for various things as a problem. For some it was an inability to participate in activities because of a lack of money, and for others an inability to afford consumer goods. Only two, IF2 and ACF2 expressed dissatisfaction with their lack of money itself. The others, although they would have liked more, were reasonably satisfied with what they had. This satisfaction, however, was based on the fact that they could afford the necessities, and each described in a different way how they adapted their desires

> Clothes, … what I've got on now would cost me a month's worth of giro, just for a
> pair of tracksuit bottoms, a T-shirt and a top, and a pair of trainers, so I can't dress
> how I used to, I actually look at myself sometimes and think, God, you're a tramp
> BM3

> So for me a car is not even in the picture, not at all. Eating wise, my food's gone,
> I've regressed to having like the basics, lots of mash, lots of beans, potatoes – nice
> food – gets a little monotonous. BM3

Maybe a computer, new books when they come out, just things, just general things

that people generally take for granted. If I see a nice top I want I don't have to look

at the price and think, naw, I gotta save up for that, just buy it there and then, that's

what I'd like to be able to do, but I can't do it. BM6


Or they adopted strategies for keeping costs down: "you will end up going

to the latter end of Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, because then they have the reduced

items and you can save money through reduced items" BM1


Unfortunately it is impossible to judge whether the material aspirations of

the respondents correspond to that of wider society. Nor is it possible to judge

whether their aspirations have been affected in any manner by past experiences.

What is plain, however, is that most people would not be satisfied with the reduced

levels of material consumption that the respondents describe for themselves.


*Ethical exclusion*


Stereotypes/Stigma

Eight of the 10 respondents reported stigma of some sort or another. IF2 felt

stigmatised as an Irish person at Social Services, as well as generally not feeling

she understood the culture. ACF1 and ACF2 reported being stigmatised by

neighbours for not sharing their style of life, BM3 and BM4 had been stigmatised

over their drug use, while BM6 had felt triply stereotyped, as homeless, as a

children's care leaver, and as being from Marsh Farm, while BM5 had felt socially

ignored because of his impaired sight. Only BM5 had classed the experience of stigma as a form or type of social exclusion.

Environment

Five of the respondents related problems to do with where they lived. ACF1 and ACF2 had problems with their neighbours, and ACF1 further reported the dangers she felt where she lived

> You get some of these youngsters riding up and down the park on motorbikes
> and in cars where the children are always going to be playing without a care in
> the world ... there's neighbours who are negligent with their pets towards other
> people ... it's just drugs where I live at the moment, it's mad on drugs. I can't
> even take my children to the park ... because on quite a few occasions now I've
> taken them there to play and I've come across syringes, used condoms, pipes and
> all kinds of things.

BM2 had left where he lived previously owing to his belief that the house was being used as a crack house, and BM3 reported how when he had been off drugs for a while, living where he was he was known as an ex-user and knew other users, and this had facilitated him falling back into drug use. IF1 reported that she did not feel safe walking in the dark in Luton.

Substance use

Both IF1 and BM3 described their efforts to not let their addiction to substances control their lives. Although addicts seem to be partly aware of their loss of control and may want to overcome it, it is only when they manage in practice to overcome

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their addiction that their ethical horizon can shift from an abeyance to the substance to some other thing.

*Inclusive Norms*

State Services

Most respondents reported availing of government services. When questioned specifically about particular services, most of them were generally accessible. The negative experiences will be detailed in the normative exclusion section.

Other services

BM6 reported that he had had difficulty in opening a bank account, but he had eventually managed to get one.

All of the respondents had used or were using services provided by voluntary groups. Some of the services were provided directly by the voluntary groups, such as financial organising, reading of mail, computer facilities, food, meeting place, or advice. Voluntary groups were seen as especially useful for getting information and for knowing what one was entitled to

> places like ___ [voluntary group] are often more helpful to you in finding that information out than the official government bodies. If you want to know about Housing Benefit it's no good asking the Council Tax people because they will give you the least amount of information, they'll give you information but they will not give you all the information. If you come here they will tell you exactly what you're entitled to and they will help you out with the forms. BM1

or as a back-up in case of difficulty

> I honestly haven't had a problem that way, and if I had a problem then ____
>
> [voluntary worker] up here can always help me out, she knows all the paperwork
>
> backwards. BM2

Groups

As noted before, groups have aspects of both a normative dimension in terms of membership, and an ethical or aesthetic dimension in terms of membership characteristics. The two types of groups discussed most frequently by the respondents are family and friends, and there is also some discussion of communities. Family ties were emphasised strongly by ACF1 and ACF2, particularly as mothers. Family obligations were also mentioned by IF1, BM1, BM3, IF2, BM5 and BM6. BM2 did not want to discuss his family.

BM1, BM2, BM3, IF2 and BM6 variously discussed friendship. BM1 expressed a very strong sense of loyalty towards his small group of friends. BM3 gave an account of the factors affecting his social life

> My social life has changed in the respect that I don't see my old friends, the
>
> people I see now are all new friends, which I've met through recovery, and
>
> coming down here and things like that. I've left my old friends alone, cos
>
> obviously they found out, or something, ___'s using gear, watch out, so you
>
> don't, you don't go to them. What have you got to say to them? Y'know? Lend
>
> us a tenner – that's all you got to say to them, so you spread apart. That's some of
>
> my goals, to get in contact with older friends, and re-kindle old friendships, but

I'm not a recluse, I don't sit in the house all day, not seeing anyone, I meet people at group, make friends, there and here, I got some friends that I still see, some friends that use which I try to steer clear of now, cos that's going to encourage me to use

ACF1 expressed a concern for her broader geographic community, while BM1, BM3, BM5 and BM6 had concerns for people who had been through similar experiences as themselves.

*Normative Exclusion*

State services

The most frequently cited problem was related to housing. Four respondents currently did not have their own accommodation (although BM3 did not express this as a problem and BM6 had a flat organised for the near future as he was a care leaver). IF2 could not even apply to be put on the housing list until she was six months in England and was thus excluded by an administrative norm.

IF2, BM2, and BM3 had had problems relating to payments from housing services to their landlords. IF1 and BM3 had had disputes over payments, and BM2 problems over the forms, and could not get officials to explain to him what was filled in incorrectly. Related to housing, because BM3 had been in a hostel that was not classed as a staffed hostel, he could not get a community care grant when he got private accommodation. ACF2 had had problems getting re-housed when she had wanted to move out of her previous area.

ACF2 and IF2 reported problems with benefits.

When I was on Income Support, when I went in to sign in, they had me in tears, I

don't know if it was this particular person being horrible and I could not get to a

supervisor, she pulled down the shutters and I said can I talk to a supervisor and

they would not let me talk to one. I had to leave the building, go home, get on the

phone to a supervisor who told me to come back and go straight to her, which I

did, and they bypassed this person and processed me fairly quickly. That person

when I went in to sign off hadn't forgotten, made sure she had a pop at me again.

She was appalling. So benefit services, I wouldn't like to go on benefits again,

put it that way.


IF2 had repeatedly gone to the benefits service when they said they would

have money for her, only to be told it had not arrived and to come back again, nor

was she able to join a library because of her lack of a permanent address, and

during the time taken to organise her benefits she could not avail of a hostel as

they require benefits paperwork. BM1 could not take part in an educational course

as this would affect his benefit payments. BM3 could not work because of his

DTTO order while he regarded his sickness as psychological rather than physical.

BM5 believed that he had previously had a hospital appointment cancelled in

favour of a private patient, and that he was thus treated in a partial manner.

Restrictions were placed on BM3 as part of his drug treatment order, so he had a

variety of things that he had to do. All these examples point to the cumulative

effect of administrative norms in causing or exacerbating exclusion.

Other services

ACF2 reported a number of problems with transport. When she had moved accommodation she had kept her children in their previous school so that they had a level of stability, but this resulted in a number of bus journeys, and she was unable to claim for financial aid for this. She complained about the lack of "a cohesive transport policy in the county," which was also a mitigating factor in her making it to community fora. BM1 had also had problems with bus services to where he had previously lived when he was working.

The need for childcare was also discussed by ACF2 as an added difficulty to taking part in activities. BM6 had to ensure he was at the hostel before shut down time each evening. These examples point to both administrative norms and also the lack of appropriate services in causing facets of exclusion.

Vulnerability

Some of the respondents, while interactionally included in some respects, experienced what they considered unfair treatment as a part of this interaction. IF1 was clearly vulnerable to the physical abuse she received from two of her husbands. BM2 reported a number of grievances against a hostel he had been in – that the rules were skewed against users, he had had his post opened, and the manager had taken advantage of running a Big Issue round for his own profit.

Groups

IF1, IF2, BM3, and BM1 reported difficulties with some of their families. Partners of IF1 and IF2 were disapproved of by some members of their families who had

reduced contact with them. BM1 had felt distanced from his family because he was gay, but he still remained in contact with them. BM3's mother had initiated court proceedings to take custody of his son when he was in jail

> I got a letter saying me mum's put in for custody. I was like fine, no problems.
> He loves nanny, nanny loves him, no problem, but I didn't see why she had to do
> it through the court, and it seems she had another card up her sleeve. It was
> actually to get __ [his son] and keep me away.

BM2 was suspicious of people and only had a few friends.

None of the respondents expressed a wish to exclude or treat differently types or groups of people. ACF1 and ACF2 had, however, felt stigmatised by their neighbours, while BM5 had felt ignored and not treated as a full member of some groups because he was partially sighted. BM6 put his dislike of politicians down to the fact that they were different to ordinary people. Thus while none of the respondents expressed exclusionary tendencies or practices, a number of them were cognizant of affective differences owing to value differences.

*Inclusive interactions*

No respondent was totally interactionally excluded.

● IF1 went to voluntary groups and counselling schemes, was in a relationship, and was in touch with her son, as well as having some hobbies.

● BM1 was actively seeking a job, availed of voluntary services and used the library to assist himself.

● ACF1 was looking after her children and doing a course.

- ACF2 had a job and looked after her children, as well as having some involvement in local meetings.

- BM2 did voluntary work.

- BM3 had sessions to attend because of his DTTO and was in a relationship.

- BM4 There was no information relating to what he did, other than attending the voluntary group.

- IF2 was starting a voluntary course, looking for a flat, and was in a relationship.

- BM5 was a member of a number of recreational groups and active in voluntary and community groups.

- BM6 was doing a course, looking for a job, and had a social group of friends from childhood.

*Interactional Exclusion*

The interactional exclusion that people experienced was an agglomeration of the factors encountered in ethical and normative exclusion, plus other factors that mitigated against inclusion.

- IF1 was excluded by a combination of the courses and sessions she attended to deal with her alcohol addiction and past emotional problems, an overweening partner, and by the perceived danger of Luton at night.

- BM1 was excluded primarily from leisure, consumption and social activities owing to a lack of money. He felt in danger of losing a rigid pattern for his activities, and the return of routine was one of the perceived advantages of regaining employment. He had found transport services a problem in the past. Receiving benefits restricted his possibilities of doing educational courses or

voluntary work. One effect of his lack of money was that he was unable to afford membership of his professional body, which in turn meant he could not apply for jobs advertised via its internal magazine. He had also been excluded as a result of his being gay.

● ACF1 was excluded owing to her commitments as a mother. One result of this was the lack of time she had for other activities (although she was now doing a course), including her inability to inform herself about local politics as much as she would have liked. She did not have enough money for the type of independence that she wanted. As well as the problems with her neighbours, she felt the neighbourhood environment restricted her, particularly in regard to leisure and social amenities, both for herself and her children.

● ACF2 felt excluded owing to her lack of money, which affected her travel, what she could afford, and childcare. The lack of transport and childcare services was also responsible. She had also felt excluded by her neighbours, by the local amenities, and more commonly as a black lone parent.

● BM2 was excluded on the one hand by being on sickness disability, and on the other from some activities he had previously been involved in, and consumption, due to expense (particularly a holiday, or being able to go to the cinema). Although he did voluntary work he did not know of any other voluntary groups in Luton.

● BM3 was excluded primarily by the sessions and routines he had to take part in as part of his DTTO, the restrictions placed upon him by it, and his lack of money to engage in activities and consumption. Whether or not he could regain his council housing was not clear.

- BM4 was excluded due to his homelessness, mental health problems and financial situation.

- IF2 was excluded by her homelessness, unemployment and lack of money for consumption, and her spending a lot of time in public houses. She couldn't join a library and had had problems accessing a hostel and benefits.

- BM5 was excluded primarily due to his visual impairment and his bad feet. The other side of this was that services and facilities were often not appropriate to his needs. He had given a number of talks to hospital staff about taking particular needs into account, but he was of the opinion that "it's the management that need the training not the nurses". He also felt excluded by being socially ignored, and previously discriminated against in job applications.

- BM6 was excluded owing to his homelessness, his unemployment, and by stigma attached to these, to being a children's care leaver and from being from Marsh Farm. His exclusion was manifested primarily in his inability to buy consumer goods without having to save for them.

## Participant respondents views on exclusion

The comments of the respondents in the participation initiatives can also be analysed according to these concepts, and this gives an added perspective on the problems of exclusion.

### Ethical exclusion

A variety of ethical and aesthetic differences were mentioned. The worker from the Bosnian community organisation mentioned the cultural differences that their

members had had to learn to deal with, while keeping their own identity in order to be able to respect others'. The worker for a HAZ-funded drop-in centre explained how it was designed as a local, residential house to fit in and be accepted by the predominantly Asian population of the area. Its success had been its ability to be accessed, and its primary aim was not to impart skills, but to increase women's confidence and help them access other services. The worker noted that they actively excluded men from the house, and even though there were a small number of non-Asian women who used the house, some other Asian women disliked the fact that it was a predominantly Asian centre. The workers also had to balance the perception of the services provided through the house in the local community, as people would only access it if it was seen as "respectable" and thus it could not be seen as being a strong advocate of women's issues.

It was mentioned by a number of respondents that people accessed voluntary groups more readily than statutory bodies, and that they can gain the trust of clients more easily. They also recognised, however, that they did not cover or service all the community, such that ethnic minorities and deaf people tended to have their own separate groups, while a number of groups were not often accessed by young people.

Confidence and support were also discussed by the member of a carers group and two homeless organisations. In terms of carers this was expressed as the need to talk to people, that carers don't tend to think of themselves as carers, and that sometimes they were not be able to articulate what was wrong or what they needed. Isolation was identified as the primary problem carers faced. Isolation was also discussed by the workers in the homeless organisations, as well as how it

became a problem when someone who was long-term homeless became re-housed, as they were often unable to re-adjust to living like that. Isolation and confidence can thus be seen as important factors in people's ethical self-relations.

Many people who used the groups were considered to have many skills, but they had no way of utilising them, or their skills, such as manual skills, were not valued. Marsh Farm was considered to be treated as if it was "a leper colony" and to suffer from post-code discrimination. Such negative valorisations can have far-reaching interactional effects.

There was some discussion of the difficulties in getting people to become involved with the groups. "There's an element of unwillingness on the part of, because they have so many issues to deal with themselves", and an example was

> Petitions were organised. So I was trying to persuade people here to sign the petition and send it up, and staff in organisations are willing to, but I found it very difficult to get any of the actual homeless clients to do so themselves, and I thought that was strange until I began to think it through, but I think its not about being selfish, but its about having so many issues of your own that you can't think on a bigger scale (voluntary group manager).

The respondent from the Asian women's drop-in centre noted the problems of the clinical environment for putting off participation, as well as the structures of hierarchy, so that users who participated at the local level tended to become very quiet in wider groups as they felt out-professionalised and out-numbered in a formal environment. These examples point not only to the ethical relationship with the self, but also how it is affected by the social and physical context.

*Normative exclusion*

As well as discussing problems with current services, respondents also discussed services that did not, but they felt should, exist, such as there being few services for carers or disabled people. A respondent from Marsh Farm discussed how people were excluded from socialising and entertainment by "economic realities" and a "failed system of civic organization" (MFCDT resident board member).

Current services were discussed in terms of access, particularly in terms of cultural appropriateness for young and ethnic minority people. A major problem for many homeless people was that of recognised identification, which they needed to access services. Numerous homeless people were reported as having had difficulties in the past because they had no ID, and had difficulties getting it, as replacement IDs required money and forms. A further problem with services is that it was often unclear where to refer clients with multiple problems (such as alcohol, drug abuse or mental health problems), and they were often moved about without anyone taking responsibility for them. This was exacerbated by the fact that often services only stepped in when people hit a crisis or threatening or extreme conditions, at which stage it was then harder to re-integrate them. The lack of housing in Luton was commented on by these respondents, and the associated need for the social housing that there was not to become ghettoised.

A number of respondents mentioned relationship breakdown, either with partners or families, or sometimes with landlords, as a causal factor in homelessness. It was stressed, however, that homeless people are not a

homogeneous group, and that there are a variety of cases and conditions that need to be understood in relation to it.

Carers were sometimes dominated by their carees, which created added stress for them, while often their wider family or friends would disengage with them as they were unsure how to, or uncomfortable with mixing with them, which then caused greater isolation. The salaried workers in the groups mentioned how their own status, while closer to the clients than statutory services, could still cause problems of understanding or of status between them and their clients.

*Interactional Exclusion*

Interactional inclusion was often mitigated against by the lack of practical skills, such as self-organisation, food awareness, confidence, sexual health awareness, general information, or, very often for different cultural groups, language. It was found very difficult to make connections with people either using drugs heavily or with personality disorders. Again the obverse of this was making services and facilities suitable for people lacking these skills or suffering from these problems.

Economic barriers were mentioned by many of the respondents, and inequality stressed by a few. The domestic focus of some South Asian women was mentioned as a barrier to them in interacting with other processes.

There were a number of practical problems discussed in relation to getting people to participate in groups or initiatives. The carer group found it impossible to meet at a time convenient for everyone, and transport and mobility was a big issue for a number of them. In Marsh Farm, the Trust discussed the problems of reaching all parts of the community. The disabled and illiterate, particularly, were

extremely hard to communicate with. Most groups had problems or issues over trying to arrange times and places of meetings. In contrast, one unemployed respondent in Marsh Farm, who was a board member, remarked that it was precisely because he was unemployed that he was able to dedicate so much time to the New Deal and other activities.

**Conclusion**

So far in this chapter we have looked at the statistical information that showed the structural contours of inclusion and exclusion in Luton in relation to the East of England and the UK nationally. Luton was seen to be deprived in terms of income, employment, health, services, education and skills, and the particular problems associated with housing were explored. Luton also had a high proportion of ethnic minority and disabled residents.

The respondents who were interviewed as possible typifiers of exclusion mostly did not regard themselves as excluded. Although somewhat predictable, this is an important finding which highlights the problem of official or policy discourse and its limited meaning to those it is applied to. The 'excluded' thought of exclusion as an all-encompassing phenomenon, so that even though they did have particular problems and experiences, they did not think that this meant they were excluded.

Analysed according to the model of inclusion and exclusion, firstly in terms of ethical and aesthetic inclusion, there were four types of self-development or respect evidenced. A number of social processes were considered of value by the respondents, but at the same time these values were not much expressed in

action or participation. The respondents showed a certain level of acceptance of their material conditions, but had reduced levels of consumption. Aesthetic and ethical exclusion was experienced as stigma or stereotyping, as a hostile social environment, and in a couple of cases as substance addiction.

Normative inclusion was provided through state and other services, and state services were often made accessible through voluntary or community groups. The groups that the respondents were a part of were family, friends, and communities, both of interest and of place. Normative exclusion was experienced through problems with state services, particularly housing and benefits, through restrictions placed on people that availed of state services, and inappropriate services. This could affect access to other services. A number of respondents reported types of exclusion by or from their family, friends or communities. An added consideration was that some inclusive relationships exploited the respondents' vulnerability. This evident vulnerability has echoes of Wood's work on the adverse incorporation engendered in third world countries through institutional regimes involving "rent-seeking behaviour or other forms of non-transparent power" (1999 p.6) that are not countered by a formal rights based alternative.

The types of interactional inclusion were individually particular and heterogeneous, as were the types of interactional exclusion. Most of the types of exclusion were connected to the processes of ethical or normative exclusion, or with particular practical or material barriers.

The interviews with members of voluntary and community groups added another layer to the analysis. It had been impossible to interview members of the

Asian population, carers, or significantly different cultural groups, so the aspect of cultural difference, particularly of language, but also of different kinship and support systems, and views of respectability were useful additions to the previous analysis. The problems with services were further developed, particularly in terms of personal identification, accessibility and appropriateness, as well as many practical issues concerning skills, knowledge and confidence. The difficulty in engaging disadvantaged communities in groups or schemes also became apparent, both in terms of the ethical preoccupations of the excluded in their immediate problems, and the practical difficulties of making the interaction of participation easy and practical.

Three very significant conclusions can be drawn from these analyses. Firstly, and most obviously, processes of inclusion and exclusion are heavily affected by the social environment. Without resources, groups for interaction, or services, inclusion is very difficult to recreate and types of exclusion are endemic. The forms of ethical, normative and interactional exclusion evident in a deprived social environment are thus multiple, overlapping and reinforcing.

Secondly, and this is not simply a theoretical point, types of inclusion create exclusion. This is not just a restatement that certain inclusive relationships are exploitative, although that is part of it, but also that systems or types of inclusion, by cutting off other possibilities, cause types of exclusion. In one sense this means that it is impossible to be fully included, and is a statement of little value, but diagnostically it allows one to investigate how particular forms or systems of inclusion create exclusion. Thus the restrictions and conditions for receiving benefits are seen to restrict other types of inclusion, and the cultural

inclusion of some south Asian women in tightly-knit families is considered as restricting their other possibilities for inclusion.

Finally, the third conclusion concerns the mediating role of voluntary and community groups. It is clear that these help people access both state services, and other services that the state does not provide. This is an inclusive mechanism, yet related to the above point, use of some services restricts the 'excluded's' ability to be included in other processes, and state restrictions can exclude people from participating in voluntary or community groups or services. Many users of voluntary and community groups are thus caught in a twilight world, partly included, partly excluded, by factors, such as administrative norms, beyond their control.

It needs to be re-iterated that those interviewed are not a representative sample of those who may be thought of, or classed as, 'excluded', nor does the statistical information tell us of people or conditions that are not included in the data. As such this is a necessarily limited and partial account of exclusion.

The analyses, however, have allowed us to explore certain experiences of exclusion and to analyse them in terms of the model of inclusion and exclusion, so that the processes can be better interpreted and understood. The findings show the heterogeneous and highly complex nature of exclusion. In the next chapter, the salient aspects of exclusion and inclusion are developed in relation to participation.

# Chapter 7: Participation and Exclusion – practical conclusions

## Introduction

The question originally posed was, to what extent does political participation alleviate or ameliorate social exclusion. The participation we have been looking at is that within three area-based initiatives in Luton: SRB6, Luton HAZ and the NDC in Marsh Farm. Across these three initiatives we have looked at the generic arenas and types of political participation: episodic agency, facilitative and dispositional. Social exclusion has been explored in terms of a dialectical model of inclusion and exclusion, of three types: interactional, normative and ethical. Participation is a type of inclusion, but non-participation does not mean an individual is excluded, as they can be inactively included. As there are different types of inclusion, however, although individuals may be participants and thus be included in some respects, they may be excluded in others, and possibly excluded precisely because of the types of participation they are involved in.

In chapter 5 the over-determined nature of the participation initiatives in terms of the state institutions was traced, particularly by the mechanisms of hierarchy, bureaucracy and financial dependence, as well as the mis-match of

organisational forms and capacities, and subsequently of identity, between the statutory organisations and the voluntary and community groups. In chapter 6 the types of exclusion that mitigate against participation, how both inclusion and exclusion are heavily influenced by the structures and resources for integration, and the mediating role of the voluntary and community groups, were traced.

First of all in this chapter, we will look at participation, potential and actual, in terms of the discrete types of individual participation: minimalist, functional, social, goal-directed and discursive; as evidenced by the respondents classed as 'excluded'. Secondly we will look at participation for the excluded, as evidenced in the initiatives by the voluntary and community groups. These two loci of participation will be explored together, and the processes and effects of these two loci will be discussed in terms of how they affect the circuits of power, and inclusion and exclusion, which types of exclusion they affect, and the concomitant consequences will be considered.

During this exploration and analysis of the data in terms of participation affecting exclusion, the process of interpreting their processes and inter-relations in terms of power and inequality will be facilitated through the use of the frameworks of incorporation, governmentality, needs, capabilities, functionings, and rights. These themes will be discussed further in the concluding chapter, but the use of these interpretative schemes will allow the identification of the structural problems of the government's initiatives for facilitating participation and tackling exclusion in the final section of this chapter which are the practical conclusions to be drawn from the thesis.

**Participation of the Excluded. Actual and potential**

In one sense, the socially excluded respondents were participants in that they used the services of voluntary and community groups involved in the initiatives. This type of participation was minimalist in three ways, firstly, in terms of being users of the voluntary and community groups' services, secondly, in terms of social interaction, in that the users interacted with other users (a number of them reported learning about the groups from previous social contacts), and thirdly, there was a minimal level of discourse in that most of the users were able to articulate either a view on volunteering, or a view on particular voluntary or community groups. Although it is impossible to say whether this type of discourse found its way into decision-making arenas, it was evident that users did discuss the groups among themselves to some degree, and sometimes made informal comments to staff (there were channels for formal comment in some of these groups, but none of the minimal respondents mentioned using them). This street-level discourse, therefore, only intermittently makes its way into the calculations of decision-making.

Only three respondents were involved beyond these minimal aspects of participation. BM2, BM5 and ACF2 all had functional roles in groups, with certain responsibilities and duties. Five respondents reported either that they would like to, or may, become more active participants in the future. One of these, IF1, had been volunteered for some functional work by her partner, but she had objected to this and wanted to be in control of her own volunteering when she felt ready for it. This points to the possible concern of the 'incorporation' of the 'excluded' into the voluntary and community groups.

BM2's functional participation was via manual work while BM5 and ACF2 had a variety of advocate and organisational briefs. ACF2 reported how "I feel powerless sometimes, although I try to make my own power", but felt that she was able to get her point across when she was able to make it to meetings and fora. As her post was about involving ethnic minority volunteers her participation was clearly goal-directed, particularly in terms of policy.

BM5 was also goal-directed. Mostly he felt his contributions were aimed at specific problems or difficulties with services, and how to resolve them, either technically or by awareness. He also had views about certain policies that affected visually impaired or senior citizens, and had a strong view about how people should be represented

> These days something like 80% or more of the committees of RNIB are visually impaired ... and previously, no, just busy bodies. I have always put pressure on for this sort of thing to happen, committees of disabled to be disabled and not of people doing what they think they'd like ... Disabled people have got to help themselves by being there and say what they want and make sure they get what they want.

The discursive action of both ACF2 and BM5 was developed through their social contacts as active participants, and used instrumentally in various fora of decision-making. Interestingly, both of these respondents used their work in groups, and their work for groups, in a challenging manner, that is, they were interested in making claims about needs and rights on both groups and institutions, while contributing to them, but without necessarily adopting a discourse of consensus.

As well as delineating the types of participation evident, and the potential for participation evident in those who expressed an interest, it is important to recount the barriers that contributed to potential participation not being realised. Taking both the views of the socially excluded and the voluntary and community groups together, in ethical terms some of the excluded were not ready to participate, either in terms of their self-orientation owing to their circumstances or other concerns, or the problems with substance use. A number of the respondents distrusted politicians in general, and although they identified more easily with voluntary and community groups many did not feel comfortable with formal or professionalised mechanisms and preferred to participate informally.

Normatively, some people preferred to participate in groups with similar membership characteristics to themselves, while others preferred diverse groups, and so the lack of either type of groups can mean some people not having a suitable group that they would want to participate in. The voluntary and community groups also have to have some rules and regulations so that in some cases they will exclude some people, either because they are antithetical to the group's identity (for example, men in a women's group) or they are disruptive, and thus only the set type of people for that group are enabled to participate in it.

Interactional barriers are both practical, in terms of place, time and how onerous activities are, how much commitment they require for participation, and also contextual, that is services that enable people to participate, such as travel, childcare or other care, and importantly, whether people are aware of the groups, fora or activities. These practical barriers relate to people's capabilities to participate, and these capabilities are a function not only of the individual's

characteristics but also of the social processes, or available functionings, in their environment, and, has been seen, these functionings are related to the normative and ethical processes evidenced in the environment.

These barriers to participation by the 'excluded' chime with Williams' (2003) discussion of the difference between formal and informal volunteering. Formal volunteering via a group clearly puts off a variety of the 'excluded' through the processes, demands and perceived cultural differences. Concomitantly, informal volunteering that takes place outside of groups, for example caring, is not recognised by the initiatives, moreover, the needs being met by informal volunteering are not recognised either. The nexus between informal and formal participation is thus the mechanism that defines participation and relates to how issues are defined as public or private.

In terms of what spheres of power the socially excluded participated in, it was mostly in the facilitative and dispositional circuits at the micro-level. Accessing services, particularly through information, learning skills, getting practical support and using some material resources (such as access to computers or phones), were the most common facilitative traits evidenced. In terms of identity, we have already seen how the groups were useful in developing a means of self identity for some of the socially excluded. As well as that self-referential aspect of identity, however, most of the respondents identified with the groups they were a member of. This was not a strong sense of identification, however, and was based in their experiences of the groups rather than with an abstract notion of the group's characteristics or aims. These feelings of identity are thus primarily

affective rather than ethical or moral in character. To a small degree, the groups afforded the socially excluded some vocabulary to articulate their experiences.

The two respondents that had accessed the episodic agency circuit at the meso-level to voice issues also had a stronger sense of identity with the purpose of their project or groups as well as having access to more skills development and resources than the other respondents. These respondents retained their capacity for identifying what they considered the problems to be, and in a number of instances located the problem as being in the statutory sector, or in the groups of which they were a part.

**Participation for the excluded**

The respondents in the voluntary and community groups involved in the initiatives spoke not only in terms of the groups they were a part of, but as respondents with particular views of their own.

In terms of general participation in the groups, participation was most commonly of a minimalist nature. Some groups had members that were members in name only, other members just received group benefits or availed of group services. Those that were members in name only did not socially engage with other members via the groups, whereas the other minimalist members did at least have some degree of social interaction. The degree of 'incorporation' of these members, either positively or negatively, was clearly not high.

Functionally contributing to the initiatives seemed to be the demarcation between minimalist and active participation. Most of the groups reported problems in trying to persuade members to take on roles or responsibilities, it was difficult,

in particular, to get committee members or trustees, two of the necessary functional components of groups. The element of responsibility is thus crucial in the move from informal to formal participation, and is moreover, as noted in the interviews with the excluded, a possible mechanism for inclusion. As noted above however, this very feature lies at the boundary between the political and the non-political. Groups were clearly not particularly able to overly affect their members.

A Marsh Farm board member commented on the barriers and tensions in promoting participation, such as people wanting recompense or benefits for acting as volunteers, and the more work they did, the more they wanted. He also noted that in the case of recruiting people for the street co-ordinators scheme, the more conditions were put on the role, or the more refined the idea of the role became, fewer people would be willing to take on the role. He observed that volunteering is a very flexible activity, and attempts to regularise it neglected the transitory or conditional involvement of volunteers. Groups are clearly aware of the tensions involved in formalising voluntarism or participation.

Some groups put an emphasis on social activities as the crucial aspect of the group's role, and were only interested in strategic engagement in initiatives as a secondary concern (if at all), while the majority of the groups active in the initiatives saw involvement in broader decision-making as imperative to improving conditions for their clients. It had taken the groups in the CLG, however, a number of years before they accepted that they had such a role in broader strategy. The socially orientated groups did attempt to instil a group identity in their members, but this was at a remove from their involvement in the initiatives (and often resulted in users or members being unaware or only dimly conscious of the

group's involvement in an initiative). A number of the strategically orientated groups invoked the concept of community, some in a particularistic fashion, but mostly in the sense of trying to create cohesion.

For those members who are involved in the broader initiatives their social participation takes place at the level of the various groups, meetings and fora which they attend, and is more goal-directed as networking and information gathering than the social participation of those in the non-strategic groups.

The goal-directedness of the groups is also affected by whether they are strategically orientated or not. The goals of the non-strategic groups coalesce around their ongoing programmes or projects and the resources and activities required for them. Generally, the funding required for such activity is less than that required by the strategically orientated groups. In relation to this, one respondent noted how capacity-building was thus of two types, either to help a group carry out its function, or to assist in it becoming a "player", that is, a group with strategic aims and concerns broader than its own reproduction.

The goal-directedness of such strategically orientated groups is more than just the reproduction of its own activities, but to have an impact in broader decision-making so as to affect the conditions of its clients or members. All of the strategic groups, therefore, were involved in making claims about the needs of their clients or members. For the BME groups this also involved a claim for rights: that their particularity needed to be recognised and accommodated. A MFCDT board member also discussed the need for particular claims to be brought into consideration to enable social parity. Some of the strategic groups, though, made claims for the community as an undifferentiated whole. These discourses were not

discrete, however, and were intermingled to different degrees in the interviews. The emphasis, however, has effects on strategy that will become apparent later.

The concerns reported in relation to the ability to take on a strategic role, and which thus acted as barriers to strategic participation, were, firstly, information, the need for these groups to know what was happening, who was involved and the timetables; secondly, access to the decision-making fora on an equal status to other parties. Both of these considerations point to the favoured status of the central agency responsible for disseminating information. In relation to this, the fact that the CLG did not have direct access to the executive of the LDP was mentioned as a problem. Status was also affected by financial dependence, so it was commented upon that groups needed to have their core operations funded outside of the initiative mechanisms to enable them to take a more objective stance in relation to other partners. Another part of the question of status regarded the role of voluntary and community groups beyond just issues that related directly to them, and their input, as equal partners, to broader issues. Clearly there were differences of opinion over the legitimacy of the voluntary and community group being involved in the definition of problems in certain spheres of interest. Thirdly, groups wanted an input into policy, firstly in its formulation and development "eventually you do get into the policy changing and changing people's minds, but you've got to work up from the very bottom and it's very slow to start with", and secondly, in calling agencies to account for not living up to policies, in ensuring rights as claims are respected in practice:

> They knew they weren't providing the service, and I know if I worked through
> their policies it would tell them different, cos when you work with them at that

level, to me, it's easier if you know what they're supposed to be delivering, cos remember, everything is already set in stone, isn't it? If you're not aware of what they're delivering then they can tell you anything … When they talk about equality and all this stuff … fair enough, yeah, you're aware of it, but what are you actually doing to address this?

The site of discourse participation is also affected by the strategic orientation of the groups, in the non-strategic groups discourse takes place at an informal level in their social activities, and formally at committee meetings. The strategically orientated groups, as well as these sites of discourse, are also involved in inter-group discourse through networking and discourse at the decision-making fora of the initiatives.

The type of discourse that takes place at the decision-making fora was predominantly instrumentally focused. In each of the initiatives there were instances of more deliberative discourse. In all three initiatives there were brain-storming sessions involving members of the voluntary and community groups as well as members of the public to establish concerns and priorities, and in the SRB6 bid there was the opportunity to develop the scoring criteria with public involvement before it was implemented.

In none of the initiatives, however, were these deliberative mechanisms built into the structure of the initiatives, that is, they were discrete occurrences. Information from them was not fed back to the public in a comprehensive manner, and how the concerns and priorities were then taken forward was not communicated to the broader public. The techniques for instrumental action thus

outweighed the techniques of deliberation in terms of shaping the nature of the initiatives.

Other issues concerning this consultative type of discourse included that of consultation overload, as people were being consulted repeatedly over a range of different matters by different agencies. The consultations, moreover, were carried out according to the timetables of the agencies involved, which often occluded the possibility of issues or concerns being worked up by communities or consultees. The information, or the time for reflection, that consultees may have wanted, were not addressed in many of the exercises.

> We can't hold larger agencies to reasonable time-scales, because they simply see that they have to move forward, they see it as a mistake to be held up, and you can understand that, but is it participation they want or not?

**Effects of participation on the circuits of power**

After looking at the types of participation, there is a need to look at how this participation affected the circuits of power evident in the groups and initiatives. As discussed in chapter 5 there was a distinct 'them' and 'us' view of statutory agencies by the voluntary and community groups in two of the initiatives. This was evidenced in their views on how the initiatives were run, the bureaucratic processes, how they felt they were treated, and how the funds were allocated.

Although there is significant evidence for making this distinction, it is important not to over-emphasise it. A number of the voluntary and community groups are materially supported by statutory agencies, and they recognise the

assistance they have been given, as well as the support of particular politicians or officers. Nevertheless, despite these particular relationships, the voluntary and community sector, in general, does have a guarded view of the statutory sector.

As noted in chapter 5, the recurrent theme of community spaces is an important feature of these initiatives. The desire for community centres and activity spaces points to the perceived need, by the groups and their members, both for spaces for public interaction and for shared activities. The success in securing these centres and the retention of control by community trusts can be interpreted as a successful claim for the need for public spaces by community identities.

The low levels of participation other than in a minimalist fashion across the initiatives and the vexed nature of voluntarism raises a number of issues. As Shah (2002) argues, there may be a case for rewarding participation, but if this were done it would be likely to have a negative effect on groups' or initiatives' legitimacy. The participation of group members in fora outside of their groups both detracts and distracts from their own activities, but it is seen as necessary to having an input into the context and structures it finds itself in, rather than simply reacting to circumstances. These constitutive dilemmas to participation cannot be resolved, but have to be negotiated.

The following example brings out the funding and bureaucratic aspects of participation in the initiatives from a facilitative perspective. A voluntary group put forward a project under SRB6 in the same manner under which it had previously had a project in an earlier round

> In SRB 1 we were aware that the funding was paid in arrears and you claimed it
> based on invoices, so for SRB6 with having been told that we'd been allocated

funding from the 1<sup>st</sup> of April 2001 we had everything in place to be able to be going

from April 1<sup>st</sup> and then claim it back, and it turned out that there was a whole lot of

project approval processes that were new to go through first, and you couldn't claim

anything until your project was approved, and although I pushed and pushed to get

it done fast, our project was not approved until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of July, so we had a whole

quarter and another three weeks of the next quarter that we cannot claim funding

back for. So we've had to take that out of our reserves, and that has caused some

hassles, but it was about, I mean basically I spent that period re-doing the same

form six times until it met their requirements, now I know those requirements are

imposed on them from above, but if that was going to happen couldn't we have

known the year before? ... perhaps they didn't know ... I think there were

problems getting the staff in place to do it and this sort of thing, but that needing to

get the paperwork right delayed us getting money. Now, we have mostly managed

to claim all our SRB for that year, but we haven't all of it, simply because we then

didn't spend the money after that, you know? We were allocated a year's funding

having worked out our project, we were then asked to spend a year's money in nine

months, well unless you start doing way out things, you ain't gonna do it are you?

So that sort of thing is a problem ... they perhaps need to be a bit more flexible ...

because smaller projects would have gone under in that time. And it may be that

they then need to be feeding back to central government that this doesn't work

(group manager).

This example illustrates that even though the initiatives facilitate the

voluntary and community groups, the way that they do so is not as facilitative as it

could be. The capacity of the bureaucracy, both of the group and of the initiative,

caused problems, the timing and dissemination of information was lacking, the

timing of the approval process and the rules applying to it caused problems, and

the strictures of the financial year created a limitation that had nothing to do with

the project's activities. The bureaucratic procedures are both the site and the object of struggle. They constrain the operations of groups, but bureaucratic success empowers them. This same process, however, as noted with the 'excluded' participants causes ethical, normative and interactional exclusion.

The two-way nature of the initiatives is also seen in that, while the initiatives facilitate the activities of the voluntary and community sector, without the voluntary and community sector, the statutory sector does not have a 'bridge' out into the wider community. Without that bridge the statutory sector would experience great difficulty both in terms of achieving any goals of enabling the participation of the public, but also in dealing with the increased levels of deprivation and exclusion there would then be among the community. The statutory sector recognises a need for the voluntary and community sector, and to an extent recognises the right of voluntary and community groups to be involved in decision-making, but this right is not yet fully implemented in the ways that the initiatives operate.

The over-determination of the initiatives is a function of the way the initiatives are set up. A large degree of this is due to the particular bureaucratic systems and procedures used. The voluntary and community groups are subject to financial, targeting and procedural monitoring, and the statutory groups arbitrate on all three mechanisms in an all-or-nothing manner.

The third circuit of participation was the episodic agency circuit. As developed in chapter 5 in delineating the various actors and the specific decisions that could be attributed to them, the overriding power relation is set by government criteria which sets the problems, restricts the operations of the voluntary and

community groups through bureaucratic stricture, but also facilitates the initiatives with the degree of participation and community involvement that has been achieved.

Although the voluntary and community groups had some success in affecting the structures, in particular the area-scoring panels and scoring systems in SRB6, and the composition of the MFCDT board, they had relatively little input into allocation at the macro- level, or indeed the over-arching policy goals (except in lobbying central government, the effects of which cannot be clearly discerned).

While some people in Marsh Farm argued for a 'bottom-up' role for community activities, almost in opposition or as an alternative to the statutory or commercial sectors, most of the respondents seemed to see their role as complementary, even if some of them saw this complementarity as sometimes being antagonistic to the statutory sector. The challenging role was seen as, firstly, questioning the statutory sector's performance in delivering its own policies, secondly, in publicising needs that were not being met, or thirdly, in challenging specific decisions. One group had withdrawn from the LDP at one stage in protest to the SRB5 process, while other groups used the CLG to make their voice heard on particular issues or policies even though they were not involved in the SRB process. The antagonistic role was bound up in the expression of needs and, sometimes, rights. Those respondents who utilised the discourse of rights, and the need for the recognition of rights, were the most vehement in engaging in argument with statutory agencies.

One respondent from the sample of participants commented that the initiatives always tended to have a particular, or hidden, agenda, and that voluntary

and community groups were structurally unable to challenge them, but were able to at least question them. In contrast, another respondent felt that the participation agenda was in some cases genuine, but that it was not consistent, in that it was not followed through over time, and that in many cases there needed to be continued attention from statutory managers to ensure that bureaucratic staff operated in a facilitative manner in their dealings with the voluntary and community sector.

A number of the respondents voiced concern at the time-limited nature of the initiatives and the fear that when they came to an end (and even as they approached their end) that the in-roads the voluntary and community sector had made into policy, and indeed the activities of regeneration, would not be sustained, and that the voluntary and community groups would be forced to shrink back to their previous state.

## The effects of participation on inclusion and exclusion

Having traced the participation of the socially excluded in the groups, and the groups in the initiatives, both in terms of types of participation and the circuits of power, it is apposite to trace how this participation affected both inclusion and exclusion, of the socially 'excluded' respondents, of the clients of the groups more generally, as well as what can be inferred about the excluded in the broader public, and finally the inclusion and exclusion of the voluntary and community groups in the initiatives.

The primary benefits of participation for the inclusion of the socially 'excluded' respondents were engagement in activities, learning of skills, and access to information and services. These were allied with spaces for, and engagement in,

social interaction with the groups and other clients or members of the groups. All of the socially 'excluded' respondents benefited in these ways to some degree, but the extent of inclusion through an increase in their capabilities at this micro-level was variable. For the minimally participant, then, the inclusion was mostly interactional, in terms of activities, skills and information, normative in the use of services and their involvement in a group, and ethical in their development of self-relation.

For the actively participant, BM2 was further interactionally included owing to his contribution to the group, but his normative inclusion was minimal through the group. His voluntary work also afforded him a degree of ethical inclusion, not merely in terms of self-relation, but also in realising his ethical goal of being a volunteer. The two most active participants ACF2 and BM5 had larger degrees of interactional inclusion, through the development of a variety of skills, normative inclusion through their wider networks of associates through their work. They also had more ethical inclusion through their involvement in arenas and fora of discourse, and putting forward comments and ideas they felt important, including claims for recognition, in a goal-directed manner at the meso-level in these arenas and fora.

There was a great deal of exclusion, however, that participation in the groups could not erode, or could only mitigate. Interactionally, respondents were still excluded owing to a lack of money, lack of appropriate facilities, and demands on their time (sometimes due to their activities via the groups). Normatively, although the groups could help with access to services, there was a lack of services available to deal with many of the specific problems some of the respondents had,

as well as a general shortfall of services provided compared to the levels of need. Also the rules of services, or the rules applying to respondents while availing of services, limited their opportunities to engage in other types of inclusion.

Although in a few cases voluntary and community groups could facilitate people contacting families they had not contacted for a long time, they could not do anything more to tackle familial rifts. The communities of similar identity that could develop between users of groups, although facilitating inclusion for those who interacted, could also result in their being viewed as a deviant group by wider society. Ethically, only the active participants were directed towards ethical goals, including the questioning of interactional, ethical and normative barriers to inclusion, but the values of the minimally participant were not being realised. The voluntary and community groups were unable to substantially affect the environment in which the 'excluded' found themselves, and although they could afford support in dealing with stigma or stereotyping, they were not able to stop them being experienced by the 'excluded'.

The socially 'excluded' respondents showed particular types of inclusion and exclusion and the affect of their participation in the groups corresponded to these types. More broadly, however, it is useful to look at how else participation in the voluntary and community groups affects inclusion and exclusion. As with the respondents, the most visible effects of the voluntary and community groups is the interactional activity afforded: the learning of skills, participation in activities, availing of and use of information, and the social interaction in the facilities of the voluntary and community groups. A number of respondents from the voluntary and community groups emphasised the gaining of confidence by their clients as the

most important benefit. This was often facilitated through the support mechanisms, or peer interaction, in the groups. This gaining of confidence, which is reflected in the socially excluded respondents, is related to their ethical inclusion through a development of self-relation.

> The main achievement that I would say we achieved is the number of people whose self-esteem and confidence is higher because of the fact that we have been prepared to accept them as people, I know that sounds horribly intangible, and I could quote you the numbers of people we've got into jobs and qualifications and all of that, but if somebody is put into a job, and they don't have the confidence to believe they can do that job, they aren't going to keep it, and I think our biggest achievement is the number of people who have been enabled to move on because they've discovered some belief in themselves (group manager).

Also like the socially 'excluded' respondents, the voluntary and community groups were not able to tackle or alleviate a variety of types of exclusion through participation alone. Interactionally, they could only help people to find employment or other roles, but could not often provide meaning-giving roles or functionings for them. Normatively, they provided their own services to members, helped members access the services of the statutory sector, and were able, to a limited extent, to influence how statutory services interacted with, or were aware of issues, through their service delivery. They were not able, however, to ensure that adequate services would be provided to deal with the many and various needs or lack of capabilities they encountered in their members or clients. Ethically, active members could develop ethical goals and realise them through their activity, but general members were not able to do this through the voluntary and community

groups, and many of the members did not have the necessary inter-personal and organisational competencies (or lacked the self-belief to acquire them) necessary to take up a position of responsibility within the voluntary and community groups.

We have also seen how the voluntary and community groups are geared towards particular problems and types of people, and thus do not appeal to everyone, and the problems the voluntary and community groups have both in reaching many people with severe problems, and in catering for those problems (such as drug use or mental health problems). The inclusion facilitated through the groups is a partial inclusion in terms of capabilities and functionings, on one hand because members are still open to stigmatisation as members of a sub-culture ('alkie', 'druggie' and so on), and on the other, because the activities within the groups take time and effort, and as such the members or users are not able to become more fully included in society (importantly, though, such members may not yet be able to take up more inclusive roles in society).

The inclusion of the voluntary and community groups in the initiatives has been previously recounted, through the types of involvement and constraints in the facilitative, dispositional and episodic agency circuits. There is a further element to be discussed. While a number of the voluntary and community groups' respondents considered confidence-building as the major benefit and achievement of their groups, they also highlighted that just such achievements were very difficult to communicate to their funders or to the initiatives for purposes of monitoring or targets:

here its very very difficult to measure your outputs. An output for us could be, as

I said earlier, getting someone to shower, getting somebody to attend alcohol

services, supporting them through that, trying to get a person to stay in their flat, to retain their flat, all those kinds of things, and yes, we do get people back into work and there are positive things, but not always measurable (group manager).

The problems of the initiatives not being able to recognise this important role, or being only able to part-recognise it, is then a form of exclusion both of the voluntary and community groups' work, and of the needs of the excluded. In other words the inability of the formalisation of outputs to capture the affective work of the voluntary and community groups' work means that the issues this work addresses are imperfectly fed into the decision-making process as public concerns.

**The structural problems of facilitating participation and alleviating exclusion**
In the last substantive part of this chapter I will develop some of the issues that have become apparent in the initiatives as to how they promote participation and tackle exclusion, in order to identify the features of these problems. As this identification is primarily abstract in character no attempt is made here to make specific suggestions. The aim of identifying these problems is to enable the highlighting and discussing of them so that they may be taken into account in future policy discussions. It is clear, however, from the findings that stimulate these practical conclusions that future attempts to enable participation or alleviate exclusion will need to address these issues.

*Participation*
One of the major problems noted in the initiatives is the subordinate position and status of the voluntary and community groups. This subordinate position

disinclines both: participation by the voluntary and community groups in the initiatives, and of the public in these groups. Participation is only a viable option for action if it is taken seriously and supported consistently by the statutory sector. There are a number of issues that affect the status of the voluntary and community groups.

Firstly, voluntary and community groups do not have direct representation at all levels of decision-making in the initiatives and are not involved in policy formation in them in an equal relation to other partners from the outset. The proportion of the representatives from voluntary and community groups also requires attention – generally only a handful of groups are on the higher-level decision-making boards representing a large number of different groups. Statutory organisations stress that they have to consider all their potential users. This cannot be disputed, but there is a question as to whether the proportion of the electorate who participate in their governance structures compares favourably to the numbers who participate in voluntary and community groups. Statutory organisations should be required to uphold the same good governance mechanisms as voluntary and community groups, and the proportions of places on partnership decision-making bodies should be proportional to the amount and degrees of active participation across all bodies that are engaged in providing for the public good[16].

The question of disparity of participation can be highlighted even in terms of the statutory agencies' preferred form of participation – consultation. The structure of consultation documents delimits the types of answers and information that can be fed back to agencies. The responses to consultations that are received

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[16] This would result in a much more fundamental re-distribution of power between the voluntary and statutory sectors than the Treasury's recommendation for the inclusion of voluntary and community sector representatives on Best Value boards (Treasury 2002).

by agencies are not made public[17]. The provenance of elements of responses to consultations that are incorporated into subsequent policies is not signified. The results of consultations are not fed back directly either to individuals or to groups. Such a systematically unequal process of participation, in terms of problematisation and agenda-setting; centralisation, hoarding and non-transparency of information; non-transparency of selection; and non-communication of results, is clearly not designed from the perspective of those who want to structure participation on an equal footing[18].

The bureaucratic processes, both for the voluntary and community groups and for the public, are very complex. The requirements imposed upon voluntary and community groups involved in the initiatives does not appear to have been communicated clearly in advance; and the targets did not appear to be agreed upon according to the types of work the voluntary and community groups do. Procedures and processes of participation cannot be done away with, but the nature of these processes – the material form that they take – can be adapted. Processes of participation have to meet certain requirements of accountability, traceability and so on, but the way that these requirements are met is not set in stone. They need to be developed up from the way voluntary and community groups work, they need to capture the informal discourse that occurs and feed these into decisions, they need to adapt to the individual circumstances of the public and they need to use the

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[17] Published analyses of consultation responses such as Marilyn Taylor Associates (2003) may be a start in this direction, but cannot give an adequate or transparent account of the individual meaning inherent in each response.

[18] Research on the public's views of consultation in local authority spending decisions showed that "residents' preferences were for consultation which went out to where the people lived, and for an opportunity to express views on issues of direct relevance to themselves or their locality" (DETR 2000 p.6).

physical and social activities of voluntary and community as proof of delivery and also as expressions of need.

Allied to this, the problems of the non-systematic integration of deliberation into decision-making, or the problems of over-consultation, show the lack of joined-up co-ordination of communication of agencies with the public.

The procedures of participation are not very amenable to the public – a serious problem highlighted in Marsh Farm was the illiteracy, or in some cases dyslexia, of much of the public. When so much of the information required to participate effectively is paper-based it is not surprising that much of the public does not participate. Commonly, council leaflets are available in minority languages, but the majority language version is often the only one found in public places. An example of positively tackling these types of barriers was a disabled group that put all its minutes in both written and audio- forms. Participation needs to be designed around the activities, habits and skills of those that are to be facilitated to participate.

The over-determination of the initiatives observed was due not only to the control by the statutory agencies of the higher levels of decision-making, but also by their role in monitoring and arbitrating on financial, targeting and procedural aspects of the initiatives. This concentration of powers by the statutory sector prevents the possibility of participation being structured reciprocally between the statutory sector and others.

The rules pertaining to the financial year cause problems in terms of deadlines, under-spend and claw-back of funds. It seems perverse that social programmes have to be altered to suit accounting procedures rather than the

accounting procedures being designed to accommodate the features and environmental constraints of social programmes. Furthermore, as a number of the respondents commented, the lack of mechanisms for forward-funding projects limits both the number and types of group able to participate in the initiatives.

The different understandings and practices of voluntarism undermine either the efficacy or the legitimacy of participation. It is clear that there is not a consensus between the public, the groups and the statutory agencies as to what the rewards of participation are or should be. Information on the initiatives, the groups and the benefits provided by them, as well as the role of volunteers, has not been sufficiently discussed with or promoted to the public to address mistrust and misunderstandings. The role and nature of voluntarism clearly relates to the contested nexus between informal and formal participation, and of the responsibilities attached to each. In practical terms, this then affects the capacities of the various organisations involved, but also the expectations of provision by the public both from the voluntary and community sector and from the state.

In terms of widening the breadth of those who participate, voluntary and community groups are always at a disadvantage compared to other organisations as they generally find it difficult to generate funds via their services or activities to facilitate their reproduction, and as such they are dependent on outside funding, whether from charities or from other funders. The groups that provide for the most excluded have the least resources to draw upon, and are thus the most fragile in their internal and external relations.

We have discussed at length the non-reciprocal relations between the statutory sector and the voluntary and community sector and the public, and of that

between the voluntary and community sector and their members or users. As discussed above, the primary difference between these two sectors is the ability of the voluntary and community sector to incorporate more sensitively the information from their informal processes into their interactions with their clients or members. There is, however, a further aspect to the social process of participation that is relevant. The current rhetoric of participation oscillates between the individually active citizen (see Blunkett, 2003) and, as seen in the initiatives studied, the idea of community. The processes of participation built around these conceptualisations of participation thus have problems, as participation is seldom either purely individual in character or truly representative of defined bounded groups. As participation is socially instituted it is both transitory and located in many different ways or at many different levels. This observation highlights that the mechanisms of the state are not yet sufficiently attuned to deal with the many different forms of participation that it may encounter, through the family, the work group, the interest group, or the geographical community, because it primarily predicates participation as either individual or as representative. The claims of groups for group rights, that are particular but are essential for universal parity, thus express a different understanding of the public than that currently institutionalised in the state.

*Exclusion and inclusion*

Exclusion needs to be understood in terms of how it is experienced as well as in terms of the underlying structural features and conditions that contribute to it. Exclusion has been seen to be the existence of barriers to, or the lack of capabilities

in relation to the social functionings of, interactional, normative or ethical inclusion. So tackling exclusion requires the removal of these barriers and the creation of more, and appropriate, capabilities for interactional, normative and ethical inclusive functionings. Improving interactional inclusion requires the consideration of the material processes and resources required for interaction. Normatively, the recognition and acceptance of different types of groups and of their characteristics, and how these relate to processes of interaction needs to be addressed. Ethically, the right of alternative legal values to be developed and promoted needs to be acknowledged and fostered.

What can be seen from the interviews with the 'excluded' and the work of the voluntary and community groups is that exclusion is experienced affectively. This does not obviate the fact, however, that these affective experiences are directly related to the lack of economic and other resources in the area. The limited effects of the initiatives upon the economic and other structural resources in their respective areas mean that the possibilities created by the initiatives for increased inclusion have been limited. What the focus on the affective nature of exclusion does show, however, is that efforts to increase inclusion have to be affectively sensitive as well as tackling the capabilities and functionings of the people concerned.

The needs for interactional, normative and ethical inclusion need to be identified, and the rights of the excluded to be provided for in terms of these needs has to be addressed. Neglecting the needs, capabilities, functionings and rights necessary for inclusion is to exclude.

Practically, the non-universal availability of services has caused problems, and conditions on their access or use (either normative or administrative) that restrict other types of legal inclusion have exacerbated the problems accessing them. The lack of penetration of facilities and support services in addressing family and community problems was evident, and the development of the conditions that promote informal or formal voluntarism[19] have not been adequately pursued. Mechanisms for protecting vulnerable people from exploitation were also seen to be operating ineffectively across and between services.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we have traced the practical relations of the effects of participation upon social exclusion in the initiatives studied. The participation of the 'excluded' could be split into either minimal or active participation. Minimal participation involved using services, some social interaction and minimal discourse, but this discourse seldom reached into higher levels. Active participation was evidenced by functional participation, but those who took a role in goal-directed participation had much greater degrees and levels of inclusion. The barriers to inclusion centred around the relation to self, different ethics, normative rules or practical difficulties – these difficulties mirrored Williams' (2003) identification of the non-recognition of informal volunteering and the needs it addresses. Minimal participation

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[19] The Home Office Citizenship survey of 2001 found that the incentives most likely to get respondents involved in the future in formal volunteering were asserted to be a direct appeal for help (stated by 38 per cent of respondents) and in the sphere of informal volunteering to know someone who needed help (stated by 54 per cent of respondents) and to be asked to help by someone (44 per cent) (cited in Williams 2003 p.289). Informal volunteering is more frequent than formal volunteering, and the crucial role of social interaction in promoting informal volunteering evidenced is a strong argument for promoting and developing the structures and resources that enable and foster social interaction.

remained at the micro-level while goal-directed participation was active at the meso-level.

General participation in the voluntary and community groups could also be classed as minimal or functional participation. The difficulties of recruiting users into functional roles points to the limited incorporation of group's users and the problems of trying to formalise volunteering.

The groups could be classed as either socially or strategically orientated. Socially orientated groups were concerned primarily with interactional activities, identity, and resources to facilitate these; they functioned primarily at the micro-level, but also the meso-level to an extent, particularly in the search for resources. Strategically orientated groups where concerned with the needs of their users or members, and some claimed the recognition of these needs in terms of rights. The problems with adopting a strategic orientation were identified as unequal, or lack of, information, the recognition of the right to be involved in broader issues and developing policy, and being able to hold agencies to account. The discourse in these groups was primarily instrumental, and the deliberative discourse evident in the initiatives was not recurrent or systematically integrated into the systems of operation.

The effects of participation on the dispositional circuit of power was evident in the development of a 'them' and 'us' split between the voluntary and community sector and the statutory sector, but also in the successful claim for community spaces and activities. The effects on the facilitative circuit could be seen in the acknowledged problems of the status of voluntarism, and the two-way power relation in terms of bureaucratic restraint and empowerment, which,

however, adversely affected participation by the public. In the episodic agency circuit the determining role of government criteria was the most evident feature. The over-determination of the initiatives was thus a combination of the structures of the episodic agency and facilitative circuits, particularly, the control of problem-setting, action at a distance, finance, targeting, and monitoring.

A minority of respondents talked of a bottom-up role for voluntary and community groups, while about half the respondents in the groups displayed a challenging disposition towards the statutory sector, in questioning their performance or highlighting needs not being met as rights; whereas those who did not stress rights but needs tended not to display this role.

The effects of participation on the minimally participant 'excluded' were primarily interactional and normative with some development of ethical inclusion, and for the actively participant a greater degree of inclusion of each type. The continuing exclusion revolved around services, family and stigma. The general effects of participation for users were activities and sometimes confidence through them, but in general voluntary and community groups seldom met all the needs of their users, and this partial inclusion could temporarily be a barrier to their further inclusion. The non-recognition of the groups' provision for the needs of their users by the systems of bureaucracy was a further barrier to their inclusion.

Finally, a series of problems were identified in relation to these issues. In terms of developing participation they revolved around the lack of participation being seriously and consistently integrated into systems, both with the voluntary and community sector and the public. Specifically this entailed the lack of: direct, proportional and equal-status representation of voluntary and community groups on

all levels of initiatives' boards; proper treatment of consultees; the lack of integration of deliberation into the initiatives systems; the complexity of bureaucracy for both groups and the public; the concentration of powers in terms of entitling, rule, role, and the higher allocative decisions by the statutory agencies; the unsuitability of the accounting systems used and the lack of forward-funding; the vexed understandings and practices of voluntarism and participation; and unclear information dissemination. These problems relate to the non-reciprocal social relations produced by the currently over-determined initiatives and the current dichotomy of participation processes centred on the individual and the community rather than social groupings.

In terms of the structural problems in tackling exclusion the problems concerned addressing the barriers and lack of opportunities for interactional, normative and ethical inclusion. This requires developing a sensitisation to needs, capabilities, functionings and rights. The promotion of interaction is necessary to promote the conditions for more informal volunteering that can break down barriers and develop capabilities for inclusive functionings. Lastly, there needs to be continued development of systems and mechanisms for recognising processes of exploitation to protect vulnerable people.

Having detailed the effects of public participation on social exclusion in the three area-based initiatives and identifying practical conclusions based on these findings, I move on in the concluding chapter to consider the further theoretical interpretation of these findings.

# Chapter 8: Conclusion and theoretical implications

**Introduction**

This thesis is concerned with one question, how does political participation affect social exclusion? Two answers have been proffered, firstly in terms of the participation engendered in three area-based initiatives in Luton, and how it has affected exclusion, and secondly, informed by this analysis, the linkages between theories of democratic political participation and the processes of inclusion and exclusion.

The importance of the question of whether and how participation relates to exclusion is related to a number of factors. The first set of factors relates to previous findings of studies into participation as discussed in chapter 1. Firstly, there have been findings that those who participate generally have access to resources that they can mobilise. Secondly, there have been numerous studies that have concluded that the participation engendered in various past initiatives is both limited in scale and in scope, that is, the number of people who participate is small, and the range of decisions that they are involved in is narrow. The third conclusion from previous studies is the interpretation that those who do participate are hegemonised, or colonised, by the state. These findings question 1) whether the

excluded can participate, 2) the scale and scope of participation, and 3) whether participation mediated by the state is necessarily colonised.

The second set of factors discussed in chapter 1 relating to the question of whether participation affects exclusion, is related to the policy motivations behind promoting participation, tackling exclusion, and the linkage that is assumed to exist between them. Promoting participation is normally seen as a political or democratic aspiration, either cynically, to bolster legitimacy, or substantively, to improve the nature of democracy. The Labour government also considers that promoting participation will improve the workings of democracy, that is, produce better decisions, so participation is also seen as an instrumental goal. Tackling social exclusion, in contrast, is normally seen as a social policy motivation, concerned with the welfare and well-being of the inhabitants of the country. While government literature assumes a complementarity between promoting participation and tackling exclusion, the nature of this complementarity is not explored. Moreover, the different policy motivations behind these two goals show that the two phenomena (participation and exclusion) are not dialectically related, as they do not necessarily function on the same space. How these two phenomena are related, if they are, is therefore one of the questions that this thesis sought to answer.

These two sets of factors, the findings of previous studies on participation, and the motivations behind the policies of promoting participation, tackling exclusion, and the assumption of a link between them, motivated the question of whether participation affects exclusion.

In this concluding chapter I will return to the original themes broached in chapter 1 in relation to the analytical frames, models and empirical findings developed throughout the thesis, both to answer these questions and to provide an interpretative context in which the questions, models, findings and themes are brought together. Mirroring the structure of the chapters, the predominant themes are grouped under the categories of the political and the social and are first dealt with separately before expanding the frame of interpretation by exploring their interpenetration. After these explorations and arguments, there is a critical reflection on the limitations of the thesis and of the concepts and theories employed. This is followed by a final summation of the main arguments of the thesis.

**The Political**

Participation invokes a vision of power and political action. Participation is important both in terms of theories of democracy, and in analyses of power. Its importance in terms of democracy required a consideration of the claims that participation via state initiatives results in incorporation. As outlined in chapter 1 previous work on participation via the state can be divided into: studies that detail the unequal processes of participation; interpretations of processes of governmentality that stress the meshed nature of power; views of incorporation, either negatively as the subversion of participating agents, or positively as the proportional representation of agents in the system of power; and the view that organisational engagement with the state itself is the feature that disempowers poor movements. This work is thrown into relief by the three elements of

hegemony: hegemony as moral and intellectual leadership; hegemony as the system of alliances that the ruling class fraction negotiates to win or sustain its position at the apex of the power bloc; and hegemony as the fixing of symbols and identities through difference and exclusion to create the building blocks of social, cultural and political alliances. These varying versions of the incorporation of social groups via participation with the state led on to the development of an analytical framework with which to describe what political participation is.

The nature of the relationship between power, politics and participation was developed in chapter 2. Discrete actions by an intentional agent involving the use of power in the control or effect of a situation can be understood as action in the episodic agency circuit of power. Alongside this episodic agency circuit, there are the conditions of system integration, the materials and techniques of production and discipline, or the facilitative circuit; and the conditions of social integration, the fixing of meaning, membership roles and processes, identity and re-cognitions, or the dispositional circuit. Theorising power in these three circuits, opposition to power, resistance, is implicated, when present, in the space of the relation that constitutes the use of power, but not all power involves conflict, as relations can also be additive, transformative or consensual.

The abstract formulation of the political that I have utilised is that the political is what is defined as public, with the boundary of the public being dependent on the conflict between definitions of the public and the private. Within the sphere of the public, the political concerns, firstly, the rules or frameworks that empower and constrain social interaction, secondly, the allocations of public

resources, and thirdly, the legitimacy or appropriateness of the decision-making rules and systems that decide both of these aspects of politics.

I also delineated the contours of the three circuits of power within the political realm of the public. In the episodic agency circuit of political power there are allocative decisions, entitling decisions, role and rule decisions, and non-decisions, whereas facilitative and dispositional circuits are harder to classify owing to their immanent nature. The facilitative circuit, however, can be seen in the identification, production, re-production and dissemination both of the discipline and techniques of human, material, and intellectual resources, and the resources themselves. The dispositional circuit is operative in the constructions of identity and culture, and the recognition that is involved in the competitive interplay between identity and cultures. Identity and culture provide the milieu for actors to develop understandings of situations, their possibilities and their relationship to their own actions, and are developed through the fora of social interaction that reproduce culture, such as institutions, and are shaped by the contexts of cultural inter-communication.

The two types of political actor, and three types of political act were defined. The first type of political actor are those within the formally recognised political sphere – the arms of the state and political parties and their actions – are uncontroversially political. The second type of actor are those that are not formally recognised as publicly political, in that their status is controversial, such as private companies or voluntary or community groups, and though their actions may not be conventionally understood as political, their normal activities are schematised as political actions in that they are involved in the production and re-production of

resources, identity and culture. The third type of political action is also performed by the informal publicly political actors, but is self-conscious action to influence or affect the publicly political actors.

The typology of participation within these types of actor and their actions utilised, was firstly, membership participation, that is, individuals being formal members or parts of a group or institution but who are not necessarily active. Secondly, there is functional participation, which is concerned with functions to reproduce the group or institution or to carry out its routinised activities. Social participation is concerned with the development of identification of members with other members and the group itself, as well as with non-members in an official capacity. Goal-directed participation concerns involvement in choosing and furthering the end goals of the group or institution. Discourse participation is engagement in the discussion, communication and development of the ideas and goals central to the group, and includes the acts of agenda setting and decision-making as well as informal discourse within the group. Minimalist, functional, and social participation each affect both the dispositional and facilitative circuits, while goal-directed and discourse participation additionally affect the episodic agency circuit.

These typologies of political power, political actor, political action, and of participation in political action are the conceptual tools with which participation was classified, analysed and interpreted. They mapped out the connections between individual interactions and the structures of political power, through the realm of the publicly political, the acts that constitute and affect it, and the circuits of power.

The investigation into participation in chapter 5 involved a number of steps, the mapping of the schema of political power onto actual actors, the outlining of the place of participation in government policies, as well as tracing its effects, and the investigation of participation in three area-based initiatives in Luton. Of the three initiatives investigated two of them were flagship New Labour programmes, two of them were specifically aimed at regeneration, and the other with widening inclusion in health provision. The concentration of these initiatives in one conurbation, and their proximity to the researcher enabled ongoing access and observation of their workings.

The initiatives had elements of the publicly political sphere and the contestedly public sphere. The public elements included membership participation from state agencies and tiers of government, as well as being subject to political authority, while the contestedly political elements were the public's, the private companies', and the voluntary and community groups' membership participation and influence.

Analytically, the initiatives showed a number of features. In terms of the episodic agency circuit, the prescriptive role of central government criteria was evident in all three initiatives. While some of these criteria empowered the voluntary and community groups in some dealings with the other tiers of government, in general it was experienced as bureaucratic stricture by the voluntary and community groups, in that the degree and amount of bottom-up working was curtailed. In the facilitative circuit there were high levels of requirements on the voluntary and community groups in terms of bureaucracy which was seen as restrictive, while at the same time this development of capacity

by the voluntary and community groups enabled them to access the funding of these initiatives. The benefits and increased opportunity for networking, the need for personal capacity among group members, and the importance of space as a resource were also noted. In the dispositional circuit, two of the initiatives showed a strong 'them 'and 'us' relationship between the voluntary and community sector and the statutory sector, while this was less evident in the HAZ, but the other two initiatives showed greater identity among the voluntary and community groups. Other elements which crossed the facilitative and dispositional circuits were the tensions involved with voluntarism, where paid work improved group capacities, but detracted from their perceived legitimacy; the general low level of public participation in the initiatives; and the apparent favouring of statutory groups compared to mainstream voluntary and community groups, and their favouring with respect to ethnic minority groups in terms of funding, which highlighted the values immanent in the systems of these initiatives.

This analysis led to the conclusion that these initiatives were over-determined on the side of the statutory sector as opposed to the voluntary and community sector, in terms of being answerable to them on two fronts, both objective-setting and financially, having low levels of representation in the decision-making processes, and having a different conception of the use of bureaucratic capacities, while the statutory sector evinced little capacity to adjust their ways of working. These features imply that the disjuncture between the statutory sector and the voluntary and community sector is unnecessarily hindering the potential of these types of initiative to facilitate participation.

Most of the findings relating to the groups referred, then, to the meso- level of group organisation and interaction within the initiatives, while the findings relating to the members themselves were at the micro-level. As the groups were essentially local in their activities, they were not operative at the macro-level as such, but as we have seen, some of the groups did have alternative philosophies of social organisation, and a significant number of respondents emphasised their roles in challenging policy practice or their contributions to policy-formation, which evidences that there was a significant desire to affect the macro-level structures of society.

Much of Eder's work, which emphasises looking at the inter-relations between the micro- meso- and macro- levels, and of many other theorists, concentrates on new social movements, particularly the ecological and peace movements (see Touraine 1981, Laclau and Mouffe 1985, Melucci 1995), in contrast with old social movements, commonly understood as trade unions or business associations. New social movements, for these writers, are the motive force for change in society, as the old social movements were before them. The groups analysed in this research do not fit neatly into this temporal schema, nor Habermas' contrast between emancipatory and defensive movements (1987a).

In relation to the first scheme it seems redundant to categorise groups in a purely temporal schema, and better to characterise them according to their aims and activities. Social movements, then, are defined by their attempts and successes to affect change at the macro-level of society through collective action.

There are two striking features, though they are not related, of the groups studied that suggest that they do not fit within such a conception of social movements. Firstly, a large number of them are set up to provide for people that could be classed as being let down or ignored by the state: the unemployed, youth, addicts, the homeless, carers, disabled people, ethnic minorities and immigrants. These groups are, in a sense, remedial, in that they are trying to remedy or alleviate social problems, as opposed to changing the features of society that cause these problems. They focus much closer at the micro- level than at the macro-level. The second feature is that a number of the groups are set up in response to the political opportunity structure, or already existing groups tailor their projects according to the initiatives' objectives.

While social movements, old or new, were constituted by members who could mobilise symbolic and/or material resources, the remedial movements do not have the same capacity for mobilisation, and their weakness in this regard has meant that they are in many ways dependent on, and influenced by, the political opportunity structures as framed by the state. Engagement with the state, or participation in its initiatives, is a vital source for their reproduction. Importantly, though, it was not the focus of the group, in terms of membership or characteristic, that was related to whether it was remedially or change- focussed, but the conceptualisation of the group's organisers in terms of whether they were primarily concerned with their users' needs, or their users' rights.

Those groups that articulated rights stressed the universal right of recognition of their particularity, that is, that their particularity had to be accommodated and provided for within the systems and structures that enable

interaction and inclusion. The groups of a more remedial character, in contrast, sought to remedy the effects of deprivation or exclusion while not necessarily seeking to change the structures of society that create inequality or deprivation. The difference in focus between these two types of groups materially affects the type of actions they undertake, and thus, their effects. While this distinction between remedial and social movements is clearly an ideal-type distinction it proffers a distinct means of interpreting the space and actions of the voluntary and community group sector.

"The welfare state was created in large part in the first half of the twentieth century by incorporating (or nationalising) the roles of many voluntary and community organisations" (Blackmore 2004). Remedial movements have been a feature of modern society at least from the era of Victorian philanthropy, and in essence share many characteristics, of client, of practice, and of organisational member, with their predecessors in alms-houses and religious orders.

Another aspect of the creation of the welfare state, though, was the nationalisation of private services, hospitals and industries, and this suggests something about the space that voluntary and community groups occupy. While Blackmore (2004) characterises the sector as being between the three poles of the state, the private (in terms of the company) and the informal (in terms of the family), using our frame of the political as the delineation of the public and the private, we can see how the discursive construction of voluntary and community groups exists between these two poles. Charities are legally defined as contributing to the public good, and yet the activities of their members are classed as being the actions of private citizens, and their representatives, as has been seen, are

questioned as to their legitimacy by elected representatives (and in some cases by the public). Remedial movements, thus, are the voluntary and community groups that gravitate towards the private pole of interaction, while social movements are those that gravitate towards the public pole of interaction. Western democracy is characterised by the movement of the delineation between the private and the public, and remedial and social movements, through their contribution to collective action as co-ordinated by the state, have been bound up in and shaped by the historical shifts and re-interpretations of the political.

*Participation, Incorporation, Hegemony*

This theme of the movable boundary between the public and the private and how it both affects and is affected by voluntary and community groups returns us to the question of incorporation. Returning to the four types of critical interpretation of participation via the state, and the three aspects of hegemony outlined in the introduction, we can now look at the details of the initiatives and the relations between the various parties to unpack the various shades of meaning, compromises and accommodations that were created to see what elements of these versions were evidenced.

Firstly, in common with most studies of participation, we have seen that participation in state initiatives is not facilitated in an equal manner and that voluntary and community groups are, and are treated as, the weak partners. The gains made by voluntary and community groups, however, in particular the securing and control of community centres, shows how the theory of

governmentality, of the relational interplay of power, is necessary to situate and explain both the unequal relations but also the mutual benefits of participation.

Incorporation was evidenced, both positively in contributing to policy-formation and problem-identification, if in a minor capacity, and negatively in terms of some groups adopting a non-strategic stance and some issues being non-decisioned. Importantly, the strategically orientated groups retained a level of autonomous action outside of the initiatives as well as contributing to them. This is a positive finding, and the ability of these groups and members to retain their critical distance from partnerships while also playing a part in them was facilitated both by the diversity of funding streams available, but also, to an extent, the discourse of participation as espoused by government.

The question raised by the fourth interpretation, that organisations of the poor are mistaken to collaborate with the state as it will withdraw its support and mechanisms with the onset of fiscal crisis or public backlash against the recipients of welfare funds (Piven and Cloward 1977), cautions against an optimistic reading of voluntary and community groups' successes (which may prove to be primarily symbolic) and current relative independence (which may either be diminished, or result in their marginalisation from public policy formulation). A significant number of respondents were all too aware of the fragile status of their position and the unclear signals from government as to the permanence of participative structures and funding. It is impossible at this stage to reject or confirm Piven and Cloward's thesis, but it is worth noting that some of the features that they describe,

the growing bureaucratic nature of the organisations for example[20], are clearly in evidence.

In terms of hegemony, despite the government's frequent assertion of the need for community leadership, clear and unambiguous leadership at the local level was not observed. There were clearly varieties of types of leadership evidenced at different levels in the groups and in the initiatives but it was not bound together in an obvious manner by a commonly defined moral or intellectual order. Poulantzas' (1978) model of the alliances and fractures that constitute the power bloc as held together by a class fraction at its apex, describes quite well the relations of power demonstrated by central government in their relation to the initiatives and the groups. This model needs to be relativised by the insights of governmentality, and also by the process of identity-fixation. The processes of governmentality – action at a distance, problematisation, incentivisation – and their relation to discourses of identity – of community, of rights – break down Poulantzas' emphasis on class, but supply an explanatory process of the relations he describes.

Incorporation and hegemony are clearly evidenced, therefore, but the incorporation was not total and had had positive effects as well as negative, owing to the current relative strategic independence of some groups and members, while focusing purely on the states' mechanisms neglects the capacity the groups displayed for operating outside of state mechanisms. Hegemony is clearly evidenced in the over-determined processes and structures of the initiatives, but the nature of the alliances and fractures allows space for relative autonomy and is

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[20] Limitations of space, and the focus of the thesis prohibit the discussion of the relation the bureaucratisation of participatory processes bears on Habermas' (1987a) theory of the colonisation of the lifeworld.

not predicated on the ideological domination of the participants, but their relational strategic weakness. The identities of the strategic groups and their members are perhaps their greatest resource, and their partial incorporation has been part of the process of claiming recognition for their rights and public space. Participation in these hegemonic initiatives characterised by governmentality and the struggle for identity-claims produced various effects and was manifested and structured in many ways. How these effects, manifestations and structures mitigated and mediated social exclusion will now be returned to.

**The Social**

The second concept in the terms of the question motivating this thesis that required explication was that of social exclusion. There has been a plurality of analytical paradigms and moral discourses related to the concept.

As developed in chapter 2 the striking feature of most of the traditions for conceptualising exclusion is that their analytical paradigms of exclusion are complemented by a moral discourse about what the nature of inclusion should be. This relationship of analysis being dependent on prescription leads to the need to separate the analytical component from the moral component, so that there is then a need to develop the concept of inclusion analytically.

Surveying the implicit operational concepts of inclusion, they range from a concern with paid work to an ability to engage in consumer society, to social rights and the structures that actuate them. These elements can be brought together in the model of inclusion and exclusion which identifies the satisfaction of needs, the

capabilities for inclusion, and social functionings, and the role of rights as claims for recognition as a process of social functioning that indicates critical autonomy.

Specifying what the capabilities for inclusion are required a model of inclusion based on a philosophical anthropological articulation of social inclusion. Inclusion was thus seen to have three aspects. Interactional inclusion is taking part in the processes of production, re-production or dissemination of human work, life or culture. Normative inclusion involves being recognised and treated equally in the membership roles and procedures of society. Ethical inclusion involves developing ethical goals and values respected and valued in society.

Exclusion, then, is related to these three aspects of inclusion. Interactional exclusion is identified by the presence of barriers or lack of capabilities that prevent a person's ability to partake in interactional functionings. Normative exclusion relates to non-recognition of a person or differentiated treatment of that person, by a community. Normative exclusion can be legally legitimated as a sanction, can be a result of the state's institutions, services or administrative procedures, or can be a result of non-state groups that discriminate between people through categories of classification or administration. Ethical exclusion tends to be discrete or transitive but can be based on enduring differences in ethical aspirations in terms of culture and identity between a person or persons and wider society.

This philosophical anthropology was influenced by a consideration of human orientations, how human action is actuated and developed upon five main evaluative categories, the practical, the true, the right, the good and the beautiful. This reflection on human orientations also clarified the distinction between the

analytical paradigm of a model of inclusion and exclusion based on a philosophical anthropology and a moral concern with exclusion as a critical and evaluative concept.

The development of a theory of capabilities of inclusion, and its relation to human needs and social functionings, was influenced by Sen's model of capabilities of well-being. Moreover, Sen's theory is concerned with equality, and the relations of equality to inclusion and exclusion raises a number of questions. Utilising the idea of rights as claims for recognition, moreover, we are able to trace the negotiations and conflicts in attempts to achieve inclusion.

Using this analytical model it was possible to investigate features and experiences of exclusion within the areas targeted by the area-based initiatives.

Without detailing the narrative summaries of the 'excluded' respondents, most of them viewed exclusion as a totalising experience of someone being severely excluded both from social interaction and services, and thus, even though most of them complained about problems with particular services, lack of money or of being stigmatised or discriminated against when questioned, only three of them classed themselves as having been excluded. Those who did class themselves as having been excluded thought of it not as a total experience of their lives, but as something particular to certain circumstances or conditions.

The respondent's interviews were analysed in terms of ethical and aesthetic inclusion and exclusion, normative inclusion and exclusion and interactional inclusion and exclusion. Themes that emerged in the ethical and aesthetic domain of inclusion involved self-respect or development that was evident in four types of

self-relation, and the non-actualisation of a variety of the respondents' ethical values.

Normative inclusion and exclusion was based primarily around three processes, state services, voluntary services, and the family, while only a couple discussed the community at large as a source of inclusion, and a few expressed concern for people with similar life experiences. Exclusion from state services was experienced most commonly with regard to housing, both access to it, and regards housing benefit. Accessing general benefits was also a problem, and a number of respondents cited the different types of restrictions that were placed upon them by being in receipt of benefits. Services that the state does not provide per se, but which people experienced problems with, were transport and childcare. With regards to group exclusion a number of respondents reported problems with their families, while a few experienced exclusion from their communities. Another aspect of normative inclusion, was that there were relationships of inclusion that included relations and experiences of domination or exploitation, so that some types of normative inclusion were asymmetrical or involved adverse incorporation.

Interactional inclusion was achieved by a wide variety of means, and as a corollary, interactional exclusion was experienced in a heterogeneous fashion. A great deal of the experiences of interactional exclusion were related to the processes or circumstances of ethical or normative exclusion, or with particular practical or material matters, and this points to the over-lapping, multiply caused and reinforcing nature of much of the respondents' exclusion.

The workers of the voluntary and community groups that worked with the socially excluded added a further layer of analysis. Ethical exclusion that they

noted included cultural differences for both the Bosnian and Asian communities, and for Asian women in particular. Voluntary and community groups were seen to be more accessible than statutory services, but they did not meet all the needs of different types of group and could not arrange a full range of social functionings for their clients. Isolation was a severe problem for some types of people, and the difficulties in encouraging participation when people had so many other issues or problems were emphasised.

Normative exclusion that they noted included the lack of services for types of problems, for example, for carers or disabled people. Access to services was a problem, especially for young people or people from ethnic minority backgrounds, the requirement for formal identification created problems of access, and services did not seem able to recognise adequately, or deal with, people who suffered from multiple problems. The socially excluded were noted to often have had breakdowns in relationships with other people, while carers were caught in an intense situation which often drove other people away. The workers stressed the heterogeneity of the socially excluded, and the problems that their own professional status caused in their dealings with them.

Interactional exclusion was often exacerbated by a lack of practical skills or knowledge, while people with substance addiction were very difficult to work with. Obversely, there was a lack of services that could cater for those lacking skills or dependent on substances. Economic barriers were noted, as were the various practical and material problems that mitigate against participation.

Although this is not a thoroughgoing exposition of exclusion, three conclusions were drawn from these analyses of data on exclusion, the experiences

of the socially 'excluded', and the views of those who work with them. Firstly, exclusion is tied to the social, economic and inter-personal relations that constitute inclusion. Services and resources and their distribution facilitate inclusion through enabling capabilities, and the lack of them is a major contributing factor to exclusion. Secondly, the social processes of inclusion can by their nature cause features of exclusion, as well as some adverse inclusive relations. Thirdly, voluntary and community groups play a mediating role through their provision of resources and services and fostering of social relations, but they cannot provide a full degree or range of inclusive functionings and some of their aspects, in the context of certain features of restrictive state services, can cause features of exclusion.

*Inequality and inclusion*

In chapter 3 two questions relating to the model of inclusion and exclusion were raised, firstly, whether it is a mediating concept between poverty and inequality, and secondly, whether it was a mediating process between personal autonomy and critical autonomy.

Before we bring to bear the conclusions of chapter 6 on these questions, we need to look closer at the concept of equality, as yet unspecified, and contrast it to that of inclusion and exclusion developed.

The concept of equality, is, straightforwardly, the question of egalitarianism in respect of some variable, and, as Sen (1992) points out, the question to be asked before asking why equality? is equality of what? Any theory that proposes equality, situates a basal equality in some favoured space, which

invariably is considered the central feature of the theory, such that inequality in other peripheral spaces is not considered important enough to warrant any disruption of the basal equality.

Sen discusses various different contenders for the central space in a theory of equality, such as rights, utilities or resources, but he prefers to propose that the most salient concern for equality is freedom. Freedom is seen to be the most encompassing concept that could be made egalitarian, and it is capable of recognising and accommodating within it the heterogeneous internal capacities of humans, the heterogeneous external circumstances of persons, as well as the diversity of human aspirations. The other concepts, in contrast, tend to occlude one or other of these aspects, and are thus not as sensitive to the different relevant aspects of the world that affect the concern for equality of freedom.

There are two components of Sen's equality of freedom, freedom of well-being, and freedom of achievement. The first concerns the set of capabilities and functionings necessary for a person's well being, the second concerns the set of capabilities and functionings necessary to enable a person to participate in the pursuit of their goals. It is this distinction between freedoms that corresponds to Doyal and Gough's distinction between basic needs autonomy and critical autonomy. Whereas Sen's focus is primarily on the individual, the advantage of Doyal and Gough's model is its stress on the social situatedness of capabilities and functionings. While the terms of freedom of well-being and basic needs autonomy are interchangeable, however, the terms of freedom of achievement and critical autonomy are not. Freedom of achievement relates to the individual ethic of

development, whereas critical autonomy relates to the moral development of the group.

Sen's conception of equality of freedom relates to the model of inclusion and exclusion in terms of its mediation between poverty and inequality, and Sen makes an observation that is instructive in this regard. Regarding the evaluation of inequality Sen makes a sustained argument that equality of capabilities is a more far-reaching indication of a person's well-being than indicators of their lack of resources (or poverty), but he concedes that this is not to argue that indicators of poverty are of no importance, either in their own right, or in particular circumstances. Indicators of inequality of capabilities are not seen as obviating the use of indicators of poverty that focus on the micro-level, or indicators of inequality that function on the macro-level.

Analytically, the purpose of a model of inclusion and exclusion is to trace the meso-level processes whereby capabilities and functionings are closed off by interactional, normative and ethical processes as evidenced in chapters 6 and 7. The study of poverty and deprivation is situated at the micro-level of the lack of commodities (or more exactly their characteristics) and their matching towards people's needs, while the study of inequality is situated at the macro-level of social functionings. The analytical model of inclusion and exclusion is thus a significant contribution to the study of social processes.

The second question relating to the model of inclusion and exclusion concerns its critical relevance, in particular its mediation between freedom of well-being and critical autonomy. To recap, personal autonomy is the satisfaction of a

person's needs for physical well-being and the possession of the set of capabilities and functionings that relate to these needs, whereas critical autonomy relates to the possession of the needs, capabilities and functionings related to playing an effective part in the changing or sustaining of the functionings within society, for example the role of rights as claims for recognition as traced in the case-studies.

Equality of capabilities for inclusion, therefore, relates to a broader set of capabilities than personal autonomy, and a more specific set of capabilities than freedom of achievement, and equates to critical autonomy. Specifically, equality of capabilities for inclusion means having equal capabilities to affect social functionings.

Sen's focus on freedom of achievement is in terms of having equal capabilities to partake in social functionings, whereas a critical concern with inclusion is concerned with the equality of capabilities in terms of being equally capable of affecting social functionings. The ethical focus on freedom of achievement focuses on equal capabilities, while the moral focus of inclusion is simultaneously more exact in terms of being predicated on having equal capabilities to affect the specific social functionings related to the production and re-production of the range of social functionings, which are, however, a subset of the broader set of functionings necessary for freedom of achievement.

The critical function of the model of inclusion and exclusion is therefore to investigate the potential for critical autonomy which focuses on the nature of moral inclusion within the group to affect this core set of social functionings, and thus mediates between the ethical concerns for freedom of well-being and freedom of achievement. This uneasy relation whereby moral inclusion in critical autonomy

is necessary to move from freedom of well-being to freedom of achievement highlights the tension between the moral and the ethical, and the unstable relations between them as instantiated in contemporary society.

**Reflections**

Having developed a number of arguments relating to the mechanisms of participation, the relations of inclusion and exclusion, as well as how these two fields relate together, I will now turn to some reflections on the limitations of this thesis. Firstly, there are substantive limitations due to the data accessed and theories utilised. Secondly, there are processual limitations in terms of the methodology of analysis, and finally there are reflections on the usefulness of the concepts employed. Following these reflections there are some suggestions for future related research.

As acknowledged in chapter 4 and chapter 6, there were practical limitations as to the types of data on exclusion that could be accessed. Particularly, there was only limited access to the Asian communities, and concomitantly, little access to the types of exclusion related either to their ethnicities or to their religions. There are also various other types or forms of exclusion which have been left out due to the small sample size. As noted, however, the aim of the thesis was not to develop a statistically representative depiction of exclusion, but to develop a contextually sensitive mode of analysis of inclusion and exclusion. Therefore, although there are various substantive types of exclusion left out, they should, nonetheless, be amenable to the same type of analysis dependent on the availability of access.

A limitation on the data relating to the initiatives was clearly the effects of these initiatives on the local economy, and of the effects of any such changes on the local population. As yet, however, there is little rigorously unambiguous empirical data relating to the economic effects of area-based initiatives and thus no way of relating this to the circumstances of people in these areas.

There are numerous theories concerned both with power and inequality that it was not possible to broach within the confines of this thesis. Questions such as the developmental or educational role of participation, on the one hand, or of the role of capitalism in inequality, on the other, have not been addressed. These and other concerns are important, and obviously impact upon the topics of this thesis and need, in future work, to be synthesised with the findings presented.

The second type of reflection, after the empirical and theoretical limits of the thesis, relates to the methodological structure employed. As developed in chapter 4, analysis was enabled by the categorisation of actions and events according to conceptual categories that were then amenable to interpretation through theoretical frames. The data presented and discussed in chapters 5, 6 and 7 were thus built upon in terms of moving from events and actions to concepts, to the interpretation of the inter-relationships between these concepts in chapters 7 and 8. This is a very formal means of presenting data and is not commonly employed in relation either to such theoretical concerns as power and inequality or in inter-relating such concerns.

The limitation of such a processual manner of presenting data is that it delimits the interpretative process until the latter stages of the work. Against this, however, it makes the conceptual and interpretative work transparent and more

amenable to replication, owing to the structural and additive way that these processes are treated. There are, inevitably, trade-offs in any method of presentation, and in this instance structure, process and detail were chosen over accessibility.

The final set of reflections refers to the concepts and theories used. In relation to the concepts and theories related to participation and power, the use of interpreting the initiatives through the circuits of power, the political and the actors who contributed to it, the types of decisions, and participation, was evident in two ways. Firstly, it was evidenced in the analytical ability to untangle the initiatives in terms of the differing types of decisions effected by the actors and their various effects. Secondly, it was evidenced in the interpretative ability to see the successes of the voluntary and community groups in securing community centres as a claim for public, and hence political, space.

The use of the concepts related to social exclusion is not so transparent. This is due, firstly, to the heterogeneous nature of the experiences of exclusion described, which meant that the development of the data remained more abstractly descriptive, and secondly because the data was restricted to views and recounted experiences, whereas in the initiatives there were documented events over a period of time which allowed for a fuller exposition of processes.

Owing to these two restrictions, the model of inclusion and exclusion may initially appear to be little different from the multi-dimensional concept of social exclusion. The differences, therefore, will be detailed. As argued in chapter 2 the multi-dimensional concept is tautological, that is, it takes descriptions of exclusion as instances of exclusion without inquiring into their nature, possible linkages or

explaining why they are instances of exclusion. The model of inclusion and exclusion is quite different in that it can be explicitly used to diagnostically trace the particular element at play in an experience or report of exclusion and relate it to either a structural (interactional) or phenomenological (normative or ethical) process of inclusion. The use of the model of inclusion and exclusion is to add conceptual and analytical clarity to our understanding of experiences of exclusion. The lack of processual data relating to the experiences of the excluded precluded the possibility of undertaking a contextually rigorous analysis of their exclusion, but, potentially, the model could be used for such purposes.

Having reflected on the thesis, there are a variety of other topics of interest that ensue from the research findings and theoretical frameworks employed which warrant future study. There needs to be studies of the types of participation being actuated in Local Strategic Partnerships and other mechanisms supposed to facilitate participation that continue to pursue whether unequal power relations are replicated in these mechanisms, and in what ways. This could involve investigation of the discourses and claims employed by the various different actors alongside the material mechanisms of participation. Such analyses could particularly focus upon how different actors construct claims in terms of needs, rights and legitimacy, that is, the construction of the publicness of such claims.

Further investigation into incorporation could involve an analytical framework for detailing the differential respective benefits to those who participate. It would be worthwhile exploring in greater detail the differences between remedial movements and social movements, in terms of structures, strategies, aims and effects. There is a need for a fuller exposition of the

relationship between human needs, the requirements for capabilities for inclusion and social functionings, with a thorough account of barriers, opportunities, processes of recognition and cultural differences, and there is substantial room for further research into ethical exclusion and mapping contextually how it is tied to normative and interactional exclusion.

## Conclusion

This thesis (a) demonstrates the constraints that operate on participative mechanisms as detailed in the practical conclusions; (b) presents new ways of thinking about the role and limitations of 'remedial movements' in addressing social exclusion; and (c) contains a critique of the extent to which current arrangements neglect the social dimension of participation.

The investigation of participation was carried out primarily at the micro- and meso- levels of collective action. The primary difference between the type of collective action studied and that studied in most social movement research were the orientations of the groups. While most social movement research looks at groups promoting contextually new ways of ordering society, the groups studied in this thesis were generally more focussed on the problems created by the current ordering of society. A number of the studied groups were particularly dependent upon the political opportunity structure as framed by the state, especially in terms of finance. Thus the groups manifested characteristics of collective action both of that which is understood as social movement action, and what was characterised as remedial movement action.

Social movement research, and theories of civil society are important areas of investigation in terms of gauging systems of democracy as forms of societal power. Participation in social groups is an indicator of the vitality of democracy for a number of types of democratic theorist. Participation by social groups in initiatives dealing with the state, however, is disputed according to whether this is regarded as incorporation into the hegemony of the state.

As evidenced by the groups studied, however, although they were a part of and contributed to the initiatives and thus in one way were supportive of the state, they were not fully incorporated into it. They contributed to changes in the way the state worked, they criticised the state both in terms of its own principles and policies, and of their inadequate provision of services, and remained free to disengage from the initiatives when they disagreed with their operations. So although it is clear that the voluntary and community groups involved in the initiatives are in an inferior position of power, it is incorrect to say they are simply incorporated into the state. There is no way of avoiding hegemony in working with the state, but it is possible to affect the processes of hegemony.

The investigation of exclusion was carried out in terms of the meso-level of being closed off from social interactions, and its effect on the micro-level of deprivation, as compared to the macro-level of inequality. The theory of inequality, as utilised by Sen, focuses on inequality of freedom, and makes a distinction between freedom of well-being and freedom of achievement.

Equality of freedom, however, is primarily an ethical concern and needs to be held in tension with the moral concern for inclusion in critical autonomy. Inclusion expresses the moral need for equal capabilities in affecting socially

reproductive functionings, such as the struggle for recognition of rights. The model of inclusion and exclusion thus operates both as an analytical anthropological concept for tracing social closure at the meso-level, and as a critical concept that makes the distinction between freedom of well-being and freedom of achievement on the one hand and critical autonomy on the other. Equality of capabilities for inclusion provides both an analytical and a critical tool for enquiry.

The findings presented in the thesis point to two contradictions. Firstly there is a contradiction between the government's stated objective of promoting participation, regardless of the reasons analysed for these objectives, and the ways in which it attempts to facilitate participation. The mechanisms of participation create barriers to participation and thus restrict both the number and types of people and groups who participate and restrict both the extent of their participation, and the spheres of power in which they can participate. The second contradiction is the material contradiction that processes of inclusion create experiences of exclusion, in particular with regard to the normative processes of state services, and concomitantly, of the mediating role of the voluntary and community groups. The types of inclusion facilitated can cause other types of exclusion, and though this relation is not necessarily causal, in that it is dependent on the particular process of inclusion, it highlights the multifaceted experiences of exclusion, and points to the need for a multifaceted and encompassing approach to alleviating exclusion.

Active participation does affect the mechanisms of social exclusion, but minimal participation only mitigates certain aspects of it. Moreover, severe types

of social exclusion create numerous overlapping barriers to political participation. The suffuse nature of the political within the social means that these two phenomena cannot be causally correlated, but the inter-relations detailed, in particular the interactional, normative and ethical processes involved, clarify their complex natures and provide a method for mapping specific inter-relationships.

Equality of capability of inclusion is a necessary feature of democracy for those who promote political equality (see Saward 2003). Democracy can be prefigured as equality of voice and the concern with democratic deficits is related to the inequality of voice apparent in western democracy. Participation initiatives by the state are thus seen as a means of inducing the voice of those often silent. We have seen, however, that so far the mechanisms to promote participation have not adequately supported, fostered or heeded these voices, as they are given limited scope. If participation is to be treated seriously, then the voices of the participants need to be seriously included in the structures of democratic power. This requires the recognition by those with power of the inescapably *social* character of participation. The mechanisms currently promoted to develop participation are profoundly *asocial.* Fair systems of participation require fair social relations. Before participation can be equally engaged in there is a need for equality of capabilities for inclusion, and this requires a thorough-going revision of the ways that the state relates to and engages with both the excluded and the voluntary and community groups that work with the excluded.

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# Appendix 1

**Respondents to 'Participation' Interviews**

| Respondents | Vol | Comm | Init/Stat | HAZ | SRB | NDC |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C/M | | | * | * | * | |
| C/F | | | * | * | | |
| A/F | | | * | * | | |
| C/F | * | | | * | | |
| C/F | * | | | * | * | |
| C/F | * | | | * | * | |
| C/M | * | | | | * | |
| C/F | * | | | | * | |
| C/F | | * | | * | | |
| C/F | * | | | * | * | |
| C/F | | * | | | | |
| AC/M | * | | | * | * | * |
| C/M | | * | | | | * |
| AC/F | | * | | | | * |
| C/F | | | * | | * | |
| C/M | | * | | | * | * |
| C/M | | * | | | | * |
| C/M | * | | | | * | * |
| C/M | * | | | * | * | |
| C/M | | * | | | | * |

**Vol:** Voluntary group, that is workers are paid salary through funds raised.

**Comm:** Community group, that is all activities are voluntary.

**Init/Stat:** Either worker paid by an initiative, or worker in statutory organisation to liase with initiative.

C: Caucasian, A: Asian, AC: African-Caribbean, M: Male, F: Female

**Appendix 2**

**Interview schedule for respondents involved in participation initiatives.**

1. Could you give me a brief history of your group/organisation/network?
   - How did it start?
   - Who was involved?
   - What support did you get?

2. What is your personal history of being involved in voluntary/community groups?
   - When/why did you get involved?
   - How did you pick up the skills/knowledge to do this?
   - What is your relationship to this particular group/organisation/network?
   - Would you regard yourself as a community development 'professional'?

3. What does the group/organisation/network do?
   - Programmes/schemes?
   - Who aimed at?
   - What barriers/deprivations are you tackling?
   - Does the group have a particular identity (a shared sense of what it is/who they are)?
   - Does the community/constituency you seek to serve?
   - Who isn't being reached by what your group does?

4. What are the problems your clients/community/area experiences?
   - What do you see your group's role as?
   - How do you relate with clients/users/public?
   - Do you see yourselves/the group as an advocate, representative or support group?
     - how does this affect what you do/ relations with other groups/schemes?
   - How does group get its voice heard?
     - lobby/protest/ through consultations/affiliations?

5. How does the group operate internally?
   - Meetings?
   - newsletter?
   - How do people get involved?
   - How are decisions arrived at?
   - How are differences of opinion resolved?
   - What specific skills have been developed in your group? (examples)
   - How has group developed/changed?
   - Has the membership changed?
   - What resources has the group?

- How are group's activities/schemes developed?
- How does the group 'bond' together?

6. How is group funded?
   - Does funding affect what you do? How?
   - Does funding pay for workers or schemes?
   - Is group involved in funding other schemes?
   - Is group involved with statutory agencies/ other organisations? How?
   - How does group communicate with the wider public?
   - advertise/publicise services/actions?
   - What skills does the group/services teach/develop to/in the public?
   - What resources do you make available to the public/users?
     - to what extent are they used?
   - To what extent is the public involved in/feedback to your group?

7. Initiatives(dependent on which initiatives, HAZ, SRB etc. group is involved with)
   - How did group become involved in initiative?
   - How has initiative developed/changed?
   - What input does group have into initiative?
   - What decisions have you pushed for/ backed?
   - What decisions/actions have you disagreed with/disputed?
   - What involvement have you had in strategy-making?
   - How do you relate with other members?
   - Has your group been involved in promoting the initiative?
   - How has initiative benefited your group?
     - funding?
     - Skills, resources, training (examples)?
     - Networking (examples)?
   - Do you have any criticisms of the initiative?
   - Has your group been involved in publicly questioning/criticising the initiative?
   - How far/to what extent has the initiative(in general) affected the problems it is supposed to?
   - How has initiative affected what your group does?
   - What problems have you encountered in being involved in the initiative?
   - How does monitoring/evaluation affect your group?
     - what are the outputs on which you are monitored/evaluated?
   - Have you utilised any skills/training or processes from initiative for other purposes?
   - Have you affected/developed the broader initiative/group?
   - Is broader initiative at all dependent on your group?
   - Are there initiatives in which you have avoided involvement or failed to get involved – and why?

8. Is there anything which you think is relevant to the topic that we have not discussed or that you would like to add?

## Appendix 3

### Interview Schedule for those who may be classed as socially 'excluded'

Could you talk me through what you do in a typical day?
Has what you do each day changed much in the last few years?
- employment/occupation?
- family commitments?
- friends/social groups?
- hobbies/past-times?
- education?

(if unemployed – what problems have you faced in getting or staying in work?)

Where do you socially interact with people?
What people do you interact with in your day-to-day activities?
Are you involved in any groups or societies? (not necessarily formal)
- to what extent?
- Are you involved in any voluntary groups?
- Have you ever benefited from voluntary or community groups activities? – in what way?
- Are there particular reasons why you haven't been involved in such groups?
- Do you identify with or have an interest in local politics or local groups? (tease out why with groups and not state/politics, if case)

What things or people do you identify yourself with?
- in what ways?
Are there things or people that you would identify yourself as against?
- in what ways?
What are the roles that you occupy in life?
What are the most important things that you do?

Do you have enough money to do what you think is important in life?
- what are the type of things you can't afford?
What other barriers are there that hinder you from doing what you want?
Do you face particular problems that prevent you from being involved in activities that you would like to be involved in?

Do you have difficulties accessing:
- Health services?
- Housing?
- Welfare (benefits)?
- Education?
- Legal services?
- Leisure or sports facilities?
- Child care?
- Social care?

Examples/instances?

Do you think these services should be changed? In what ways?

Has where you live ever been a problem (or caused problems) for you?
-        in what way?
Have you ever encountered discrimination or felt stigmatised?
-        In what way?

Have you heard of the term 'social exclusion'?
What do you think it means?
Do you think you are in any way socially excluded? How?/Why not?

Are you happy with your standard of life?
What aspects, in particular, would you like to see changed?

# Appendix 4

## Codes for participation data

1. Decisions    1.1 Non-decisions
                 1.2 Particular decisions      1.2.1 Restrictive
                                               1.2.2 Enabling
                                               1.2.3 Bureaucratic/processual
                 1.3 Allotting

2. Capacities   2.1 Financial capital          2.1.1 Having financial capital
                                               2.1.2 Lack of financial capital
                                               2.1.3 Gaining financial capital
                                               2.1.4 Failing in attempt to gain.
                 2.2 Procedures                 2.2.1 Restricting
                                               2.2.2 Enabling
                 2.3 Network capital            2.3.1 Having network capital
                                               2.3.2 Not having network capital
                                               2.3.3 Not being aware of networks
                 2.4 Labour (physical work)
                 2.5 Skills                     2.5.1 Having skills
                                               2.5.2 Lacking skills
                                               2.5.3 Learning skills
                                               2.5.4 Teaching skills
                 2.6 Awareness                  2.6.1 Having awareness of self
(groups)
                                               2.6.2 Lack of self-awareness (groups)
                 2.7 Intellectual capital       2.7.1 General intellectual capital
                                               2.7.2 Professional intellectual capital
                 2.8 Information                2.8.1 Having information
                                               2.8.2 Lack of information
                                               2.8.3 Overload of information
                                               2.8.4 Difficulties in spreading
                 2.9 Experience                 2.9.1 Having personal experience
                                               2.9.2 Lacking personal experience
                                               2.9.3 Group having experience
                                               2.9.4 Group lacking experience
                 2.10 Promotion                 2.10.1 Group self-promotion
                                               2.10.2 Promotion of others by group
                                               2.10.3 Promotion of group by others
                                               2.10.4 Press publicity
                                               2.10.5 Lack of press publicity
                                               2.10.6 Bad press publicity
                                               2.10.7 Public Events
                 2.11 Trust                     2.11.1 Having trust
                                               2.11.2 Losing trust
                                               2.11.3 Building trust
                 2.12 Material Technology       2.12.1 Having

# Appendix 5

## Codes for exclusion data

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 Interaction. | 1.1 Human | 1.1.1 Production | 1.1.1.1 Presence |
| | | | 1.1.2 Lack |
| | | 1.1.2 Re-production | 1.1.2.1 Presence |
| | | | 1.1.2.2 Lack |
| | | 1.1.3 Dissemination | 1.1.3.1 Presence |
| | | | 1.1.3.2 Lack |
| | 1.2 Material | 1.2.1 Production | 1.2.1.1 Presence |
| | | | 1.2.1.2 Lack |
| | | 1.2.2 Re-production | 1.2.2.1 Presence |
| | | | 1.2.2.2 Lack |
| | | 1.2.3 Dissemination | 1.2.3.1 Presence |
| | | | 1.2.3.2 Lack |
| | 1.3 Cultural | 1.3.1 Production | 1.3.1.1 Presence |
| | | | 1.3.1.2 Lack |
| | | 1.3.2 Re-production | 1.3.2.1 Presence |
| | | | 1.3.2.2 Lack |
| | | 1.3.3 Dissemination | 1.3.3.1 Presence |
| | | | 1.3.3.2 Lack |

1.4 Inability    1.4.1 Ability
1.5 Inappropriate facilities
1.6 Housing    1.6.1 Lack
1.7 Substances
1.8 Money    1.8.1 Having
1.8.2 Not enough
1.9 Knowledge 1.9.1 Having
1.9.2 Lack
1.10 Qualifications    1.10.1 Lack

2. Norms    2.1 Bureaucracy/rules 2.1.1 Breaking
2.2 Being taken advantage of
2.3 Friends    2.3.1 Presence
2.3.2 Lack
2.4 Sociability 2.4.1 Aggression
2.5 Services    2.5.1 Barriers
2.6 Stigmatisation/discrimination/excluded   2.6.1 Self-isolated

3. Ethical/aesthetic    3.1 Stereotypes
3.2 Environment    3.2.1 Dislike of
3.3 Self-respect
3.4 Disapproval of lifestyle    3.4.1 Approval
3.5 Interest    3.5.1 Having
3.5.2 Lacking
3.6 Materialism    3.6.1 Being
3.6.2 not-being
3.7 Roles/responsibilities    3.7.1 Having
3.7.2 Lacking

3.8 Personal problems
3.9 Happiness 3.9.1 Unhappiness
3.10 Cultural difference