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Social Capital, Neighbourhood Attachment and Participation in Distressed Urban Areas. A Case Study in The Hague and Utrecht, the Netherlands

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Published in:
Housing Studies

DOI:
10.1080/02673030701254103

IMPORTANT NOTE: You are advised to consult the publisher's version (publisher's PDF) if you wish to cite from it. Please check the document version below.

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Publication date:
2007

Link to publication in University of Groningen/UMCG research database

Citation for published version (APA):
Dekker, K. (2007). Social Capital, Neighbourhood Attachment and Participation in Distressed Urban Areas. A Case Study in The Hague and Utrecht, the Netherlands. Housing Studies, 22(3), 355. DOI: 10.1080/02673030701254103

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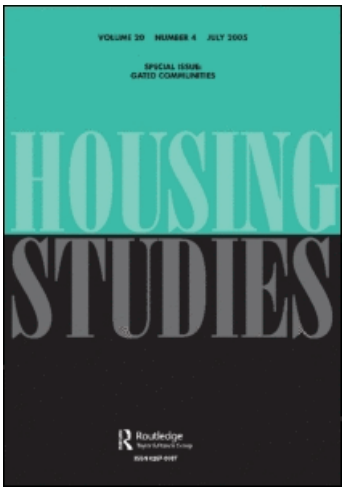

Housing Studies
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713424129

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Online Publication Date: 01 May 2007

To cite this Article Dekker, Karien(2007)'Social Capital, Neighbourhood Attachment and Participation in Distressed Urban Areas. A Case Study in The Hague and Utrecht, the Netherlands',Housing Studies,22:3,355 — 379
To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/02673030701254103
URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02673030701254103

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Housing Studies,
Vol. 22, No. 3, 355–379, May 2007

Routledge
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Social Capital, Neighbourhood Attachment and Participation in Distressed Urban Areas. A Case Study in The Hague and Utrecht, the Netherlands

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(Received June 2005; revised August 2006)

ABSTRACT *During the last decade, academic interest in residents' participation in maintaining the quality of life in distressed urban areas has risen. Many articles seeking to explain why people participate relate the social networks dimension of social capital to participation. However, according to Putnam's definition of social capital, not only social networks, but also norms and trust give people the tools they need for participation. Other authors concentrate on the relationship between neighbourhood attachment and participation. However, an empirical analysis in which both factors are combined is lacking. This paper describes the combined effect of social capital together with neighbourhood attachment in explaining participation. The findings show that participation is greater for residents with social networks in the neighbourhood, who reject deviant behaviour, and have a stronger neighbourhood attachment. Trust in authorities was not found to have any statistically significant impact on participation. The conclusions underline the theoretical assumption that social capital and neighbourhood attachment form a useful pair of concepts in explaining participation, because they focus not only on what people have, but also on their mindsets.*

KEY WORDS: Participation, social capital, neighbourhood attachment, governance, social mix, neighbourhood restructuring

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Introduction

Pollution, neglect of maintenance, vandalism, crime, drug abuse, child neglect and social isolation are just a few of the problems that lead to a poor quality of life in distressed urban neighbourhoods (Musterd & Van Kempen, 2005). These problems can lead to dissatisfied residents who aim to leave the neighbourhood as soon as they can, leaving behind those without the option to do so (often the low-income households). As a result, in Northwest Europe the low-income households are increasingly concentrated in areas where the

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ISSN 0267-3037 Print/1466-1810 Online/07/030355–25 © 2007 Taylor & Francis
DOI: 10.1080/02673030701254103

social-rented sector prevails (Musterd & De Winter, 2005; Van Kempen & Van Weesep, 1998). The concentration of low-income households and the ageing of certain parts of the housing stock exacerbate the social, economic, and physical problems in urban areas (Dekker & Van Kempen, 2004).

Many of the governments in Europe concentrate their urban policies on these distressed urban areas. In present-day urban policies in Europe, much attention is paid to the participation of residents (see, for example, Belmessous *et al.*, 2004; Droste & Knorr-Siedow, 2004; Öresjö *et al.*, 2004). This emphasis is also the case in the Netherlands. The Big Cities Policy, which is the major urban policy focusing on distressed urban areas, initially addressed these problems with a change in the housing stock. Housing for the lower-income groups is being replaced by owner-occupied homes, which bring in middle-class households. This 'social mix' is supposed to be good for the mutual tolerance between groups, and enhance liveability in the neighbourhood (Jupp, 1999; Veldboer *et al.*, 2002). Later, the change in the housing stock was augmented with integrated social, economic and safety policies. Within the approach, much is expected from the participation of the residents in their neighbourhood. The Dutch National government aims to achieve safety, liveability, integration, and social cohesion by "facilitating them (the residents, KD) … to take responsibility for 'their' neighbourhood" (Tweede Kamer der Staten Generaal, 2001, p. 1).

The policy discussion on participation is embedded in the academic governance debate. Local institutions increasingly work alongside other local institutions, such as community groups, and use their powers to enable rather than direct (Taylor, 2000). Participation is one of the key areas in which the delegation of power evolves (Docherty *et al.*, 2001; Raco & Flint, 2001). In order to give communities a voice in policy making, local governments invest in community capacity building. However, distressed urban areas accommodate concentrations of people with low socio-economic status (education, work, income) and of non-native origin. It is assumed that these people lack the necessary tools for participation (Purdue, 2001; Subramanian *et al.*, 2003).

The aim of the study reported in this paper is to identify and describe the factors that foster participation in distressed urban areas. To this end, social capital and neighbourhood attachment are related to participation. Following other research, the social networks dimension of social capital is related to participation. In addition, two further dimensions of social capital have been analysed for their explanatory value for participation: trust in other people, and authorities (O'Laughin, 2004; Purdue, 2001; Subramanian *et al.*, 2003) and norms (Kilpatrick *et al.*, 2001). Common norms lead people to trust each other, and this mutual trust generates informal governance as well as the feeling of responsibility.

Not only social capital, but also neighbourhood attachment is related to participation. When people identify with a neighbourhood and feel part of it they are more inclined to participate (Brodsky *et al.*, 1999; Galster, 2003; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003). To date, most research has focused on the impact on participation of either social capital or neighbourhood attachment. Through combining these two separate lines of thought, our understanding of the causes of participation can be enhanced. In this paper, the following question is addressed: to what extent can social capital and neighbourhood attachment help to explain the participation of residents in their neighbourhood?

The structure of the paper is as follows. First, there is a brief review of the literature on social capital and neighbourhood attachment. Here the concept of participation is also defined more precisely. This review is followed by a description of the data collection and

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methods used. Then the outcome of the fieldwork is presented. Finally, the conclusions give an evaluation of the usefulness of using both social capital and neighbourhood attachment as factors capable of fostering participation in distressed urban areas.

Defining Participation

What is participation? Policy makers and scientists alike tend to focus on various modes of participation in formal policy making structures. 'Formal' participation refers to people taking part in the decision-making processes that influence their neighbourhood positively (Verba & Nie, 1972). The degree to which communities can influence these processes depends on the degree of openness of government and the way in which decisions are taken. Participation requires the capacity to influence the final decision. As Arnstein (1969) has shown, different levels of power relate to different levels of participation. Only where citizens have decision-making power in issues that concern them do we refer to their actions as formal participation. For the sake of clarity, the paper has limited the analyses to participation in neighbourhood-related issues. At this level, formal participation refers to such activities as being a member of the neighbourhood council, or having a say in decision making or in drawing up a plan. In these cases participation is a form of mutual exchange and dialogue between authorities (both public and private parties like housing corporations) and residents.

'Informal' participation can also be an important source of aid in neighbourhood regeneration (Lelieveldt, 2004). For example, a resident can become a member of a street committee that organises events, checks the undesirable behaviour of loitering teenagers, and so on. This is what Crenson (1983) once named 'informal governance': all those activities that do not fit the 'normal' definition of political participation, but which are essential in neighbourhood governance. Informal activities may enhance residents' opportunities of participating in formal processes (see, for example, Verba & Nie, 1972).

Of course, it is not a *sine qua non* for all residents to participate. Feeling part of a neighbourhood is different from being actively involved in its management. It may very well be that residents feel attached to their neighbourhood, but are not interested in participation in neighbourhood-oriented activities. Some people may not want to participate because they find other things in life more important. In that case there is no real problem. However, the situation becomes more problematic if residents want to be involved in either formal or informal activities in the neighbourhood, but are not able to do so for various reasons. Therefore, it is useful to gain more insight into the variables that may help to explain who participates.

In this paper, participation is defined as activities undertaken by residents with the aim of positively influencing the social and physical situation of the neighbourhood. These activities can be either formal or informal. Other authors have used a definition of participation which focuses on more than just formal participation. Examples are: being active in school activities (Marschall, 2001); working to bring about change (Kang & Kwak, 2003); or being a volunteer in the neighbourhood (Shirlow & Murtagh, 2004). Non-formal activities often take place at the very low-scale level of the apartment block or the street, because this is part of the resident's daily environment and is therefore the most relevant. Formal activities often refer to participation in policy making processes within the neighbourhood. The focus is on the elements that may be related to participation,

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and can therefore either stimulate or limit participation. The variables that relate to participation are described in Figure 1.

While the starting point here is that social capital and neighbourhood attachment indeed affect participation, it should be acknowledged that the converse is also possible (as indicated by the dotted lines in Figure 1). In fact, it is probable that there is a continuous, dynamic interplay between participation, social capital and neighbourhood attachment. The analyses should thus be interpreted with care. It might be argued that a structural model in which participation, social capital and neighbourhood attachment affect one another might be preferable to the one-way causal analysis presented in this paper. It was decided not to construct this type of model here for the following reason: the way in which social capital and neighbourhood attachment influence participation is an essential part of the process that is being studied. The aim is to analyse to what extent different kinds of characteristics of the residents add to their activation. Focusing on the mutual relationship between social capital, neighbourhood attachment and participation rules out the option of identifying which factors specifically influence the participation of residents. The consequence of this choice is that, strictly speaking, the regression models cannot be regarded as causal models. They should be interpreted as what Mulder & Van Ham (2005) call 'sophisticated descriptive statistics'. This is not necessarily a disadvantage of the analyses. The aim is to establish whether the action of participation is associated with social capital and neighbourhood attachment, not whether a similar level of participation would have been reached had exactly the same persons not had any social capital or neighbourhood attachment.

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Influences on Participation

In this section, the variables that are related to participation are presented: first, the more generally known variables related to socio-economic status, ethnicity, socio-demographic situation and housing characteristics are discussed. The focus is then on the possible relationship between social capital and neighbourhood attachment with participation.

The individual and household characteristics of people who do or do not show a high rate of participation are already familiar. First, people with a low socio-economic status (income, work, education) are less likely to participate in formal situations because they have less well-developed interpersonal skills, fewer social interactions, and less access to

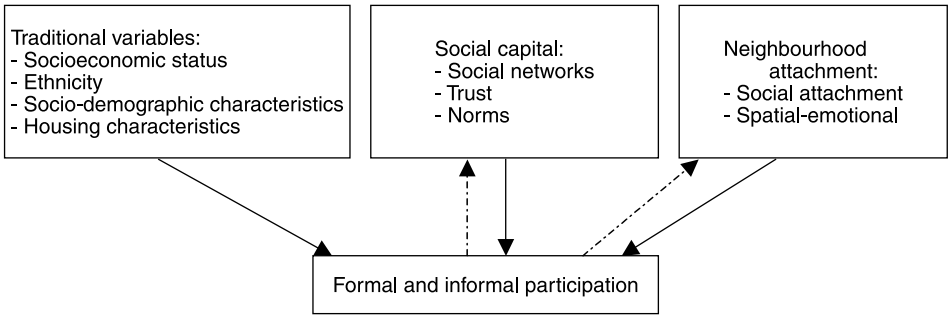

Figure 1. Explanatory variables for participation

institutions and participation activities. These factors lead to less involvement in local activities (Verba & Nie, 1972), political work, work in organisations, and communication with local authorities (Staeheli & Clarke, 2003).

Second, when the negative impact of low socio-economic status is controlled for, ethnic minorities are often found to have higher shares of participation. This is the consequence of psychological attitudes and higher group identity among ethnic minority groups. As Verba & Nie (1972) have pointed out, participation among African Americans in the US is often found to be related to group consciousness; those who frequently mention race in their conversation are more politically conscious than those who do not. More recently, Marschall (2001) found that African Americans in inner-city New York have developed a sense of self-pride and trust in the local government that is positively related to participation.

Having a considerable share of the same ethnic group in a neighbourhood is considered an asset for participation. On the one hand, people associate more easily with others who have a similar income, education, ethnicity and lifestyle (Gerson *et al.*, 1977). If people can readily identify with a group in the neighbourhood, their capacity to participate in that group will be enhanced. The availability of facilities such as a mosque also enables ethnic minorities to participate. In Europe, for example, Peleman (2002) found that, through the available facilities, women of North-African origin living in areas of concentration in Belgium participate more than their counterparts in non-concentration areas.

Third, socio-demographic characteristics indicate a resident's stake in the neighbourhood. Women in particular play a key part in community participation (Gittell *et al.*, 2000). The neighbourhood is very much their concern, since women tend to work less outside the home and spend more time in the neighbourhood, shopping etc. than men do. People with children tend to have more contacts in the neighbourhood, which in turn facilitates participation. Age is also related to participation, since older people tend to spend more time in the neighbourhood and so attach greater importance to it (Campbell & Lee, 1992; Fischer, 1982; Gerson *et al.*, 1977; Guest & Wierzbicki, 1999).

A resident's stake in the neighbourhood is also related to the housing situation (Gerson *et al.*, 1977). Homeowners invest more in the locality, hence the higher participation rates of homeowners compared with tenants (Kang & Kwak, 2003; Lelieveldt, 2004). Furthermore, people who have chosen to make a housing career within the neighbourhood participate more because they have made a positive choice to live there (Bolt & Torrance, 2005). Of course, this positive choice can be the result of a positive attachment to the neighbourhood.

Social Capital

From the above, it should be clear which socio-economic, ethnic and socio-demographic characteristics affect people's propensity to participate. However, it is less clear what reasons people have for participating. When discussing reasons for participation, social capital is often mentioned as being helpful in giving people not only the tools, but also the will to act. Social capital theory starts from the principle of rational theory, in which individuals maximise their own benefits within a particular social network (cf. Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Portes, 1998; Putnam, 1993).

Most empirical analyses of neighbourhood participation concentrate on the impact of the social networks dimension of social capital. Increasingly, trust is receiving

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consideration as an element capable of explaining participation (Arrow, 2000; O'Laughlin, 2004; Purdue, 2001; Subramanian *et al.*, 2003). The awareness is spreading that trust, but also norms, tell people what to do. Not only what people *have,* but also what they *feel* plays an important part in explaining participation (Bowles & Gintis, 2002; Van Deth, 2003).

Although existing research has certainly provided insight into the issue why some people participate while others do not, empirical evidence of the combined impact of the three elements of social capital on participation is lacking. Often only one or two of the dimensions are taken into consideration, while social capital is a construct of the related concepts of social networks, trust and the rejection of deviant behaviour. The decomposition of the concept into its constituent elements is crucial. Subsequently, it is important to specify the mechanisms through which each of the three elements of the social capital definition may affect participation in the neighbourhood.

The academic discussion of the concept of social capital as defined by Putnam has been extensive (see, for example, Portes & Landholdt (1998) and DeFillipis (2001)). One of the most profound criticisms is that Putnam's argument is a virtual circle: Putnam states that, in places with good co-operation, there is good governance. Although there may truly be a mutual relationship between the co-operation of diverse networks and governance, for the purpose of analysis it is better to separate the concept (social capital) from the effect (action/co-operation). In addition, many negative consequences of social capital have been mentioned: examples include the exclusion of outsiders, excess claims on group members, restrictions on individual freedom, and downward levelling norms (Portes, 1998). However, the positive results of social capital are emphasised most. One aim here is to assess the extent to which these expectations can be supported by empirical evidence.

Social Networks Related to Participation

Social networks reflect the degree of social interaction within communities (and families). When social networks are related to participation, they are often found to be helpful in facilitating participation by bundling individual needs and capacities; in other words, networks allow communal action to take place (Kearns & Forrest, 2000).

People who are socially involved with each other are more integrated into their community and feel more positive about it, which may stimulate them to take a more active role in social and political affairs. Strong, dense, neighbourhood-based networks are assumed to provide support (Granovetter, 1973), while weak ties within a neighbourhood can provide the feeling of home, a sense of security and identity (Henning & Lieberg, 1996), and give people a sense of social order and social control.

Empirical research has revealed that active involvement in society is positively related to social networks in certain situations. In Wisconsin (USA), Kang & Kwak (2003) found that interpersonal networks constitute the most important explanatory variable for civic participation when residential variables, socio-economic status and demographic variables are controlled for. Marschall (2001) also found that, in the context of New York inner-city neighbourhoods, involvement in the local school increases with the number of social ties. Thus, those with social networks in the neighbourhood may be expected to participate more.

Social interaction can take place in different settings, such as neighbourhoods, groups of friends, professional and business networks, gangs and sports organisations. All these

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networks facilitate participation in their own particular way and so lead to different results. An important restriction of social networks is that not everybody is free to choose which group to belong to. In general terms, people with a low socio-economic status have more difficulty entering their network of choice than do people with a high socio-economic status (Bowles & Gintis, 2002).

Trust Related to Participation

Trust is the second element of social capital that has been found to have a positive relationship with participation. The accumulation of the capability to act is an outcome of networks based on trust and commonalities and can be used in participation (Gittell *et al.*, 2000). Two types of trust can be discerned: personal trust in co-residents, and in authorities. First, people who trust each other will do so on the basis of common norms and group identification. For example, Marschall (2001) found in inner-city New York that community involvement is positively related to these feelings of trust. A lack of trust between individuals or groups in communities and partnerships can lead to difficulties in generating communal action (Purdue, 2001).

Second, participation is positively related to trust in authorities. Some authors stress the negative impact on participation of the lack of trust in authorities in an area with a concentration of low-income households and ethnic minorities. Shirlow & Murtagh (2004) reported great differences in how people feel about community authorities in a community in North Belfast. Despite a common set of norms about how to behave, the authors found that feelings of mistrust and a negative attitude towards the neighbourhood authorities work against participation in voluntary associations. Similarly, Ross *et al.* (2001) and also Subramanian *et al.* (2003) found that the level of trust is lower in distressed than in average neighbourhoods. The findings show that specific local circumstances can lead to lower levels of trust, with lower participation rates. The low levels of trust found in distressed areas often have a long history with deep roots in the community. This entrenchment makes speedy change difficult.

Norms Related to Participation

Norms make up the third element of social capital that is related to participation. Norms are the rules specifying appropriate and desirable behaviour and forbidding non-desirable behaviour (Elissetche, 2005). In comparison with the other two dimensions of social capital, there are fewer studies that link the norms dimension to participation. Nevertheless, there is reason to believe that perceptions of favourable behaviour influence participation. Together with Friedrichs & Blasius (2003), the current study concentrates on how one evaluates deviant behaviour as an indicator of norms. A person's attitude towards deviant behaviour leads to action. Such attitudes urge a person to do something about a problem; participation then offers a means of making a meaningful contribution to society (Lelieveldt, 2004; Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Davis Smith & Gay (2005) call this intrinsic motivation an 'ethical legacy'. It is based on religious and humanistic impulses to contribute positively to society; these impulses are formed during a lifelong experience of forms of voluntary participation based on family and other social networks.

People who reject deviant behaviour are therefore more likely to participate; conversely, accepting deviant behaviour can have a negative effect on participation,

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especially when many people in the same group accept such behaviour. When the majority in an area accepts deviant behaviour, such prevalence can lead to a lack of work ethos, irresponsibility, fatalism (what's the point of education?), a lack of ambition, social immobility, restricted social and geographical horizons, and underachievement within the context of economic change and employment[1] (Atkinson & Kintrea, 2002; Wilson, 1987). The fear of 'being different' from the rest of the neighbourhood is stronger than the urge to improve the situation.

Participation Related to Neighbourhood Attachment

In the initial set of propositions it was mentioned that the feeling of attachment to the neighbourhood also relates to participation (see Figure 1). Neighbourhood attachment can lead to a feeling of security, build self-esteem and self-image, give a bond to people, cultures and experience, and maintain group identity (Altman & Low, 1992; Crow, 1994; Taylor, 1988). The idea is that people not only have ties with others, but also feel attracted to and identify with their immediate living environment (Blokland, 2000). Participation is encouraged when people feel that they are attached to a neighbourhood and that they identify with it: what belongs to them needs to be protected, taken care of and influenced.

The positive effect of neighbourhood attachment on participation has been shown in earlier research. Individuals who identify with their neighbours and the community (social neighbourhood attachment (Zijderveld, 1988)) become empowered and willing to change their social and political environment to improve the quality of the lives they live there (Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003). People who identify with the people around them score higher on various forms of participation, such as attending religious services, being registered to vote, and involvement in a neighbourhood organisation (Brodsky *et al.*, 1999). Thus this social type of neighbourhood attachment is positively related to participation. Social attachment is different from social networks, since a person can have a strong feeling of social attachment without having any real social contacts in the neighbourhood.

Another positive effect of neighbourhood attachment on participation involves spatial-emotional neighbourhood attachment. This concept refers to the connection people feel with their home area and their sense of belonging to that place (Forrest & Kearns, 2001). A general feeling of pride about the neighbourhood makes people feel part of it (Massey, 1991). In the USA, one of the causes of the problems of distressed urban areas is seen to be a lack of neighbourhood pride. An increase in such pride makes people change their behaviour in the neighbourhood (Kaplan, 1934). It is their positive attachment (both social and spatial-emotional) to the neighbourhood that will encourage people to take action towards improving the situation there.

Description of the Neighbourhoods

The research questions as stated in the introduction have been addressed on the basis of empirical research in two post-Second World War areas in the Netherlands: Hoograven in Utrecht and Bouwlust in The Hague. Together with Rotterdam and Amsterdam, these cities and their surrounding areas form the densely-populated Randstad. The two neighbourhoods were selected for the purposes of this research on the basis of their involvement in the Big Cities Policy and their relatively high share of ethnic minorities

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and low-income households. The housing composition and the population composition in these two research areas are comparable with many other post-Second World War areas in the Netherlands and Northwest Europe (see Dekker & Van Kempen, 2004 for an overview of the characteristics of post-Second World War neighbourhoods in Europe).

The research area Bouwlust (in The Hague) has a large share of social housing (81 per cent in Bouwlust compared with 38 per cent in The Hague as a whole), mostly multi-family buildings without an elevator. The population is getting younger, and the share of ethnic minority groups is rising: it was 33 per cent in 1995 and 48 per cent in 2002. The main immigrant groups are Surinamese, Turks, and Moroccans (see Table 1 for an overview of the characteristics of both neighbourhoods).

Hoograven (in Utrecht), the other research area, also has relatively high unemployment, high dependency on social benefits (10 per cent), and many poorly-educated people on low incomes. The majority of the houses are multi-family buildings within the social-rented sector. Only 29 per cent of the residents live in a home they own themselves; most people live in a social-rented apartment. Almost half the residents belong to an ethnic minority group; the largest share of this group is of Moroccan descent.

Physical decline and changing population structures have led to restructuring processes in these neighbourhoods in the context of the Big Cities Policy. In both research areas, multi-family dwellings in the rental sector have been replaced by single-family owner-occupied houses. On the one hand, residents' participation is seen as a prerequisite for more effective and sustainable policy results and on the other for an improved quality of life in the neighbourhood. The aim of the Big Cities Policy has been to increase variation in the housing stock and offer the more prosperous local residents the opportunity to make a housing career in their own neighbourhood and at the same time attract new high-income families (Bolt & Torrance, 2005). This process has taken place on a larger scale in Bouwlust than in Hoograven. However, most of the dwellings in the research areas are still in the social-rented sector. The restructuring process is leading to greater diversity of the population in socio-economic terms, since high-income families are replacing low-income

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Table 1. Selected characteristics of Hoograven and Bouwlust compared with the cities of Utrecht and The Hague

	Hoograven	Utrecht	Bouwlust	The Hague
% social-rented dwellings	60	43	81	38
% owner-occupied dwellings	29	42	13	37
% multi-family dwellings	78	57	89	81
Total number of dwellings (× 1000)	4.3	114.1	8.5	221.7
% low incomes[a]	45	38	47	40
% high incomes	11	20	9	19
% age group ≤ 25 years	15	11	32	30
% age group ≥ 65 years	32	31	16	14
% ethnic minorities	44	31	48	45
Total number of inhabitants (× 1000)	9.9	265.2	15.6	463.8

Notes: [a] Percentage of low incomes = percentage of persons in the two lowest income quintiles; percentage of high incomes = percentage of persons in the highest income quintile.
Sources: Leefbaarheidsmonitor The Hague (2004); Wijkmonitor Utrecht (2004).

households. This process also means that native Dutch are replacing ethnic minority groups, who are overrepresented in the lower-income groups.

The restructuring process has led to many changes in the area. The demolition of the old dwellings inevitably leads to parts of the area looking shabby for a considerable time, residents become uncertain about the future, services are temporarily closed down, and so the quality of life is threatened.

From the above, people in both research areas could be expected to be highly involved in their neighbourhoods, because of the turbulent developments surrounding them and the impact these have on their daily lives. However, there are some factors that diminish participation. First, a lack of communication and poor management during the current restructuring processes may lead to a lack of trust in the local government authority. Second, the high mobility rates and short-stay perspectives of many residents are a threat to participation rates in these restructuring areas (Aalbers *et al.*, 2004).

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Data Collection and Methods

In the empirical part of the paper, the testing of the hypothesis that social capital and neighbourhood attachment can help explain participation is described. The hypothesis was based on the theories reviewed in the theoretical part of this paper. The aim here is to clarify who participates and which factors can help explain the variance in participation.

The empirical data were collected in spring 2003. Two strata were distinguished in each neighbourhood in order to obtain a balanced variation in terms of socio-economic status and tenure: one for the new dwellings and the other for the old dwellings. The total sample comprised 907 households; at each address, the head of the household or his/her partner completed the questionnaire. Distributing and collecting the questionnaires in person raised the response levels. The residents who could not speak Dutch were approached by an Arabic- or Turkish-speaking interviewer. As a result of this approach, the response level reached 51 per cent: 54 per cent in Hoograven and 48 per cent in Bouwlust (a total of 465 respondents).

The sample is representative of all households in the neighbourhood if a weighting factor is used to correct for the overrepresentation of the residents in the newly-built areas. A comparison of the sample and the population on three aspects (age, ethnicity, tenure) shows this. The weighting factor has not been used in the logistic regression analysis (see Table 2) since the stratifying variable (old/new dwellings) is included as an independent variable. The standard errors of the parameters would be less accurate if case weights were used.

Measuring Participation

To measure participation, both formal and informal activities were included such as being actively involved in the local school and other types of voluntary work. The more official activities included were membership of the neighbourhood committee or a neighbourhood organisation. All these activities refer to various forms of participation with the aim of positively influencing the neighbourhood, and include those people who are actively involved in governance processes or (in)formal organisations. The people who participate in any of these activities form one category (participation = 1) and those who are not active in any way form the other category (0).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for the variables used in the analyses

	Mean %[a]	Mean Score[b]	SD
Dependent variables			
Participation	30		
Independent variables			
Income			
Net monthly income (× 100 €)		19.35	7.20
Education[c]			
Lower-average education	56		
Higher education	45		
Professional status			
No daily activity (unemployed, housewife, disabled, pensioner)	27		
Daily activity (work or school)	73		
Ethnicity[d]			
Dutch	78		
Non-Dutch	22		
Age			
Age: lg10 (age)		1.62	0.14
Household composition			
Household with children	45		
Household without children	55		
Gender			
Female	56		
Male	44		
Housing category			
Old house	53		
New house and new in neighbourhood	35		
New house and lived in neighbourhood before	12		
Tenure			
Owner occupier	47		
Tenant	53		
Social networks			
Family in the neighbourhood	26		
Most friends within the neighbourhood	32		
Chat with neighbours	84		
Trust			
Trust in authorities	12		
Trust in co-residents	36		
Tolerance towards deviant behaviour			
Acceptance of deviant behaviour		0.008	1.03
Acceptance of force		− 0.021	1.04
Neighbourhood attachment			
Social attachment		0	1
Spatial-emotional attachment		0	1

Notes: [a] Percentage of respondents per category are given for the nominal and ordinal variables.
[b] The means and standard deviations are given for the ratio variables.
[c] Lower-average education level: upper secondary vocational education or less; high education: professional education or university.
[d] Division Dutch–non-Dutch is a response to the question: 'In terms of ethnicity, what would you call yourself?' (self-categorisation).
Source: Survey (2003).

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Independent Variables

Table 2 displays the variables included in the analysis and provides descriptive statistics for each variable. The means and standard deviations are given for the ratio variables; the percentages of the respondents per category are given for the nominal and ordinal variables.

The independent variables in the models include three indicators of 'socio-economic status': first, income was recalculated as a ratio variable. Second, a dichotomous variable for the respondents' level of education (low/medium and high) (1 = high) and a dichotomous variable which represents the degree of social inclusion (those who go to school or work versus full-time housewives, the unemployed, the disabled and pensioners) (= 1). The models also include 'ethnicity' as a dichotomous variable (native Dutch and ethnic minority groups) (1 = ethnic minority groups). Of the respondents, 7 per cent stated that they were Surinamese, 5 per cent Moroccan, and 5 per cent Turkish, while smaller proportions came from Iraq and Southern Europe. Their numbers were too small to allow analyses of the differences between these ethnic groups.

The 'housing situation' is reflected in another dichotomous variable measuring homeownership (homeowners and tenants) (1 = tenants). A variable with three classes corresponds with the housing career: people living in a new home and are newcomers to this neighbourhood; people living in a new home but have been residents of the neighbourhood for a longer time; people living in the old houses. The residents in the old houses are the reference category. The housing career variable corresponds to the time lived in the neighbourhood, since the people who are living in a new house and are newcomers to this neighbourhood have per definition a short time of residence in the neighbourhood (not longer than three years). The time of residence has not been included in the model because of this strong correlation.

There is also a set of 'social-demographic' variables containing three measures: dichotomous variables for gender (1 = male) and household composition (with or without children) (1 = without children), and a continuous variable for the respondent's age (in years). The log function of age in years is taken to avoid the possible impact of outliers. Many of the variables above correspond with those which have been used in other recent research on participation (Kang & Kwak, 2003; Lelieveldt, 2004; Marschall, 2001).

To measure the impact of social capital, three dimensions are specified here. The 'social networks' dimension of social capital is reflected in three dichotomous variables; having family members in the neighbourhood (1 = yes); having at least half your friends in the neighbourhood (1 = yes); and chatting regularly with the neighbours (1 = yes). These variables reflect both strong ties in the neighbourhood (family and friends) and neighbourly behaviour (chatting with neighbours) (Friedrichs & Vranken, 2001).

The 'trust' dimension of social capital is reflected in two dichotomous variables. The trust dimension refers to personal trust placed in authorities and in co-residents, which can lead to communal action (Purdue, 2001). The first reflects the feelings of trust in authorities and is an answer to the question 'Do you believe that the opinions of the residents are taken seriously in the development of restructuring plans for Bouwlust/Hoograven?' (1 = yes). This variable shows whether people feel that the local government takes them seriously. The other dichotomous variable reflects the trust in co-residents: 'Most people can be trusted' (1 = yes).

The 'tolerance of deviant behaviour' dimension of social capital is reflected in two continuous variables. These measures were composed in an earlier stage of this research;

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for a full discussion and account of the composition of these measures see Dekker & Bolt (2005). One variable reflects the tolerance of deviant behaviour in the neighbourhood, indicating perceptions of support, legal issues and public behaviour. The other reflects the acceptance of force as a way of resolving problems between community members. People who reject behaviour that is deviant from that of mainstream society can be expected to participate more (Atkinson & Kintrea, 2002; Wilson, 1987). The variables are based on eight descriptions of deviant behaviour presented to the respondents and to which they were asked to react on a scale of 1 to 4 (1 = very bad; 2 = bad; 3 = not very bad; 4 = not bad at all). Friedrichs & Blasius (2003) used comparable statements in their research. One statement on its own says little about the overall ethos of the respondents, so this is represented by two uncorrelated components. The component loadings and the statements are given in Table 3.

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Table 3. Response 'Yes, this is bad or very bad' of respondents to statements (percentages), and component loadings of the statements on the dimensions in CATPCA

		Dimension[a]	
The statements are:	Judgement 'This is (very) bad' (%)	1	2
Somebody puts the garbage outside on the street on the wrong day.	63	0.563	0.157
Your children play outside with other children. An elderly neighbour is irritated by the noise they make and hits one of the children, because they do not quieten down in time. If you do not have children of your own, imagine that you do.	91	−0.080	0.669
You are in a supermarket and you witness an elderly lady putting a package of cheese in her handbag.	75	0.696	0.061
The corner of the street is a meeting point for youngsters. You see the youngsters calling women names.	98	0.346	0.575
You often hear a neighbour beating his children.	93	0.029	0.768
Imagine that you frequently see a person drunk on the street.	66	0.551	0.321
Your television set is old and nearly broken. Somebody offers you a television set which has probably been stolen for half the normal price.	73	0.635	0.018
An acquaintance who is a single mother with three children depends on social benefits. She is offered a cleaning job in the black economy, which she accepts without reporting it to the social services.	25	0.653	−0.208

Note: [a] The Cronbach's Alpha of this model is 0.895, which indicates that the model indeed represents the input variables.
Source: Dekker & Bolt (2005).

Table 4. Response 'Yes, I (completely) agree' of respondents to statements (percentages) and Principal Components Analysis of statements related to neighbourhood attachment and identity

The statements are:	'Yes, I (completely) agree' (%)	Component[a] 1	2
I feel at home in this neighbourhood.	48	0.641	0.366
In this neighbourhood we take care of each other.	14	0.637	0.107
I feel that I am a real Hoogravenaar/ Bouwlustenaar ('Londoner').	16	0.332	0.767
I feel attached to this neighbourhood.	26	0.435	0.664
I feel proud of this neighbourhood.	16	0.678	0.477
People outside this neighbourhood think that this is a good area.	13	0.731	0.041
This is a cosy neighbourhood.	28	0.773	0.333
This neighbourhood suits my taste.	25	0.641	0.452
This neighbourhood is special.	21	0.284	0.535
It hurts when people say something negative about this neighbourhood.	27	0.004	0.801
This neighbourhood has a lively radiation.	20	0.573	0.374
This neighbourhood is better than others.	18	0.691	0.284

Notes: [a] The Cronbach's Alpha of this model is 0.79, which indicates that the model indeed represents the input variables. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
Rotation converged in 3 iterations.
Source: Dekker & Bolt (2005).

The first dimension is called 'acceptance of deviant behaviour'. Accepting deviant behaviour gives the respondent a positive overall score on this component; rejecting deviant behaviour gives a negative overall score. The second dimension is called 'acceptance of force'. A high score indicates more tolerance of the use of force. The respondents' scores were estimated for both dimensions to enable them to be used in further analysis.

Finally, feelings of 'neighbourhood attachment' are reflected in two continuous variables. One variable reflects social neighbourhood attachment; the other reflects spatial-emotional neighbourhood attachment. The variables are based on 12 statements presented to the respondents and to which they were asked to react according to a Likert scale of 1 (I do not agree at all) to 5 (I completely agree). All statements refer to feelings related to the neighbourhood and the extent to which the respondents derive part of their identity from the area in which they live. In order to raise the reliability and validity of the measurement of attachment, two new variables were constructed with the aid of principal components analysis (PCA) (Table 4). For a full discussion and account of the composition of these variables see Dekker & Bolt (2005).

The first indicator, 'social attachment', refers to communal feelings on how to act, feel and think within a certain social setting (Zijderveld, 1988). The second indicator, 'spatial-emotional attachment', refers to feelings of pride about the neighbourhood and identification with its physical aspects (Massey, 1991). Respondents with a high score on either of the components have a strong feeling of attachment to the neighbourhood.

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A person with a loading of +1 on component one, for example, would have a strong social feeling of attachment, while a person with a loading of −1 on the second component would have a low feeling of spatial-emotional belonging.

Analytical Strategy

To test the hypothesis, bivariate analyses were first used to analyse the impact of the dimensions of social capital and neighbourhood attachment on participation. For this analysis a multitude of statistical methods was used, based on the scale on which the variables were measured. Relationships between variables measured on a ratio scale were analysed with the help of bivariate correlation tables. Where one variable was measured on a dichotomous scale and the other on a ratio scale, the *t*-test for independent samples was used. In the case where both variables were measured on a nominal or ordinal scale, a chi-square test was performed. To test the added value of the concepts of social capital and neighbourhood attachment to explain participation, the independent variables were entered into four logistic regression models.

Findings

Nearly one-third of the respondents in the sample participate actively in one or more activities (Table 5). The categories overlap, since residents who are involved in more demanding activities such as being a member of the neighbourhood committee usually also perform less demanding activities. The participation rates in the two neighbourhoods do not differ from one another.

Most participating residents do some form of voluntary work that is not directly related to the situation in the neighbourhood, such as activities in a football club, a religious centre etc. Just over 10 per cent of the residents are active members of a neighbourhood committee or neighbourhood organisation. These residents contribute substantially to the neighbourhood: they organise street parties, manage the housing block, and two residents in the survey are members of the neighbourhood council and so take part in the formal governance process. Finally, strongly related to having children, of course, just over 4 per cent of the residents are active in school activities.

As explained in the literature review, socio-economic status was expected to be positively related to participation. However, when socio-economic groups within the

Table 5. Types of participation of the respondents (percentages)

	N	%
Member of neighbourhood committee	23	4.9
Member of a neighbourhood organisation	28	6.0
Active in local school activities	20	4.3
Voluntary work	99	21.3
Total participants all mentioned above	139	29.9
Non-participating	326	70.1
Total abs (= 100%)	465	100

Source: Survey (2003).

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research neighbourhoods were compared, it was found that socio-economic status by itself had no positive or negative effect on participation (Table 6). This is an important finding, because both researchers and policy makers assume that residents with a low socio-economic status living in distressed urban areas would lack the necessary tools for participation (Purdue, 2001; Subramanian *et al.*, 2003). Probably this is related to the level of deprivation in these Dutch neighbourhoods, which may be not as bad as in the other neighbourhoods. It is possible that factors other than socio-economic status are related to lower levels of participation.

It was expected that ethnic minorities in concentration areas, such as the research areas investigated here, would participate more than native Dutch residents. The findings in Table 6 show that ethnicity is not related to participation. The neighbourhoods are characterised not only by high shares of ethnic minorities, but also by increasing numbers of young people. In the analyses, it was found that the elderly in the neighbourhood participate significantly more than the young (Table 6). Other research has shown that older residents

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Table 6. Characteristics of the residents related to participation (percentages)

Characteristic (ratio variables)	Participation	*N*	Mean	Std. deviation
Age: Lg10 (age) ***	No	326	1.61	0.14
	Yes	139	1.65	0.14
Net monthly income (× €100)	No	326	19.54	7.21
	Yes	139	18.89	7.19

Characteristics (nominal/ ordinal variables)	Does not participate %	Does participate %
Low education[a]	67.7	32.3
Medium education	70.3	29.7
Higher education	70.8	29.2
No daily activity (unemployed, housewife, disabled, pensioner)	71.8	28.2
Daily activity (work or school)	64.8	35.2
Native Dutch[b]	69.9	30.1
Ethnic minorities	69.9	30.1
Household with children	70.8	29.2
Household without children	69.7	30.3
Male	70.2	29.8
Female	69.8	30.2
New house & new in neighbourhood	73.0	27.0
New house & lived in neighbourhood before	63.2	36.8
Old house in neighbourhood	69.8	30.2
Tenant	73.0	27.0
Owner occupier	66.8	33.2
Hoograven	70.6	29.4
Bouwlust	69.4	30.6
Total abs (100%)	326	139

Notes: [a] Lower-average education level: upper secondary vocational education or less; high education: professional education or university.
[b] Division Dutch–non-Dutch is a response to the question: 'In terms of ethnicity, how would you call yourself?' (self-categorisation).
Statistically significant difference: *** = $p < 0.01$.
Source: Survey (2003).

tend to spend more time in the neighbourhood, but they also tend to have had a longer time of residence there (Campbell & Lee, 1992; Fischer, 1982; Guest & Wierzbicki, 1999). None of the other indicators of a person's social-demographic situation (having children, gender) were found to be related to participation, contrary to expectations.

Relatively large shares of the housing stock are multi-family dwellings in the social-rented sector. The literature review suggested that this social-rented housing would be related to low levels of participation. However, in these bivariate analyses the impact of homeownership and housing career has not been found to be significant. But, as is shown below, there is a significant relationship between homeownership and participation when socio-economic, ethnic and socio-demographic variables are controlled for.

The relationship between socio-economic, ethnic and socio-demographic characteristics of the residents and participation as described above is very limited. Perhaps the three dimensions of social capital can help explain who participates? Indeed, as the data in Table 7 reveal, both good neighbourly behaviour (chatting with neighbours) and strong ties (having most of one's friends in the neighbourhood) are positively related to participation, supporting the expectations formulated in the theoretical part of this paper.

However, some care is needed because the study did not analyse who has these social networks. Separate analyses (not shown here) indicate that the more highly educated in particular have a smaller share of their friends in the neighbourhood, whereas ethnic minorities tend to chat less with their neighbours (Dekker & Bolt, 2005). The impact of social networks on participation is thus not the same for all residents.

In addition to the social networks dimension, the feelings of trust in authorities and co-residents were related to participation. The feelings of trust in the local government authority were operationalised as the feeling of being taken seriously by the local

Table 7. Characteristics of the residents related to participation: social networks and trust

Characteristic	Does not participate %	Does participate %
I have family within the neighbourhood		
No	70.8	29.2
Yes	68.7	31.3
At least half of my friends live in this neighbourhood***		
No	74.1	25.9
Yes	59.1	40.9
I regularly chat with my neighbours*		
No	78.9	21.1
Yes	68.2	31.8
I feel taken seriously by the local government		
No	71.1	28.9
Yes	63.2	36.8
Most people can be trusted**		
No	74.0	26.0
Yes	63.3	36.7
Total abs (100%)	297	168

Notes: Statistically significant different participation between categories * = $p < 0.1$; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.01$.
Source: Survey (2003).

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government authority. These analyses do not suggest that residents who feel that the local authorities take them seriously also participate more. Only a small share of residents report that they feel they are taken seriously by the local government (12 per cent), which may be an indication of a poorly-performing local authority in an area where major urban restructuring activities are taking place.

The lack of trust in authorities is somewhat compensated for by higher levels of trust in co-residents (38 per cent of the residents state 'yes, most people can be trusted'). This indicator of trust is positively related to participation, since a larger proportion of the residents who trust their co-residents participates (Table 7). It could very well be that the lack of trust in the local authorities generates a new bond between the residents, a negative form of cohesion (see also Van Marissing *et al.*, 2005). If this is the case—which is difficult to confirm on the basis of these data—it remains to be seen how long this kind of trust lives on after the restructuring operation has finished.

The literature review showed that little is known as yet about the relationship between rejecting deviant behaviour and participation, but that rejecting deviant behaviour was expected to enhance participation. To test this hypothesis, two dimensions of common values were distinguished (see previous section): acceptance of deviant behaviour (e.g. stealing, alcohol abuse and fraud) and acceptance of force (e.g. happy-slapping, abusive name-calling). The bivariate analysis in Table 8 shows that residents who are against the use of violence to resolve problems, or who readily reject deviant behaviour, participate more.

In addition to social capital, residents' positive feelings about their neighbourhood were expected to lead to more participation in their neighbourhood. When residents feel attached to their neighbourhood they take care of it (Brodsky *et al.*, 1999; Minkler & Wallerstein, 2003). Two dimensions of neighbourhood attachment were identified: 'social attachment', which refers to the social significance that is attached to the neighbourhood; and 'spatial-emotional attachment', which refers to the symbolic value that is given to a place (see the section on data collection and methods). Indeed, in the bivariate analysis reported in Table 8, social attachment is positively related to participation, as is spatial-emotional attachment, but more strongly.

Table 8. Characteristics of the residents related to participation: common values and feelings of belonging

	Participation	*N*	Mean[a]	Std. deviation
Acceptance of deviant behaviour*	No	300	0.054	1.030
	Yes	131	−0.125	0.921
Acceptance of force**	No	300	0.065	1.077
	Yes	131	−0.150	0.780
Social belonging component**	No	326	−0.077	0.941
	Yes	139	0.180	1.109
Spatial-emotional belonging component***	No	326	−0.121	0.895
	Yes	139	0.284	1.166

Notes: Statistically significant difference between yes/no participation: * = $p < 0.1$; ** = $p < 0.05$; *** = $p < 0.01$.

[a] Low acceptance of deviant behaviour or force = low mean. High feelings of social- and spatial-emotional belonging = high mean.

Source: Survey (2003).

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The findings of the positive relationship between neighbourhood attachment and participation may also operate the other way around. For example, it has been reported elsewhere that residents who were involved in the design of the public space around their social-rented apartment blocks felt much more strongly attached to their home and the neighbourhood, and as a result became active in maintaining the quality of the public space (Dekker & Van Kempen, 2006).

The findings above, based on bivariate analyses, show that age, social networks, the rejection of deviant behaviour, trust in other residents and neighbourhood attachment are all positively related to participation. A shortcoming of these bivariate analyses is that they do not show the relative importance of each of these variables in accounting for participation. Some of these variables were expected to be more important than others in explaining participation; for this reason, four logistic regression models were estimated. As explained in the theoretical part of this paper, this is an exploratory model, which, strictly speaking, should be seen as advanced descriptive statistics rather than as causal models. The models are:

A. $$\text{(participation)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{SES}) + \beta_2(\text{ethnicity}) + \beta_3(\text{socio-demographic variables}) + \beta_4(\text{home-related variables})$$

B $$\text{(participation)} = \text{Model A} + \beta_5(\text{social capital})$$

C $$\text{(participation)} = \text{Model A} + \beta_6(\text{neighbourhood attachment})$$

D $$\text{(participation)} = \text{Model A} + \beta_7(\text{social capital}) + \beta_8(\text{neighbourhood attachment})$$

The findings in Table 9 show that, on some of the indicators of social capital and neighbourhood attachment, positive scores raise the chances of participation, whereas on other indicators of social capital and neighbourhood attachment they do not. In short, the residents who have higher chances of participation are: the elderly, those who own their homes, those with the largest share of their friends in the neighbourhood, residents who reject the use of force and residents with strong feelings of social and spatial-emotional attachment to the neighbourhood.

Other indicators of social capital are no longer significant in this logistic regression model, despite the positive relationship in the bivariate analyses. These are: chatting with neighbours, trust in other residents and rejecting deviant behaviour. The relationship between these indicators of social capital and participation clearly runs via other indicators of social capital or individual and household characteristics. That is not to say that these dimensions of social capital can be ignored if one wants to explain who participates, and who does not. It is more likely that trust in other people, as well as a common idea on how to behave, is derived from social networks or the feeling of belonging to the neighbourhood. Indeed, separate analyses (not shown here) point into this direction.

The logistic regression models indicate that an increased share of participation can be explained if the indicators of social capital or neighbourhood attachment are added as explanatory variables (Nagelkerke's R rises from 0.087 in model A to nearly 0.141 in model B; and 0.139 in model C). Using the indicators of social capital and neighbourhood attachment in one model (Table 9, model D) causes Nagelkerke's R to rise further to nearly 0.18. These analyses confirm the hypothesis that social capital and neighbourhood

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Table 9. Logistic regression analysis of participation

	Model A Social economic status, ethnicity, home-related, socio-demographic		Model B = model A + social capital		Model C = model A + neighbourhood attachment		Model D = model A + social capital + neighbourhood attachment	
	B	Sig.	B	Sig.	B	Sig.	B	Sig.
Income	−0.020	0.301	−0.019	0.342	−0.025	0.202	−0.023	0.275
Higher education	0.114	0.644	0.300	0.282	0.303	0.238	0.432	0.131
No daily activity	−0.262	0.418	−0.458	0.193	−0.370	0.263	−0.537	0.134
Ethnic minorities	0.295	0.317	0.320	0.319	0.050	0.871	0.122	0.712
Age	0.038	0.000 ***	0.035	0.002 ***	0.036	0.001 ***	0.034	0.004***
Household without children	0.152	0.532	0.186	0.470	0.128	0.607	0.149	0.570
Male	−0.167	0.457	−0.065	0.788	−0.200	0.382	−0.069	0.780
Housing career		0.146		0.251		0.534		0.511
New house, new in neighbourhood	−0.499	0.100	−0.505	0.122	−0.308	0.326	−0.378	0.260
New house, lived in neighbourhood before	0.101	0.784	−0.044	0.911	0.031	0.934	−0.094	0.813
Tenants	−0.807	0.005 ***	−0.771	0.011 **	−0.688	0.018 **	−0.633	0.039**
Hoograven	0.058	0.813	−0.061	0.821	0.082	0.743	0.009	0.973
Family in the neighbourhood			0.067	0.812			−0.019	0.948
Most friends in the neighbourhood			0.811	0.005 ***			0.663	0.026**
Chat to neighbours			0.314	0.370			0.236	0.507
Trust in local authorities			0.481	0.173			0.362	0.315
Trust in other residents			−0.231	0.350			0.025	0.929
Acceptance of deviant behaviour			−0.128	0.310			−0.186	0.165
Acceptance of force			−0.319	0.020**			−0.327	0.018**
Social neighbourhood attachment					0.263	0.031**	0.320	0.037 **
Spatial-emotional neighbourhood attachment					0.444	0.000**	0.387	0.003***
Constant	−1.653	0.012	−1.950	0.020	−1.600	0.017	−2.006	0.019
N	429		390		429		390	
Nagelkerke R Square	0.087		0.141		0.139		0.179	
df	11		18		13		20	
Sig.	0.004		0.001		0.000		0.000	

Source: Survey 2003.

attachment together can be used to help explain who participates. However, the dimension of trust as an indicator of social capital to explain participation has not been shown to be relevant.

Conclusions

The aim of the study reported in this paper was to gain insight into the importance of social capital and neighbourhood attachment in explaining participation in the neighbourhood. To perform this analysis, participation was defined in a broad manner, including both formal and informal activities, rather than the more commonly analysed involvement in formal neighbourhood governance. Three dimensions of social capital were distinguished: social networks, trust and acceptance of deviant behaviour. In addition, neighbourhood attachment was measured by two indicators: social attachment and spatial-emotional attachment.

The findings show that nearly one-third of the residents participate in formal and informal activities in the neighbourhood. The first hypothesis was that social capital is related to participation. The results show that this is indeed the case, although with some qualifications. It has become clear that residents participate more when they have most of their friends in the neighbourhood or when they reject deviant behaviour.

The social capital dimension of trust generates ambiguous results in the different analyses, indicating that the findings should be interpreted with care. Trust in co-residents is positively related to participation when analysed separately, but in the logistic regression model this relationship is no longer significant. The implication is that, although important, this impact of this dimension of social capital on participation is derived from social networks and shared ideas on tolerant behaviour rather than a direct relationship. Using multiple indicators of social capital has thus informed us about the relative importance of each of the dimensions.

The paper does not wish to suggest, of course, that the work of other authors such as Purdue (2001), Shirlow & Murgah (2004), and Subramanian *et al.* (2003) is useless. They argue that, particularly in deprived areas, residents may have low levels of trust, which they found influenced negatively the degree to which residents were willing to take action to improve the situation in their neighbourhood. One of the additional reasons why the findings reported in these earlier studies and the findings reported here differ may be the level of deprivation of the neighbourhoods. Although the neighbourhoods in this study are among the most deprived in the country, they are relatively prosperous in comparison with American and Irish research areas.

The second hypothesis was that neighbourhood attachment leads to participation. Neighbourhood attachment was measured in two ways: social attachment and spatial-emotional attachment. Indeed, residents' internal views about their neighbourhood, identification with the neighbourhood, and taking pride in it relate to participation. From these findings it may be concluded that residents who identify with their neighbourhood have a higher probability than others of becoming active in the neighbourhood.

Finally, the aim was to find out what was the combined effect of social capital and neighbourhood attachment on participation. When the indicators of social capital and neighbourhood attachment are both incorporated in the model, it is clear that together they help explain who participates, not only on the basis of individual and household

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characteristics, but also on residents' social networks, tolerance of deviant behaviour, and their feelings towards the social and spatial characteristics of the neighbourhood.

The findings in these two neighbourhoods cannot simply be transferred to the situation in every Dutch distressed urban area, let alone other European neighbourhoods with similar problems. Nevertheless, with this limitation in mind, some ideas can be put forward on how to improve participation in urban areas. This paper started with the notion that problems accumulate in some urban areas as a result of the concentration of low-income households and ageing housing stock. It was also asserted that these problems are often approached area-wise and that much is expected from the participation of residents to enhance the quality of life in these distressed areas.

Whether participation is the answer to these problems cannot be concluded on the basis of the empirical evidence presented here, because another type of data would have been required for that purpose. However, the findings do set out some ideas on what may influence participation and some preliminary suggestions can be given for policies that address it.

With respect to housing, there is an indication that the ownership structure of deprived neighbourhoods in the Netherlands, with a concentration of social-rented apartment blocks, does seem to be an impediment to participation, since the scores for homeowners are higher than for tenants. This finding would support the current Dutch housing policy of replacing the social-rented housing stock by owner-occupied homes. So, if people buy a home there is an expectation of their increased participation. This would probably be the result of individual needs, such as maintaining the value of the home, but would nevertheless have positive effects on the overall quality of the neighbourhood, which would benefit all residents.

As a result of this finding, the advice could be justified to continue the current policy of the demolition of social-rented dwellings and increase the share of owner-occupied homes. However, this solution is not a simple one because buying a house is not an option for most tenants in the social-rented sector (Bolt & Torrance, 2005). In addition, this policy would mean that new residents would move into the neighbourhood. These new residents are likely to have lower scores on the indicators of social capital and neighbourhood attachment than the more highly educated and native Dutch. Consequently, social networks and neighbourhood attachment need to be rebuilt, with negative consequences for the level of participation. Additionally, as experience in the UK has shown, enhancing homeownership only has positive effects on the neighbourhood if people also have the means to maintain their dwellings.

It may be more sustainable to develop activities that support social networks in the neighbourhood and which create an idea about what constitutes good behaviour. This type of action may also be helpful to create the type of social capital and neighbourhood attention that are inclusive rather than exclusive. For example, networks of youngsters who organise meetings and invite others to join in generate a more positive type of social capital than a network of youngsters who hang about on the street. Still, some caution is needed; social capital is not the silver bullet that residents can easily acquire and thereby resolve all the problems in their neighbourhood.

Acknowledgements

An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Nethur School 'Social Cohesion and Social Capital in an Urban and Neighbourhood Context' with Prof. A. Kearns as visiting professor. The author wishes to thank Prof. R. Van Kempen and Dr G. Bolt for their comments on earlier versions of this paper.

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Note

[1] Following the publication of Wilson's work in 1987 a heated debate on the 'underclass' arose. Some of the discussants in this debate blamed inner-city problems on the alleged 'social pathology' of the poor (Wacquant, 1997). The author wishes to make it clear that she does not agree with the assumption that stronger repression of deviant behaviour affords a solution to the social problems in deprived urban areas.

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