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Community co-production engaging youth with mental health problems. Is equal participation possible?

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ABSTRACT

Community co-production is intended to improve public democracy as well as welfare economy. This single case study is a 'most likely' case for success and explores how experiences of equal participation among youth with mental health problems take place in a partnership between a social enterprise and a Danish municipality. I explore how the democratic dimension is configured in relation to a focus on service production and efficiency. Applying the multidimensional model of 'the collaborative turn' I find that equal participation of vulnerable citizens can be enhanced through co-production when youth with mental health problems equally partake in activities including supervisors from the municipality and a blended group of local participants. This, however, provide a dilemma. As part of their thriving, young people need to take an independent stand on things and interact in different transforming roles. But for the municipality, participation is a means to achieve municipal goals and supervisors can set standards for the participation of young people that contribute to stigma and inhibits the equal participation.

KEYWORDS

Community co-production; youth with mental health problems; critical single case study; equal participation

Introduction

In the Nordic countries, governments have high political ambitions for co-production between civil society and municipalities to create more efficient, democratic welfare services together with citizens instead of for citizens (Ibsen & Espersen, 2016; Loga, 2018, Sørensen & Torfing, 2011; Stougaard, 2020; Tortzen, 2016; Tuurnas, 2016). Internationally, interest in involving users, civil society and volunteers in public services has increased as organizations have become more professional and bureaucratic, with weak civic participation and influence (Park, 2019). On the one hand, it is argued that civil society's democratic governance and closeness to citizens can help strengthen the welfare state's democratic legitimacy and individual user adaptation, with citizens and civil society invited to be equal co-developers of a welfare society (Brandsen et al., 2017; Brandsen & Honingh, 2016; Fotaki, 2011; Voorberg et al., 2015). On the other hand, these ambitions express resource scarcity and demographic challenges and the need to have access to more resources and the state encourages volunteering and co-responsibility on a top-down basis (Fledderus et al., 2014; Osborne et al., 2016).

However, while the ambitions are ambivalent, some studies find that the equity, quality and effectiveness of social services aimed at vulnerable citizens can be enhanced through co-production (Jakobsen & Andersen, 2013; Ostrom, 1996; Stougaard, 2020; Vanleen et al., 2018). In addition, some researchers stress the suitability of co-production to tackle ‘wicked’ problems that cannot be solved by one party only (Agger & Tortzen, 2015; Pestoff, 2012).

Co-production between citizens, professionals and volunteers is defined in various ways, I define it as; ‘a joint effort of citizens and public sector professionals in the initiation, planning, design, and implementation of public services’ (Brandsen & Pestoff, 2006, p. 497; Voorberg et al., 2015). Moreover, I focus on cross-sector co-production involving volunteers and civil society, often labelled ‘community co-production’ as opposed to user co-production which limits focus on the interaction between the end-user of a public service and the professional (Bovaird, 2007; Brandsen et al., 2018; Enjolras & Trætteberg, 2021; Espersen & Andersen, 2017; Pestoff, 2008). Furthermore, community co-production builds on the general hybridization of sectors, in which organizations adopt characteristics that typically characterize organizational forms in other sectors (values, logics, rationalities of action, basis of legitimacy, etc.) thereby bringing the sectors closer together (Brandsen et al., 2005; Doherty et al., 2014; Evers, 2005; Hustinx et al., 2015). As hybridization creates very varied spaces of participation community co-production can both enable and inhibit inclusion of vulnerable citizens.

In this article, I explore how the democratic dimension in a partnership between the social enterprise INSP and the Danish municipality Roskilde is configured in relation to a focus on service production and efficiency. By democratic dimension I mean the ambition for equal deliberate participation and by service production and efficiency I mean the municipal goals about implementing efficient service that can pay off by bringing youth with mental health problems closer to increased self-efficacy, jobs and education. Departing from ‘the collaborative turn’ as developed by Andersen (2019) I apply a conceptual framing in which I situate community co-production and participation of vulnerable citizens (Espersen et al., 2021). By applying the ‘collaborative turn’ I can identify and explore the multidimensional elements of the transformative co-production that might lead to equal participation (Needham & Carr, 2009). At the micro level of the case, youth with mental health problems participate in a blended group of local youths and citizens and supervisors from the social psychiatry in INSP and the co-production roles are then transformed into more equal relations (Needham & Carr, 2009). At the meso level, the partnership is split between different administrative regimes that frame the interaction between the participants located at the micro level (Andersen et al., 2020; Pestoff, 2009). Subsequently, I explore how the dynamic interaction between different multi-layered public administrative regimes and organizational structures frame the participation of citizens, volunteers and professionals in a hybrid organization, containing ambivalence and conflicting logics (Evers, 2005). Thus, these structures enable and inhibit equal participation of young people with mental health problems and balance the democratic dimension with a focus on service production and efficiency.

Many different multidimensional elements play a significant role in the configuration of participation of youth with mental health problems. Public administrative regimes, the

organizational and institutional environment, and the roles of professionals, citizens and volunteers.

The article starts with the case presentation followed by a literature-based thematic exploration of co-production related to participation of vulnerable groups in community co-production. Then, 'the collaborative turn model' is introduced for my analytic purposes as well as data and methods. The empirical analysis, discussion and conclusion then follow.

Case Presentation

Danish policy papers express ambitions to strengthen the democratic, equal deliberate participation of vulnerable citizens through community co-production, and these ambitions are implemented through financing of time-limited, performance-targeted projects (Regeringen, 2017; Social & integrations ministeriet, 2013). In 2015, three partnerships between civil society organizations (hereinafter CSOs) and municipalities received a government grant for a period of three years (Espersen et al., 2018). One of the three partnerships was a partnership between the social enterprise INSP and social psychiatry professionals in Roskilde municipality who provide social pedagogical support to citizens with mental health problems. Roskilde municipality is a medium-sized Danish provincial town that has focused strategically on strengthening community co-production with civil society for more than ten years (Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019; Tortzen, 2016). Supervisors supporting young people with mental health problems go to INSP where the young people can participate in activities with each other and with other groups of participants in a blended practice. INSP is a citizen-run culture and activity centre and a social enterprise, which also has civil society characteristics such as participatory democracy, reciprocity, and volunteers and work strategically with equal participation of different groups of vulnerable citizens (Andersen, 2016; Kirkegaard, 2019; Sievers, 2016). The partnership is a part of INSP's multimethod platform with more than 100 partners, where the many activities and over 100 local partners form synergistic platforms that mutually reinforce and inspire each other through learning and networking (Andersen, 2016; Sievers, 2016). According to logbooks from the municipality in 2018, 40 out of about 60 young people with mental health problems with a municipal social psychiatry supervisor participated in INSP. In the period 2012-2017, 400 youth with mental health problems with a municipal supervisor used INSP (Espersen et al., 2018).

Community Co-production

Several empirical studies of community co-production in Denmark show that co-production often takes place as an implementation of municipal policy, services and projects (Espersen et al., 2021; Ibsen, 2020; Frederiksen et al., 2021; Kirkegaard, 2016; Stougaard, 2020; Tortzen, 2016). As a result, Danish municipalities are not very interested in the organizations' values, interests and advocacy, and the collaboration often takes place within the municipal institutions or projects or as parallel activities (Espersen et al., 2021; Frederiksen et al., 2021; Ibsen, 2020; Ibsen & Espersen, 2016; Tortzen, 2016).

Parallel to the Nordic states' growing interest in community co-production, CSOs in the social field are increasingly defined by market mechanisms and a 'contract culture'

with the public sector (Andersen, 2018; Boje et al., 2006; Eikenberry & Kluver, 2004; Henriksen, 2015; Wijkström & Zimmer, 2011). One of the consequences is that the traditional legitimacy of civil society organizations as value-based, democratic and independent organizations is under pressure (Hustinx, 2014). This means that the way in which we engage in civic participation in the Nordic countries changes from collective action to the individual dimension of civil society. Instead of the traditional civilian role as a democratic voice on the political input side, civil participation is being conducted as a service provider on the political output side (Grubb & Henriksen, 2018; Wijkström & Zimmer, 2011).

However, cross-sectoral configurations also have democratic, inclusive potential. Pestoff (2008 & 2009) identifies opportunities for a new participatory paradigm and democratic governance through community co-production where citizens' participation can be increased in terms of both concrete contributions and influence. Community co-production is hybrid organization as actors from different sectors collaborate and contain different welfare regimes, ambivalence and conflicting logics (Evers, 2006). As I explore how the democratic dimension is configured in relation to a focus on service production and efficiency I uncover how hybridity is negotiated among the different participants and how the dynamic interaction and multi-layered governance regimes on the micro and meso level frame participation.

Participation of Vulnerable Citizens

Case studies have shown that co-production has the potential to strengthen social inclusion among citizens that are traditionally hard to reach in democratic processes (Vanleen et al., 2018). Research points to, how co-production enables socially vulnerable citizens participate and contribute when power and roles can be transformed towards equality and the activities are democratically and collectively governed (Boje, 2017; Brandsen, 2021; Needham & Carr, 2009; Thijssen & Van Dooren, 2016). Brandsen (2021) emphasizes that the potential lies in the fact that participation can be individualized, whereby it becomes possible for citizens to gain influence and contribute to designing and implementing services or products that are important to them. However, some socially vulnerable citizens may lack cultural capital to interact in traditional democratic processes and they can participate in co-production through other contributions that are more accessible as varied forms of skills and experience-based knowledge become relevant (Brandsen, 2021; Thijssen & Van Dooren, 2016).

Moreover, it is crucial that citizens in vulnerable positions can take the initiative (co-initiatives) or participate in the early stages of the design phase (co-designer) and that the municipality's employees support the participation of the vulnerable citizens through continuous relationship-building (de Graaf et al., 2015; Jakobsen & Andersen, 2013; Osborne et al., 2016; Stougaard, 2020; Vanleen et al., 2018). When municipal employees overlook the need for citizens' ownership, crucial influences and their own perspectives on solutions, it can be difficult to motivate vulnerable citizens to co-produce (Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019; Stougaard, 2020; Vanleen et al., 2018). In addition, it may be important that the municipality's employees contribute to building social capital around vulnerable citizens so that as a group they have the capacity to participate collectively in community co-production (Stougaard, 2020). When the professionals take on a

supportive facilitator role rather than a decisive, equal participation of vulnerable citizens will be increased (Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019; Vanleen et al., 2018).

It is also crucial that professionals support citizens so that they can participate (Jakobsen & Andersen, 2013; Vanleen et al., 2018). Not all groups of vulnerable citizen have the skills or self-efficacy to be able to participate and they need continuing support (Brandsen, 2021; Jakobsen & Andersen, 2013; Stougaard, 2020; Vanleen et al., 2018). In another Danish study, it was pivotal for immigrant women's participation in their children's school that professionals made materials and knowledge available (Jakobsen & Andersen, 2013). Moreover, in a Dutch study in the most disadvantaged housing areas and a Scottish study of asylum seekers, the participation of vulnerable citizens increased through professionals' continuous relationship-building and responsiveness to citizens' own needs and invitations to participate (de Graaf et al., 2015; Osborne et al., 2016).

However, research findings also clarify difficulties and barriers (Brandsen & Honingh, 2016; Fledderus et al., 2014; Fotaki, 2011; Frederiksen et al., 2021; Tortzen, 2016). Professionals in the municipality often take on a more controlling role, the performance-based management can inhibit the equal relationship and community co-production may require time, resources and competences that are not always present (Stougaard, 2020; Tortzen, 2016; Tuurnas, 2016). It can be difficult for municipal employees to listen to immigrant women or youth with mental health problems and build trust, rather than positioning them as 'clients with a lot of social problems' (Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019; Stougaard, 2020). Municipal employees can also act as mono-professionals governed by professional standards who 'know best'. The professionals need to transform their roles and take on a supportive facilitator role as multi-professionals rather than a decisive, controlling role (Needham & Carr, 2009). They need to balance various roles such as friend, representative, mediator and leader with none of these roles lacking or in excess (Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019; Vanleen et al., 2018).

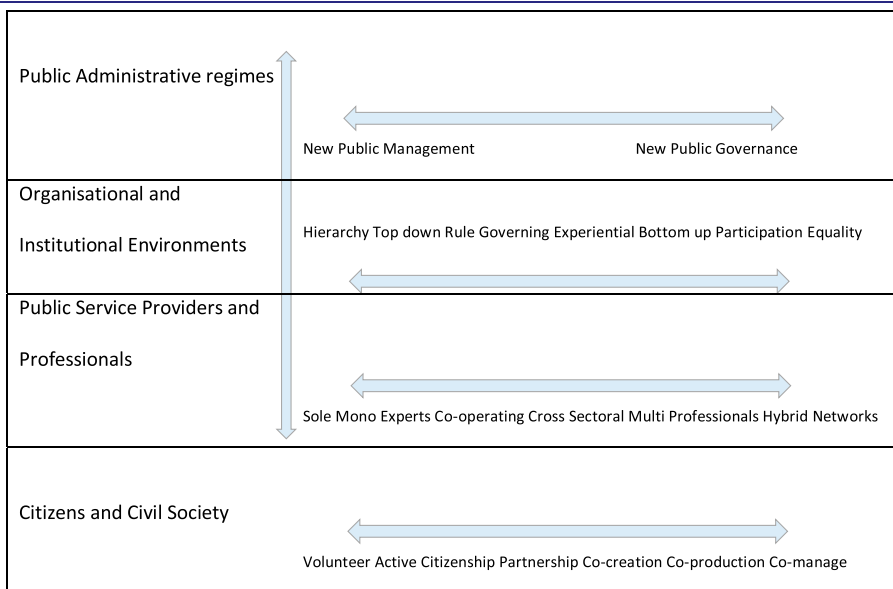
According to Needham and Carr (2009), there is a possible outcome dimension linked to the democratic influence of vulnerable citizens when power and roles are transformed into new and more equal positions. In a transformative co-production, citizens and professionals have equal influence and create services together with the citizens' network (Needham & Carr, 2009). Boje (2017) also identifies inclusive and emancipatory potential in the gaps between organizations and sectors and emphasizes that it is crucial that these arenas are democratically and collectively governed.

Based on these findings, in some cases the influence of vulnerable citizens remains limited in relation to the co-implementation of public services and public goals and the municipal employees remain mono-professional (Frederiksen et al., 2021; Tortzen, 2016). Meanwhile, other cases leave more room for citizen influence (Agger & Jensen, 2021; Espersen et al., 2021; Sievers, 2016; Stougaard & Levinsen, 2016). Community co-production creates unique opportunities to enable equal participation of vulnerable citizen groups, but also new opportunities for exclusion as hybridity and the dynamic interaction of the multidimensional elements within 'the collaborative turn continuum' is negotiated and configured in different ways, that is with different emphasis on the democratic dimension and a focus on service production and efficiency (Fotaki, 2011; Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019).

The Collaborative Turn – a Model for Analysing Community Co-production

Andersen (Andersen, 2019; Espersen et al., 2021) has named the contemporary renewed interest in community co-production and partnerships ‘the collaborative turn’ and developed a model that captures the dynamic multidimensional interaction, hybridity and ambiguity of community co-production. Departing from previously developed models (Fotaki, 2011; Hartley et al., 2013; Needham & Carr, 2009; Pestoff, 2009) the model (Table 1) elaborates how concrete collaborations are a multifaceted phenomenon on a continuum taking shape in four dimensions, which are all relevant dimensions of a community co-production. That is, respectively ‘Public administrative regimes’, ‘Organizational and institutional environments’, ‘Public service providers and professionals’, and ‘Citizens and civil society’. Each dimension contains a continuum of different positions expressing ambivalence and ambiguity, as the positions can both coexist in the same practice and be balanced differently in different concrete practices at the micro level and meso level. At the meso level a municipality can, as an example, be rooted in new public management and a hierarchical top-down management, while the CSO is rooted in partnerships and co-production. But a CSO can also be professional and dominated by professional market management and new public management and new public governance at the same time. Similarly, at the micro level professionals can be both mono-experts in the new public management paradigm and multi-professionals when working in more hybrid arenas with citizens, professionals and volunteers alike. Citizens can both participate as volunteers with limited tasks and limited influence on the output side of a service production under NPM management, and participate in co-production and co-management with equal influence under NPG. On the micro level, professionals

Table 1. The collaborative turn continuum.



Andersen, 2019, Espersen et al, 2021

and citizens therefore affect and are affected by public administrative regimes and organizational environments in dynamic interaction at the meso level.

Citizen participation in community co-production can therefore contain both high and low influence, meaning that the balance between democratic participation and a focus on service production and efficiency can be framed differently depending on how the specific practice is negotiated and configured in dynamic interaction (Evers, 2006).

While the existing studies of vulnerable citizens in co-production are mainly at the two lower micro levels of the model, which concern professionals and citizens, I will conduct an analysis of the partnership that focus on the interaction between the micro and the meso level and how it influences the roles of the youth with mental health problems and the supervisors, balancing the democratic ambition and the focus on service production and efficiency (Fledderus & Honingh, 2016; Levine & Fisher, 1984; Stougaard, 2020; Vanleen et al., 2018). Thus, I establish further insight into the pivotal multi-dimensional mechanisms of participation of vulnerable citizens in community co-production. That is, in relation to factors that can enable different kinds of participation with high or low influence. At first, I present the data collection and methods.

Data Collection and Methods

The data stem from a case-based evaluation of three partnerships between CSOs and municipalities conducted during the years 2016–2018 by a partnership of researchers from VIVE – The Danish Center for Social Science Research, Roskilde University and an on-site evaluation consultant at INSP (Espersen et al., 2018). The overall objectives of the evaluation were to provide site-based learning and continuously reflective learning processes on how participation, supported activities and other autonomous activities could improve the degree of empowerment and self-efficacy of young people with mental health problems. In order to get in-depth insights into how the different agents participate in trajectories and develop over time and how they evaluate outcomes and the structuration of the partnership I use the qualitative interview data from the evaluation that contains ambivalence concerning the participation of the youth with mental health problems. The data consist of the following (Table 2):

The data combine 12 focus groups collected by the evaluation team and 47 single interviews conducted by the on-site evaluation consultant.

All interview data were recorded and transcribed, and data from the on-site evaluation consultant from INSP were referenced and presented as graphic overviews of the different participants' trajectories over time.

Table 2. Overview data.

47 semi-structured single interviews and 12 group interviews.	29 single interviews and 18 follow-up interviews about participants' trajectories. Selection criteria were different types of participants, youth with mental health problems, other young people and employees, volunteers, and supervisors from the municipality completed by the on-site evaluation consultant. Four group interviews including youth with mental health problems, four group interviews including employees and volunteers at INSP. Four group interviews including supervisors and leaders from Roskilde municipality. Completed by researchers in the evaluation partnership.
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Note: Interview data collection 2015–2018. A large amount of data has also been collected in the form of logbooks, observations, workshops and meetings. These data I use in the case presentation.

Furthermore, in the presentation of the case I use data from ‘headnotes’ or mental notes (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 18) that stem from meetings between the evaluation team and the on-site evaluation consultant, three workshops focusing on joint learning and logbooks written by INSP and Roskilde Municipality.

Moreover, as data are collected in close interaction with, and partly through, the practice itself and the on-site evaluation consultant, and analysed in dialogues between the participants of the evaluation partnership and the various groups of participants at INSP, the research process also contains productive inspiration from community-based participatory research where practitioners and researchers work together analysing data on workshops in a dialectic process (Phillips et al., 2021). Based on these arguments, I understand the multifaceted interpretations and voices of interest from the different groups of participants in interviews, dialogues and workshops as an ongoing interpretation of the empirical data (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Phillips et al., 2021; Yin, 2003). In this way, the interpretations created in the interactions between the case and the on-site evaluation consultant, and between the evaluation partnership and the data, become both a productive part of the empirical data themselves and of the interpretation of the data.

All respondents are anonymized, but the case itself is already public through the evaluation report and it is therefore not anonymized. The data collection as well as the analysis processes have been conducted in a critical dialogue with a theoretical framework (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2014). Community co-production and the participation of vulnerable groups were found to be relevant theoretical concepts prior to the data collection and were operationalized in the interviews, surveys and log documents.

A Critical Single Case Study

Following Flyvbjerg (2006), I have conducted an information-oriented selection of the case for strategic reasons as the case is directly intended to realize and exemplify the democratic ambitions of the state (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Regeringen, 2017; Social & Integrations ministeriet, 2013). Furthermore, Roskilde municipality is amongst the ‘front runners’ in co-production (Espersen et al., 2018; Kirkegaard, 2016; Tortzen, 2016). The case is therefore a critical single case as it represents community co-production that is expected to be crucial for implementing national ambitions in relation to the participation of vulnerable citizens (Flyvbjerg, 2006). A critical case can be defined as having strategic importance in relation to the general problem and ‘most likely’ or ‘most likely not’ (Flyvbjerg, 2006) have success. In addition, the case contains characteristics that turned out to be pivotal for success in the evaluation process (Espersen et al., 2018). These characteristics are; (1) the employees from the municipalities actively participate as professionals in the CSO, (2) the collaboration was initiated bottom up as the supervisors looked for places to interact and spend time with the young people, (3) the CSO has a strategic interest in and experience with working with blended groups of participants and the participation of vulnerable groups, (4) the collaboration is carried out over many years and is part of the everyday life of both the municipality and the CSO and (5) there is a partnership and continuous dialogue between the municipality and INSP at all levels of the municipality. These characteristic and strategic intentions make it ‘most likely’ (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 231) that the case can foster success concerning

equal participation of vulnerable groups in community co-production. Roles can be transformed and the young people have access to professional support and influence at the same time (Brandsen, 2021; Jakobsen & Andersen, 2013; Needham & Carr, 2009; Percy 1987; Thijssen & Van Dooren, 2016).

Analysis and Results

The analysis is divided into three thematic sections, each showing how the participation of young people with mental health problems in INSP takes up different positions in the continuum. The section ‘Shared Everyday Life and Supporting Supervisors’ situates the shared everyday life on micro level in institutional arrangements on meso level as part of a public management regime. The section ‘Blended Groups of Participants and Dynamic Change of Roles’ analyse the shifting negotiated roles of the young people and the supervisors and establishes the elements that are important for the equal democratic participation of young people with mental health problems. The section ‘The Ambiguity of the Partnership’ focuses on the hybridity in the infrastructural framing that differs between NPM and NPG and frame the participation.

The three themes reflect the relevant ingredients concerning equal participation of vulnerable citizens in community co-production, focusing on the interaction between the meso and macro level of the case as well as the roles of the young people and the supervisors balancing the democratic participation with a focus on service production and efficiency.

Shared Everyday Life and Supporting Supervisors

Young people with mental health problems are initially invited to INSP by the municipal supervisors and this mirrors other studies pointing to how, strong trust between the young people and the supervisors is needed to motivate young people to participate (de Graaf et al., 2015; Osborne et al., 2016). Young people themselves say that it is a prerequisite for their participation that the supervisors facilitate and are continuously present at INSP as supporters since this provides a point of safety and trust. This is confirmed by other findings inquiring the need for continuous support from employees (de Graaf et al., 2015; Osborne et al., 2016; Stougaard, 2020; Vanleen et al., 2018). Young people also express the importance of participating in an arena free from municipal plans and a professional pedagogical culture, one which serves as a refuge from the expectations of others and provides an arena for self-positioning and self-developing. They express the importance of being met as equal participants in INSP, as participants who can contribute on an equal footing with other participants (rather than being a ‘diagnosis’). A young participant in social psychiatry care describes how the lack of municipal expectations and monitoring of development means that participants can experience being accepted and empowered:

You feel accepted and okay. You are not just a big failure anymore. Many of these young people [in social psychiatry care] who experience pressure by the municipality and then have terrible experiences, instead of trying to give the young people successes at their own pace so they can feel worthy of participating and experience empowerment through trying something. You learn this in situations where you must decide for yourself and take an independent stand on things.

The supervisors express that they also want the young people to ‘take an independent stand on things’ and they supervise them as multi-professionals enacting in the NPG part of the collaborative continuum, taking on different balanced roles as friend, representative, mediator and leader with none of these roles lacking or in excess (Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019; Vanleen et al., 2018). But, at the same time, the supervisors have an overarching goal of ‘bringing people into better well-being or jobs’ and they must document that participating in INSP ‘works’ and is worthwhile. In an interview, a supervisor explains how the ambivalence between the young people’s own logic of participation and the municipal NPM steering logic is especially difficult to balance when social psychiatry is: ‘under financial pressure. Then we have to explain – what is our core benefit, and can this pay off?’

While the supervisor agrees with the aim to let the young people ‘take an independent stand on things’, the collaboration with INSP is also used to work toward municipal goals of education and employment and this participation has no value in itself unless it means that the young people need less help from the municipality – that is becoming more independent. The head of social psychiatry characterizes INSP as a place that the supervisors can use ‘in our very structured and targeted efforts’. This more instrumental approach, related to enacting in the NPM part of the collaborative continuum, also takes place when the supervisors have, periodically recruited young volunteers whom they instructed to be role models for the young people with mental health problems, and they set rules for the volunteers’ behaviour. For example, they were not allowed to drink alcohol and precisely their role as role models meant that they were not equals to the young people. In addition, the professional norms of the supervisors mean that they often push the young people to participate actively rather than being passive even though several of the young people say that they prefer to participate passively. When the supervisors act as mono-experts related to the NPM-part of the continuum it seems to lead to difficulties trusting that the young people ‘take an independent stand on things’ and not to view them as clients with a lot of social problems (Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019; Stougaard, 2020). In this way, the supervisors reproduce stigmatization and exclusion of the young people, as we have seen it in other cases (Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019). Thus, in their professional roles the supervisors move between the two outer poles on the continuum as respectively multi-professionals with different balanced roles and mono-experts ruled by municipal targets and professional norms which a supervisor describes as very different ‘landscapes’:

I am a social psychiatry employee, but I am also an employee of INSP when I am here. These are two completely different landscapes. There is legislation, plans, focus areas, and status updates every three months when I am a supervisor. I have to forget about all that when I’m here. I have to be here in the moment. I always bring a professional focus with me while simultaneously having to throw it all away. I’m aware of what I’m doing – but I’m not planning it. I do not know in advance what I am going to do at the workshop.

When collaborating as a multi-professional supervisor one must ‘throw away the municipal framework’ and act in a way that is responsive to the rhythms of the organization and the participation of the various groups of participants without being able to plan – or decide – what will happen during the day. This contrasts with the mono-professional role, which is standardized and characterized by professional norms.

When NPM dominates, this implies supervisors acting more as mono-experts rather than multi-professionals supporting facilitators (Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019; Vanleen et al., 2018).

Blended Groups of Participants and Dynamic Change of Roles

As well as the supervisors take on different multi-professionals roles enacting in the NPG part of the collaborative part of the continuum the young people can enter into different relationships and in different roles among the blended groups of participants in INSP. It is crucial that the young people can take on many different roles and switch between being passive and active, user, visitor, initiator, employee, entrepreneur, artist, friend, workforce, volunteer and non-committal participant in different relationships. Developing through relationships is constituted through an oscillation between being able and not being able, between being active and being passive, that can transform roles.

When the supervisors are enacting as multi-professionals in the NPG part of the model, a transformative co-production with the young people takes place in the activities being organized so that the participants can take on many roles (Needham & Carr, 2009). When they act as mono-professionals the young people do not have the same equal relationship and volunteers are assigned as role models for the youth, which inhibits flexible roles. It is a prerequisite that the negotiation of roles in the hybrid system takes place through participation in self-organized activities and relationships rather than through target group management, professional ambitions, or pedagogical plans. This transformative form of co-production establishes collective processes for management, organization and activities between citizens and professionals, and between civil society and the community (Needham & Carr, 2009). It is also pivotal that the supervisors act as multi-professionals without the power of authority, and that is not possible when the NPM side of the continuum dominate. A supervisor in INSP says that:

When I present myself as a supervisor, I do not say that I am a supervisor. I say I'm part of INSP. I do not appear as an employee, but as part of the center, on an equal footing with [name of hosts in INSP]. And that means that the young people who participate do not have the feeling that they have to fit into a municipal framework. It may well be that they are talking to me as a municipal employee. But if they disagree with me that does not mean they cannot be here. It is not me who has the power to do everything possible. I'm just part of the center.

As in other studies we see that the supervisors in INSP enacting in the NPG part of the model balance their role and do not have greater authority than other groups of participants. But in addition to the need for continuous facilitating support and a strong responsiveness in the partnership, the analysis adds that it is also important that activities are organized so that vulnerable citizens can take on many different flexible roles in a blended hybrid practice (de Graaf et al., 2015; Kirkegaard, 2016, 2019; Osborne et al., 2016; Stougaard, 2020; Vanleen et al., 2018). This is possible when multi-professionals are enacting in the NPG part of the model and there are many other groups of participants. Consequently, the equal participation of youth with mental health problems depends on the supervisors acting as multi-professionals in hybrid networks. It requires an organizational and institutional environment that is responsive to learning from practice and that is participatory and equal and includes both the support of the supervisors

and citizen-driven activities. However, not all learning from collaboration in everyday life is integrated into the work of the partnership – as I will unfold in the following.

The Ambiguity of the Partnership

The participation of youth with mental health problems is dependent on the infrastructural framework with concrete organizational overlap between INSP and Roskilde municipality's supervisors who participate in the everyday life of INSP (Andersen, 2016). This means that the young people can move from safe relationships with supervisors to INSP's many opportunities and possibly further on into other networks and opportunities outside INSP. Moreover, in the partnership, there is an effort towards synergy and shared learning from the experiences of shared everyday life. However, the director of INSP also experiences pressure from upper management in the municipality to focus the goals of the partnership on delivering on municipal goals and documenting effects in accordance with the municipality's goals. The municipality's upper management and politicians do not always acknowledge the democratic value creation in INSP. The director of INSP says that: 'the challenges on the political side lie in the recognition of its value'. That is, the partnership is dominated by municipal performance management as they have to act as suppliers to the municipality enacting the NPM side of the collaborative continuum. Partnerships in the social field are often defined by public funds, goal management, control and evaluations (La Cour & Lindberg, 2006). The ambiguity of the partnership is shown by the fact that the partnership for the next few years contains a contract for specific goals while simultaneously INSP and the municipality want to develop the shared arena together with the participants themselves.

Therefore, in its extreme consequence, the partnership might rest upon an organizationally fragile basis as the opposing rationales in the collaborative continuum can prevent both the ongoing equal participation of youth with mental health problems and the achievement of municipal goals. This entails a risk that the municipality withdraws from the collaboration based on a lack of documented economic effect (Andersen & Hulgård, 2010; Diochon & Anderson, 2011; Seelos & Mair, 2012). The individual narratives about the intangible value of the partnership become difficult to convey to the municipal partners and the participation then risk becoming invisible and having no value for the municipality if it fails to present and identify criteria of economic effect. The ambiguity of the partnership therefore not only frames the participation as a continuous interaction between the poles of the collaborative continuum. It also jeopardizes the young people's opportunities to contribute on an equal footing with other participants.

Discussion and Conclusion

Departing from international findings the analysis of this 'most likely' success case confirms that community co-production can enable equal participation of youth with mental health problems when they have influence as co-initiator or co-designer and are supported through trust-based relationships by professionals, who balance their role as facilitators without having central or dominant power (Brandsen, 2021 de Graaf et al., 2015; Stougaard, 2020; Vanleen et al., 2018;). It is important that the participation can take place through young people's own concrete influences and be adapted to

the individual's needs (Brandsen, 2021; Fledderus & Honingh, 2016; Jakobsen & Andersen, 2013; Levine & Fisher, 1984; Thijssen & Van Dooren, 2016; Vanleen et al., 2018;).

The analysis adds that it can be difficult when municipal employees simultaneously try to control participation to work toward specific goals or professional ambitions – as pointed to can be the case in Danish municipalities. Thus, youth with mental health problems have limited influence and participate as service providers on the political output side (Grubb & Henriksen, 2018; Wijkström & Zimmer, 2011). The supervisors work towards municipal goals even though the young people explicitly say that they appreciate INSP as a civilian space without municipal plans, where they can spend time with each other and other young people on their own terms. The municipal dominance in the partnership (La Cour & Lindberg, 2006) creates ambivalence and the supervisors move continuously between the outer poles of the model as multi-professionals and mono-professionals. That is how the democratic dimension is configured and challenged in relation to a focus on service production and efficiency.

The analysis also points toward the importance of organizing activities together with the young people themselves so that they can take on many different roles through different relationships in a blended practice with many groups of participants. As the hybrid flexibility in the negotiation of roles in the relations between different citizen groups – resourceful, vulnerable, volunteer and professional supervisors – is crucial, it is necessary to negotiate the hybridity in the partnership so that it is framed according to the participants' own wishes and concrete activities related to the NPG part of the model rather than according to professional ambitions or municipal goals. It is also crucial that the young people are guided and supported in INSP together with the supervisors in a shared everyday experience.

Thus, the interaction of the meso and micro level of the 'collaborative turn model' has proved essential for understanding how the equal participation of youth with mental health problems in community co-production can be created and shifted in relation to a more instrumental NPM and a focus on service production and efficiency. It is possible to enable equal participation when the hybridity is negotiated in favour of NPG and multi-professionals, but it requires some very concrete context factors. I argue that the following three context factors imbedded in the NPG side of 'the collaborative turn model' are pivotal; First of all a partnership must frame an organizational infrastructure that makes it possible for the young people to receive professional support and participate in a civil community on their own terms at the same time. It is crucial to facilitate an integrated continuing collaboration in a joint practice as opposed to a project-oriented and parallel collaboration where the partners work side by side. This kind of collaboration is characterized by inter-organizational exchange, long-term relationships and lowered power distances, high levels of reciprocal interdependency, and vast resource investment as well as acceptance of high risks (Bentzen, 2022). Secondly, the CSO must consist of a varied amount of activities that makes it possible for the young people to make their own choices and interact in different flexible roles in different rooms with different groups of participants. Therefore, the CSO must have a strategic interest in framing the varied activities of different participants who are negotiating and changing roles in a blended hybrid group of professionals, volunteers and citizens. Thirdly, it is pivotal that INSP facilitates the interaction of participants using hosts as facilitators of relations, boundary spanners and bridge builders making it possible to maintain balanced power relations between the different groups of participants.

These context factors imply that the NPM-side of ‘the collaborative turn’ is challenged by the culture of chaos, power-sharing and mutual interdependence and it is not possible for the supervisors to remain mono-professionals all the time. The NPM side of ‘the collaborative turn’ such as hierarchy, silo structures, orientation towards one’s own organization, and top-down processes characterize municipalities governed by NPM and create barriers to the collaboration on a meso level as well as the equal participation of the young people on a micro level.

Using The Collaborative Turn as a model for analysing the overall complexity of the negotiation of hybridity reveals correlations between the interactions amongst citizens, professionals and volunteers, and the organizational institutional framings and public administrative regimes. The material municipal goals for participation related to NPM challenge the partnership and the very mechanisms that create the participation.

Consequently, the partnership might rest upon an organizationally fragile basis as the opposing rationales in the collaborative continuum model can prevent both the equal participation of youth with mental health problems and the achievement of municipal goals. This entails a risk that the municipality withdraws from the collaboration based on a lack of documented economic effect and jeopardizes the young people’s opportunities to contribute on an equal footing with other participants. This makes it necessary for the supervisors to challenge the NPM rationales in the partnership so that the young people can participate equally ‘and take an independent stand on things’.

We need to further investigate the concrete context factors that are pivotal for signs of success and the ability to (temporarily) overrule NPM. A single case study is a relevant method when one wants to gain in-depth insight into many simultaneous factors that influence and are influenced by each other in a context. At the same time, as it is a critical ‘most likely’ success single case it is possible to expect that the learning points from the analysis may also be present in other cases where the same context factors are present.

However, it is still a weakness that some of the data are collected by the case actors themselves. It would have strengthened the validity of the analysis if I had been able to observe how the participants interact, since people sometimes act differently from the way they say they do. It is also a critical point that there has been no opportunity to interview young people with mental health problems who do not use INSP or who have stopped using INSP.

In conclusion, the case is an interesting contribution to the discussion of how participation is negotiated within hybrid community co-production. One may ask oneself whether the characteristics of the case are pivotal for the signs of success that other Danish cases do not have (Frederiksen et al., 2021; Ibsen, 2020; Tortzen, 2016). Although the case primarily takes place in a CSO setting instead of in a municipality setting, municipal rationales dominate in the partnership’s structuration. Would there have been signs of equal participation for youth with mental health problems if INSP conversely had participated in a municipal institution?

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