



International Journal of Public Sector Management

Coproduction as a structural transformation of the public sector

Albert Meijer

Article information:

To cite this document:

Albert Meijer , (2016), " Coproduction as a structural transformation of the public sector ", International Journal of Public Sector Management, Vol. 29 Iss 6 pp. 596 - 611

Permanent link to this document:

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-01-2016-0001>

Downloaded on: 08 March 2017, At: 00:51 (PT)

References: this document contains references to 69 other documents.

To copy this document: permissions@emeraldinsight.com

The fulltext of this document has been downloaded 264 times since 2016*

Users who downloaded this article also downloaded:

(2016), "The agreeable bureaucrat: personality and PSM", International Journal of Public Sector Management, Vol. 29 Iss 6 pp. 582-595 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-12-2015-0218>

(2016), "Public entrepreneurship and sub-clinical psychopaths: a conceptual frame and implications", International Journal of Public Sector Management, Vol. 29 Iss 6 pp. 612-634 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/IJPSM-01-2016-0011>

Access to this document was granted through an Emerald subscription provided by emerald-srm:213934 []

For Authors

If you would like to write for this, or any other Emerald publication, then please use our Emerald for Authors service information about how to choose which publication to write for and submission guidelines are available for all. Please visit www.emeraldinsight.com/authors for more information.

About Emerald www.emeraldinsight.com

Emerald is a global publisher linking research and practice to the benefit of society. The company manages a portfolio of more than 290 journals and over 2,350 books and book series volumes, as well as providing an extensive range of online products and additional customer resources and services.

Emerald is both COUNTER 4 and TRANSFER compliant. The organization is a partner of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and also works with Portico and the LOCKSS initiative for digital archive preservation.

*Related content and download information correct at time of download.

Coproduction as a structural transformation of the public sector

Albert Meijer

*Utrecht University School of Governance, Utrecht University,
Utrecht, The Netherlands*

596

Received 4 January 2016
Revised 11 April 2016
Accepted 15 May 2016

Abstract

Purpose – Coproduction fundamentally changes the roles of citizens and governments. The purpose of this paper is to enhance the theoretical understanding of the transformative changes in the structural order of the public domain that result from the coproduction of public services.

Design/methodology/approach – This paper builds upon both the literature on coproduction of public services, new public governance and on social contracts between citizens and the state to identify the nature, drivers and implications of the transformation. The argument is illustrated with examples from crime control and healthcare.

Findings – The analysis identified an institutional misfit and highlights four key issues that are key to the understanding of the structural transformation of public services: compensation for time and knowledge resources, responses to new forms of (in)equality, risk of conflicts between citizens and re-organizing accountability.

Research limitations/implications – The analysis highlights the need for further research into the implications of coproduction for government legitimacy, transfer of power, financial implications, representativeness and consequences for non-coproducing citizens.

Originality/value – This paper links instrumental debates about the coproduction of public services to fundamental debates about the relations between government and citizens and identifies substantial issues that are raised by this structural transformation in the public domain and that require new responses.

Keywords Coproduction, New public governance, Structural transformation

Paper type Conceptual paper

1. Introduction

The literature on coproduction in the public sector is rapidly expanding and empirical research is being conducted in a broad variety of domains (Bovaird, 2007; Alford, 2009; Pestoff *et al.*, 2013; most recently, Williams *et al.*, 2016). While the theoretical notion of coproduction dates from the 1970s, the idea currently catches momentum and is applied to describe and analyze a wide variety of practices of citizen and stakeholder engagement ranging from housing (Brandsen and Helderman, 2012) to public service delivery (Bovaird, 2007), childcare services (Pestoff, 2006), education (Thomsen and Jakobsen, 2015) and policing (Meijer, 2014). The key point in all these analyses is that traditional distinctions between users/consumers and producers are fading and they are being replaced by cooperative relations.

In spite of the growing attention for coproduction, our understanding of the fundamental nature of coproduction is still limited. Coproduction brings a fundamental re-organization of relations between citizens and government (Bovaird, 2007; Alford, 2009; Pestoff *et al.*, 2013; Radnor *et al.*, 2014) and this transformation challenges important values such as equality, accountability, transparency and proportionality. Many analyses of coproduction, however, are highly interesting but of a rather instrumental nature and fail to tackle the underlying issue of re-arranging the roles of



government and citizens. Our knowledge about the forms, effects of and incentives for coproduction is growing – when and how does coproduction “work”? – but our understanding of the fundamental nature of these transformative changes in the structural order of the public domain – how do we organize public control and the distribution of power in coproductive arrangements? – is lagging behind. This paper aims to fill that gap in the literature.

A fundamental understanding of coproduction requires that we relate this rather instrumental concept to broader theories about the division of power and authority in the public domain. These are issues that have been at the heart of the analyses within the discipline of public administration but also of political philosophy and the challenge for coproduction scholars is to connect our analyses of the practices of coproduction to their broad ideas about the public domain. This paper forms an effort to produce an understanding of coproduction as a structural transformation of the public sector in the sense that the roles of citizens and government are fundamentally re-defined. The main question is:

How can we interpret practices, drivers and implications of coproduction in terms of a structural transformation of the public sector?

Different perspectives from public administration and political philosophy are used because to define the roles and responsibilities of citizens and government at a fundamental level (Osborne, 2006, 2010; Pestoff *et al.*, 2013; Torfing and Triantafyllou, 2013). To answer the research question, we will look at the nature of the change in the structure of the public domain, analyze the drivers of this change and explore some of the implications. The argument builds upon the rapidly expanding literature on coproduction of public services (for an overview: Brandsen and Honingh, 2016) and theoretical perspectives from public administration and political philosophy to show what the structural transformation entails. Examples from two different policy domains – the coproduction of healthcare and (Coulter, 2011; Carman *et al.*, 2013) crime control (Meijer, 2014; Williams *et al.*, 2016) – are used to illustrate this theoretical argument. The paper ends by discussing the implications of the emerging institutional misfit between current institutional structures and evolving roles and responsibilities of government and citizens.

2. Structural transformation of the public domain

Coproduction is a broad concept that is increasingly popular in both academic and societal debates to connote a change to a more collaborative relationship between citizens and government. Within this broad conception, Brandsen and Honingh (2016) identify a variety of practices. They conclude that these practices differ in their relationship with government services – complementary or non-complementary – and in the level of influence – only implementation or both design and implementation. Similarly, Pestoff *et al.* (2013) highlights that coproduction can only entail the implementation but also joint management and governance of public services. The level of transformation varies but overall the central idea is that services are no longer only delivered – and managed and governed – by professional and managerial staff in public agencies but also coproduced by citizens and communities (Brandsen and Honingh, 2016). To understand the implications of this shift, we need to position coproduction in classic debates about relations between citizens and government.

The structure of the public domain and the relations between government and citizens are at the heart of political philosophy and form the basis for theories of public

administration. While Plato defended the idea of a philosopher king, the basis for our current ideas lies in the enlightenment when philosopher such as Hobbes (1651), Locke (1689) and Rousseau (1762) argued for a “social contract” between citizens to mandate a government that would benefit all citizens in society. These ideas have been very influential and they have formed the basis for revolutions, transformation and, eventually, modern forms of democratic government. At the same time, these ideas are still being discussed in terms of their appropriateness for modern societies. Competing models have been formulated, and continue to be formulated (Rhodes, 1997; Fung and Wright, 2003; Hajer and Wagenaar, 2003; Osborne, 2006). To enhance our understanding of the implications of coproduction, we need to discuss this within the framework of different perspectives on the relations between citizens and government (see also Ossewaarde, 2007).

The role of citizens was traditionally conceptualized as granting a mandate to government through an electoral and representative process. Osborne (2006) has labeled this model “old public administration” (OPA). OPA holds that citizens consent to surrender some of their freedom to the authority of the state in exchange for the protection of the remaining rights. The centralized and hierarchical political order of the state was accepted since this could eliminate the conflicts and disorder that result from human selfishness and imperfections (Hume, 1739). The social contract is a fiction in the sense that citizens have not actually signed a contract but the idea of a “contract” can be used to develop just relations between citizens and the state. The functioning of government is based on the idea of a neutral bureaucracy that ensures that equal cases will be treated equally and individual citizen are subservient to the bureaucratic procedures (Weber, 1922/1968). The idea has been highly influential in the development of the political institutions of the modern state.

OPA still forms the basis of public administration but it came to be criticized for its inertness, ineffectiveness, inefficiency and failure to attend to the needs of citizens (Osborne and Gaebler, 1992). Osborne (2006) stresses that since then new relations between citizens and government have developed: the new public management transformed the role of citizens into clients or customers of government organizations and they could demand good services or else, if possible, use exit and voice. This transformation can be analyzed in terms of the neo-liberal restructuring of the public domain (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2011). The role of government in society was redefined from steering to enabling and facilitating individual action in a market place with private instead of collective responsibilities for ensuring public welfare (Gilbert, 2002).

The new public management, in turn, also has been criticized ferociously and more recently we are seeing the rise of new relations between citizens and government that have been labeled as the new public governance (NPG) (Osborne, 2006, 2010; Budd, 2007; Pestoff *et al.*, 2013; Torfing and Triantafillou, 2013). While OPA is about hierarchical relations and NPM about customer-producer relations, NPG is about more horizontal networked and collaborative relations between government and (organizations of) citizens. In this perspective, citizens actively engage in public policies and are conceptualized as coproducers that work with government in a more or less horizontal relationship. Trust, relational capital and relational contracts act are regarded as the core governance mechanisms (Osborne, 2006, p. 394).

OPA, NPM and NPG have different perspectives on the roles of government and citizens and these changes can be understood as renegotiations of the social contract. The basic idea of the traditional contract is that citizens provide resources through taxes and provide legitimacy to government agencies through elections in exchange for

fair and equal treatment. This model evolved in the twentieth century and came to be challenged by NPM that stressed that citizens could use their buying power to demand good services and goods. The quality of government outputs is seen as the new source of legitimacy and the basic idea is that citizens accept authority and are willing to pay for good outputs of government activity. The twenty-first century brings us a more participatory model of government (Osborne, 2006). The idea of interactive or participatory governance emerged to engage citizens not only in decision-making processes but also in the actual implementation of government tasks (Torfing *et al.*, 2012). While conventional government bureaucracies have proven powerful instruments in the twentieth century and have in many societies contributed to the production of wealth and prosperity, their effectiveness in twenty-first century conditions is declining (Bovaird, 2007). Costs are rising in all domains of government activity and the effectiveness of the government is increasingly challenged. These challenges result in a renegotiation of the “contract.” Citizens are not only expected to supply resources and provide legitimacy but also to coproduce government policies by, to mention but a few examples, managing urban parks, providing healthcare support in peer-to-peer networks and assisting the police through citizen information networks (Alford, 2009; Pestoff *et al.*, 2013). Ossewaarde (2007, p. 593): “Today’s new social contract [...] introduces the concept of the ‘good citizen’ or ‘active citizen,’ thereby distancing itself from the welfare state concept of the social citizen” Table I.

The contracts should not be understood as strictly replacing the previous form but rather as amendments to previous contracts or as a “sedimentary model” (Djelic, 2010). In that sense, the social contract increases in complexity through the different mandates, roles and relations of citizens and government. The basic idea is that this growing complexity mirrors the increasing complexity of relations in society. Governments all around the world are experimenting with coproduction in a variety of domains of government activity (for overviews: Bovaird, 2007; Alford, 2009; Pestoff *et al.*, 2013). Citizen engagement in the form of coproduction can be conceived as a new social contract: it is characterized by new civil obligations and different social entitlements (Ossewaarde, 2007). Bloom *et al.* (2008) highlights that we see the emergence of a new set of shared behavioral norms. This can be illustrated with the example of coproduction in two quite different policy domains: healthcare and crime control.

Coproduction of healthcare presents an interesting illustration of this transition from healthcare for patients to healthcare with patients and their families (Bloom *et al.*, 2008; Coulter, 2011; Carman *et al.*, 2013). Healthcare is a key domain of public services and the ageing population in many countries and the increasing costs of high-tech treatments put stress on this system of service delivery (Carman *et al.*, 2013). The traditional contract, OPA, highlights that governments use public money to provide healthcare services for the population and public healthcare systems in many European countries were based on this system. The patient was subjected to these

Type of government	Citizen role	Citizens provide ...	Government provides ...
Old public administration	Subject	Elections and tax resources	Protection of the rights of citizens
New public management	Client	Payments for (collective) services	Value for money
New public governance	Coproducer	Collaborative engagement	Collaborative action

Table I.
Social contract
in models of
government

services and limitations in choice were one of the consequences of this system in combination with free access to healthcare services. Voice was to be presented through elections on the basis of political programs. The new public management has drastically changed this perspective and highlights an emphasis on managerialism, privatizing healthcare services, performance measurement and patient choice. At the moment, engagement of patients and families is largely seen as a way to not only enhance the quality of healthcare services (Coulter and Ellins, 2007) but also decrease costs (Carman *et al.*, 2013). These changing relations have important implications for the social contract between government and citizens. How, for example, will government be able to provide good healthcare for citizens who do not have social support networks of family members, neighbors or friends? Who is to decide about treatments in collaborative relations between patients and medical professionals? Do coproducing citizens get a discount on healthcare services if their personal networks assume some of the tasks of medical professionals? These questions are becoming increasingly relevant and the attention for these issues can be understood from the broader changes in the relations between government and citizens that we are also seeing in other policy domains.

Crime control as a domain of government activity forms a key element in reflection on the social contract since it means that the power of force is transferred to the state. Crime control is a core activity of government all around the world and government performance in this domain is often hotly debated (Garland, 2001; Reiner, 2010). The traditional social contract holds that citizens have agreed among each other to transfer authority to the police in return for protection and safety. The new public management has amended this contract in the sense that citizens want to see value for money: police forces have to demonstrate their performance to legitimize their claim on tax money. The practices of coproduction of safety challenges the premise of this contract since citizens engage in crime control. Coproduction of crime control is already taking place and holds a huge promise for the near future: using new information technologies and social media, the “full crowd” could participate anywhere, anytime by providing better intelligence and tackling (virtual) crime (Heverin and Zach, 2010; Crump, 2011). Police departments are already providing real time information about perpetrators of criminal activities to tap into the intelligence of citizens and citizens’ initiatives to dispel child pornography from internet forums helps the police to curb this criminal activity. This means that the police is working with society rather than only for society and that citizens do not only supply resources and legitimacy but also their effort and knowledge. The strict division of roles in the traditional social contract is challenged. Optimists argue that coproduction enables the coupling of formal and informal mechanisms of crime control to produce more effective and legitimate forms of collaboration. Skeptics highlight that it results in forms of “coveillance”: citizens become an integral part of the surveillance structure of the state (Mann *et al.*, 2003). There can be a fine line between the intelligence of crowds and the amplification of rumor, prejudice and collective stress in ways that undermine rather than enhance effective crime control or the rule of law. These tensions can be understood as resulting from the changing social contract that presents a new answer to the question of how modern societies can generate safety.

This section has argued that citizen engagement in the form of coproduction can be conceived as a new social contract. This new contract fits within the NPG paradigm and highlights that citizens are not only expected to supply resources and provide legitimacy but also to coproduce government policies. The contract changes the roles of government and citizens and puts them in the role of co-workers who engage in

collaborative action. This relation differs radically from the pre-existing subject-object (OPA) and provider-customer relations (new public management). This brings us to the question why the OPA and NPM contracts are now being amended.

3. Drivers of the transformative change

The first driver of the new order in the public domain is a broad transformation in society toward more horizontal relations within families, within organizations and also between citizens and the state. The 1960s and 1970s formed a “revolutionary” period in which vertical relations in society were criticized and this movement resulted in substantial changes (Hajema, 2001; Meijer, 2015). The Dutch sociologist de Swaan (1979) writes about the transition from a “regime of negotiation” to “regime of command” and highlights that this regime change extends to all domains of society. Authority is no longer taken as a given but constructed in relations between parents and children, managers and workers, and citizens and government officials (de Swaan, 1979; Pierre, 2000). The protests and political activism in the 1960s and 1970s resulted in the development of new forms of direct democracy, enhanced transparency and also various forms of coproduction (Ostrom, 1978; Parks *et al.*, 1981). In that sense, coproduction is a direct outcome of a push for more equal relations and more democracy. The first wave of practitioner and academic attention for coproduction was more substantial in nature than the present wave that highlights the instrumental value of coproduction. At the same time, the more horizontal relations that were established in those years came to be “normalized” in the decades thereafter. Traditional government-citizen relations were not re-established in Western countries. This horizontalization manifests itself in more assertive citizens but also in politicians and administrators that are increasingly reluctant to take unilateral decisions.

The horizontalization in society also manifests itself both in the relations between healthcare providers and patients and between police and citizens. Modern healthcare institutions were developed on the basis of the idea that expert medical knowledge needed to be developed and institutionalized through processes of professionalization. The key idea was that medical professionals have the knowledge to provide treatments for their patients (Freidson, 2001). The coproduction of healthcare stresses that this knowledge is only one element in the provision of healthcare: experiential knowledge and informal care are also crucial to the success of medical treatments (Coulter, 2011). Similarly, modern police institutions were built upon the idea that crime control is a task for specialist state institutions but this approach came to be criticized for lack of effectiveness and for failing to draw upon citizens’ contributions (Ostrom, 1978). Coproduction of crime control, defined as police and citizens making better use of each other’s resources and contributions to achieve better or more efficient reduction of crime, was developed as an alternative strategy (Brudney, 1983; Garland, 2001). The new networks of healthcare professional-patient and police-citizen cooperation are structures of healthcare and crime control that “fit” structural changes in the information society where traditional institutions are losing their monopolies and citizens organize themselves in “me-centered networks” (Castells, 2004). Building upon Foucault, Garland (2001) discusses these developments in term of the “responsibilization”: citizens become active partners in the business of healthcare and crime control. This does not only mean, however, that they are taken seriously as contributors but also that the blame for mistakes or underperformance may be shifted to the coproducers. Ossewaarde (2007, p. 499) stresses that the new social contract emphasizes the individual responsibility of citizens in the participatory state.

The second driver of the new order in the public domain is technological change. The emergence of new approaches to governance is not only driven by the shortcomings of the bureaucratic approach but also facilitated by new technologies (Meijer, 2014). Information and communication technologies and the internet have already revolutionized the commercial sector where traditional giants have been challenged by relatively small high-tech companies such as Facebook and Google. The effects of new technologies on the public sector have been studied for a couple of decades and Fountain (2001) concludes that the state is transforming into a virtual state with government agencies in complex networks. Running in parallel to this trend and augmenting it are developments in social media that facilitate new forms of citizen engagement (Wellman, 2001). While previous information technologies strengthened the internal organization of government by facilitating central control (Stol, 1996; Manning, 2008; Reiner, 2010), new communication technologies enable much more intense, rich, direct and multilateral exchanges with external actors. The new technologies are stunning in their technological potential but their actual impact resides in the opportunities that are created to rearrange massive forms of cooperation such as Wikipedia and Linux. Believers in new technologies argue that similar forms of massive cooperation between individuals can produce solutions to societal problems.

The use of technology also manifest itself in the relations between both healthcare providers and patients and police and citizens. Modern information and communication technologies facilitate new forms of coproduction such as treatments and home and the collection of relevant information (Bopp, 2000). Patients are given new systems to collect information about their health situation such as their sugar level to relieve the burden of monitoring by healthcare professionals (Harris *et al.*, 1993). In parallel, systems such as Patients Like Me enable patients to not only monitor but also analyze and benchmark their healthcare situation (Wicks *et al.*, 2010). The technology puts many patients in control over the collection and sometimes even analysis of healthcare data. Similarly, in crime control citizens are increasingly invited to bring in relevant information that will help the police to solve crime (Meijer, 2014). Amber Alert is probably the best known example: all of society is invited to participate in the search for missing children. Citizens Net is a Dutch network that is used to ask citizens for information about missing and wanted persons in time pressing situations (Meijer, 2014). The possibility to instantaneously engage large groups of citizens through information networks did not exist before. The opportunity to collect and co-ordinate information exchanges on a large scale reduces the need for a large police bureaucracy and generates the possibility to make all citizens police informers.

A third driver behind coproduction is international competition and fiscal stress (Pestoff, 2012, p. 13). Governments are facing a semi-permanent situation of austerity and coproduction can be seen as a means to unleash new productive resources that help to limit government spending and enhance the efficiency of the public sector (Pestoff, 2012). The current wave of forms of coproduction can be regarded as a (step) child of new public management since it puts an emphasis on bringing citizen resources such as time and knowledge to cut down on government spending. Services, oversight and management can theoretically be carried out at a lower cost because of the engagement of citizens.

Population changes and the costs of new, sophisticated treatments have resulted in a large scale problem for healthcare systems in countries around the world. How can the healthcare system be viable? The emphasis on patient and family engagement is often presented as a means to enhance medical quality but should also be understood

as a response to this financial crisis (Carman *et al.*, 2013). Voluntary productive work by families, friends and neighbors is to reduce the costs for medical professionals by relieving them from simple, non-medical tasks such as cleaning houses and washing patients. Similarly, the large scale use of volunteers in police works seems to partly result from fiscal stress (Ling *et al.*, 2006). Sundeen and Siegel (1986) identified four main domains of police volunteering: reserve officers, neighborhood watch, explorer scouts and clerical help. Their research showed that these volunteers provide thousands of hours of work at relatively low-administrative cost.

The drivers indicate that a transformation in the roles and relations of government and citizens fits the changing role of authority in late modern societies, is facilitated by new possibilities to organize mass collaborative relations through information and communication technologies and is needed to reduce the cost of the government apparatus. This overview highlights that the new structure of relations cannot just be regarded as something that political activists demanded – more democracy! – but also as a change that was imposed on citizens from the perspective of declining government budgets – less cost! This brings us to the question what the implications of this transformation are for relations in the public domain both between government and citizens as well as among citizens.

4. Implications of the new order in the public domain

The new order in the public domain fundamentally alters the roles of government officials and citizens by engaging them in a task that was previously carried out by professionals in bureaucratic organizations. The instrumental and motivational aspects are frequently studied but fundamental implications are not well analyzed. These implications will be discussed in terms of relations between government and citizens and also between citizens.

A key aspect of the relation between government and citizens is legitimacy. The traditional sources of government legitimacy – in OPA – is input legitimacy (Scharpf, 1999): government is legitimate if authority is based on a fair democratic process with adequate checks and balances. Increasingly, in NPM, the output of government activity is seen as the key to legitimacy (Scharpf, 1999): government is legitimate if it produces solutions to societal problems. A third source of legitimacy is process legitimacy: acceptance of authority is based on the correct use of this authority. Process legitimacy has traditionally played a role in a procedural sense but coproduction means that process legitimacy obtains a different meaning. The openness and correct engagement of citizens in government processes become a crucial, additional, source of legitimacy. This means that accountability mechanisms should not focus on proper use of input or on outcomes but on the quality and equality of structures and actions for active citizen engagement. The facilitating action of government becomes key to its legitimacy. For this reason, the realization that coproduction in certain domains is limited to high-educated citizens forms an important threat to government legitimacy.

The shift in roles of government and citizens may also have consequences for (formal and informal) power relations. The direct engagement of citizens in the production – and even the management and governance of services – strengthens their influence over not only decisions but also the agenda and the formation of perceptions (Lukes, 1974). The extent to which power is transferred varies widely among the different forms of coproduction (Bovaird, 2007; Alford, 2009; Pestoff *et al.*, 2013): non-complementary forms and engagement in design constitute a broader shift of

power than complementary forms and engagement in implementation only (Brandsen and Honingh, 2016). On the one hand, the introduction of school vouchers to stimulate the coproduction of education concerns a significant transfer of power whereas the request to put a postal code on an envelope conditions citizens rather than granting them power. The literature on coproduction extensively discusses the transfer of power in the form of co-management and co-governance (Pestoff *et al.*, 2013): the idea is that citizens and non-for-profit actors co-decide on public services and hence this concerns a significant transfer of power.

The theoretical argument in healthcare is that legitimacy is strengthened by developing a mature relation with patients through forms of “patient empowerment” (Anderson and Funnell, 2010). This empowerment entails information provision and co-consultation and sometimes even forms of co-decision. Pestoff *et al.* (2013) highlight that there seems to be some transfer of power in other policy domains such as education, welfare, child care and housing. Empirical research in the domain of crime control indicates that citizen engagement strengthens police legitimacy (Meijer, 2014). Qualitative information suggests that citizens appreciate the fact that the police invites them to participate. Most forms of citizen engagement in crime control, however, do not include a transfer of power. Citizens are invited to present specific information but not to influence police actions. This may, however, be specific to the use of physical power by the police and the reluctance to transfer this to citizens. A notable exception are recent experiments with giving citizens the right to determine how a certain proportion of the time of neighborhood community officers is being spent (van Rossum, 2012). Other forms of co-governance and co-management were not found in the domain of policing and crime control. In terms of representation, coproduction of safety demonstrates engagement from citizens with different levels of education and could be seen a legitimate (Meijer, 2014).

Interestingly, while the transfer of power from government to citizens has received quite some attention, questions about the financial implications are not often asked. There is little attention in the literature for the relation between coproduction and tax reduction and monetary rewards for coproducers. An exception is Rich (1981) who discusses the idea that volunteers could be compensated by reductions in their tax proportional to their effort and there seems to be some growing attention for rewarding coproduction through local economic trading systems or time banks (Glynos and Speed, 2012). There are also no indications in the literature that citizen engagement in police work – for example, in the form of volunteering – results in tax reduction.

The changing contract also has implications for the relations between citizens. While government legitimacy is about citizen trust in government, trust in other citizens is a key question for the legitimacy of coproductive arrangements. In the new structure, citizens are to have confidence in the integrity, competences and intentions of their fellow-citizens to coproduce for the collective good. And this may result in specific tensions. The “old” contract – OPA – has emphasized the equality between citizens: all citizens pay tax, all citizens can vote and all citizens are equal before the law. NPM states that citizens should all get the same value for money but that also means that in certain situations – education or healthcare – citizens with more money get better services. Inequality may be an issue in the new social contract since some citizens may be able – and willing – to coproduce whereas others may not (Jakobsen and Andersen, 2013). This results in a more differentiated relation between citizens and government. Some citizens may be able to influence government while others may not have this opportunity.

The issue becomes even more complicated if we take into account that citizens may also coproduce against other citizens. They may, for example, assist government in the enforcement of food or environmental laws (Meijer, 2007). The new social contract that entails potential adversity between citizens – a lack of horizontal trust – whereas the basis of the construction of Hobbes' Leviathan was that government was positioned above citizens to settle these conflicts. In view of recent analyses of the rise of a meritocracy (Bovens and Wille, 2011) this may result in the capture of government by a certain elite.

For healthcare, the changing relations between citizens manifests itself mostly in differentiated models of financing healthcare (Dunston *et al.*, 2009). Whereas the OPA and NPM approaches focus on the individual patient, the network around the patient becomes increasingly relevant for the coproduction of healthcare under NPG. Differences in the coverage of healthcare may emerge because of differences in the strength of community networks. From a model where all citizens have an equal relation with government, we now see more differentiated relations. This also applies to other domains: crime control forms a sensitive domain when it comes to the implications of coproduction for the relations between citizens. Citizens engage in crime control through new (virtual) information networks but also in the prevention of criminal activities and even the repression of crime and the apprehension of criminals through citizen arrests. This coproduction of crime control may result in more citizen influence on policing and a democratization of justice but also in an Orwellian state that builds upon "coveillance" between citizens build upon relations of distrust (Meijer, 2014). These risks of coproduction refer to citizen engagement in law enforcement but in service domains such as healthcare, education and housing coproduction may also result in negative consequences for other citizens when there is a zero sum game. These negative consequences are still poorly understood and understudied.

This discussion of the implications of the new order in the public domain for the relations between government and citizens and also between citizens highlights that existing sources of legitimacy are challenged. Inequality between citizens, a hidden transfer of power to "amateurs" without accountability, a lack of compensation to citizens for their resource contributions and the risk of conflict between citizens with opposite interests are the key issues that we identified. These issues highlight that there may be an institutional misfit between existing institutions and the new, emerging social order. This institutional misfit will be discussed further in the conclusions.

5. Conclusions

This paper set out to conduct a theoretical analysis of the reorganization of public control and the distribution of power in coproductive arrangements. The central question for this paper was: how can we interpret practices, drivers and implications of coproduction in terms of a structural transformation of the public sector? The paper has argued that coproduction is an amendment to the existing division of roles and responsibilities between citizens and the state in the sense that citizens do not only provide resources and legitimacy to the state in exchange for the protection of their rights but also, increasingly, provide their time, effort and knowledge through practices of coproduction. This means that the traditional order in the public domain no longer holds and a new order emerges. The drivers of these changes are push factors – the call for more democracy and engagement – but also pull factors – the need for cost

reduction – and enabling factors – the availability of new technology. The new social contract presents a new source of legitimacy but also raises questions about the consequences for the other sources of government legitimacy. More specifically, the new social contract is built upon a horizontal notion of trust among citizens, challenges the current notion of equality among citizens and produces the risk of conflicts between citizens (see also Ossewaarde, 2007).

We used examples from two policy domains, healthcare and crime control, to highlight that the structural transformation of public services is a broad development that has implications for diverse policy sector. Our current analysis has highlighted the similarities between these sector but a subsequent analysis is needed to systematically map the differences between various policy sector. A comparative analysis will help to understand how this structural transformation of public sector occurs in different policy domains and what differences and similarities can be identified.

This paper aimed to create a basis for a more fundamental debate about coproduction in the public sector. The analysis highlighted an institutional misfit between current institutional structures and evolving roles and responsibilities of government and citizens. This triggers the following fundamental questions:

- What do citizens get back from government in exchange for their extra contributions in term of time and (knowledge) resources? The new order in the public domain seems to highlight extra activities from citizens that are instrumental to government action. Does this mean that citizens have to pay less tax? Or are they given more power in determining the allocation of government resources? Do they get more authority over the quality and type of services that are provided?
- Can we develop a notion of equality that fits the new order in the public domain? One could argue that there is generally equality in the sense that citizens may coproduce but one can ask the question whether this opportunity is enough for generating equality. Do governments need to make an effort to ensure that coproduction is representative in terms of participation or should they safeguard equality in outcomes and satisfaction?
- To what extent does the new order in the public domain carry the danger of conflicts between citizens? Certain citizens may align with government to exercise power over other citizens. This means that government is no longer independent and above these conflicts but forms a coalition with certain citizens. How can we define the new order in the public domain in such a way that it unites rather than divides citizens?
- How can we organize accountability that fits the new social order in the public domain? Current accountability systems are based on the idea that power is being transferred to government and hence government can be held to account. But what happens when this power is shared in coproductive relations? Should coproducing citizens also be held to account?

These issues challenge the current institutional structure in various policy domains and responses can be developed by adding new institutional layers to our current system. Horizontal forms of accountability, for example, form a responses to the shift of power toward more horizontal relationships (Michels and Meijer, 2008; Schillemans, 2011). Another response entails the adaptation of current institutional structures to the

new practices of coproduction. Legal protection of citizen engagement is an example of traditional structures providing guarantees for equality in coproduction practices (Aubin and Bornstein, 2012). Systematic knowledge about these responses is lacking and is needed to provide guidance for dealing with these substantial questions. The analysis of the transformative nature of coproduction in the public sector therefore results in a research agenda. More attention for the following empirical issues is needed:

- How does coproduction influence government legitimacy? The exact relation between coproduction and government legitimacy is poorly understood. Does legitimacy result from more knowledge about government activity (input), from the fact that citizens are taken seriously (process) or from the fact that better outcomes are produced (output)?
- To what extent does coproduction entail a transfer of power to citizens? What do the various forms of coproduction – co-production, co-management and co-governance – mean for the transfer of power from citizens to government and vice versa? Can we measure the transfer of power empirically?
- Does coproduction result in (specific) tax reduction? Do we see situations in which coproduction reduces in tax reduction or other monetary compensations for coproductive efforts? Is that specific tax reduction for the co-producing citizen or for all citizens?
- How representative are various forms of coproduction? Some studies have looked at issues of representativeness of coproduction but a systematic overview – a meta-analysis – could bring these studies together and generate a broad understanding. How representative are practices of coproduction?
- Do we see negative effects of coproduction on other – non-coproducing – citizens? Most research focusses on the effects of co-production on either the co-producing citizens or on the whole population. A systematic analysis of the effects on non-coproducing citizens is missing.

The key point of this paper is that a mere instrumental perspective on coproduction misses out on the fundamental nature of these transformations. The new order in the public domain needs to be analyzed by institutional changes in shifting roles and responsibilities and implications for distributions of power, representation of interests, burden sharing, accountability and legitimacy. Academics have the obligations to look beyond the question of what works and need to ask questions about public control and the distribution of power as inputs for debates about institutional structures that fit coproductive governance.

References

- Alford, J. (2009), *Engaging Public Sector Clients: From Service-Delivery to Co-Production*, Palgrave MacMillan, Basingstoke.
- Anderson, R.M. and Funnell, M.M. (2010), "Patient empowerment: myths and misconceptions", *Patient Education and Counseling*, Vol. 79 No. 3, pp. 277-282.
- Aubin, R. and Bornstein, L. (2012), "Montréal's municipal guidelines for participation and public hearings: assessing context, process and outcomes", *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp. 106-131.

- Bloom, G., Standing, H. and Lloyd, R. (2008), "Markets, information asymmetry and health care: towards new social contracts", *Social Science & Medicine*, Vol. 66 No. 10, pp. 2076-2087.
- Bopp, K.D. (2000), "Information services that make patients co-producers of quality health care", *Studies in Health Technology and Informatics*, Vol. 76, pp. 93-106.
- Bovaird, T. (2007), "Beyond engagement and participation: user and community coproduction of services", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 67 No. 5, pp. 846-860.
- Bovens, M. and Wille, A. (2011), *Diplomademocratie: Over de spanning tussen meritocratie en democratie*, Uitgeverij Bert Bakker, Amsterdam.
- Brandsen, T. and Helderma, J.K. (2012), "The conditions for successful co-production in housing: a case study of German housing cooperatives", in Pestoff, V., Brandsen, T. and Verschuere, B. (Eds), *New Public Governance, the Third Sector and Co-Production*, Routledge, New York, NY and London, pp. 169-191.
- Brandsen, T. and Honingh, M.E. (2016), "Distinguishing different types of co-production: a conceptual analysis based on the classical definitions", *Public Administration Review*, doi: 10.1111/puar.12465.
- Brudney, J.L. (1983), "The evaluation of coproduction programs", *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol. 12 No. 2, pp. 376-385.
- Budd, L. (2007), "Post-bureaucracy and reanimating public governance", *International Journal of Public Sector Management*, Vol. 20 No. 6, pp. 531-547.
- Castells, M. (2004), *The Network Society: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*, Edward Elgar, Northampton.
- Carman, K.L., Dardess, P., Maurer, M., Sofaer, S., Adams, K., Bechtel, C. and Sweeney, J. (2013), "Patient and family engagement: a framework for understanding the elements and developing interventions and policies", *Health Affairs*, Vol. 32 No. 2, pp. 223-231.
- Coulter, A. (2011), *Engaging Patients in Healthcare*, McGraw-Hill Education, New York, NY.
- Coulter, A. and Ellins, J. (2007), "Effectiveness of strategies for informing, educating, and involving patients", *British Medical Journal*, Vol. 335 No. 7609, pp. 24-27.
- Crump, J. (2011), "What are the police doing on Twitter? Social media, the police and the public", *Policy & Internet*, Vol. 3 No. 4, pp. 1-27.
- de Swaan, A. (1979), *Uitgaansbeperking en uitgaansangst. Over de verschuiving van bevelshuishouding naar onderhandelingshuishouding*, Oratie Universiteit van Amsterdam: De Gids/Meulenhoff.
- Djelic, M.L. (2010), "Institutional perspectives-working towards coherence or irreconcilable diversity", in Morgan, G., Campbell, J.L., Crouch, C., Pedersen, O.K. and Whitley, R. (Eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Institutional Analysis*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 15-40.
- Dunston, R., Lee, A., Boud, D., Brodie, P. and Chiarella, M. (2009), "Co-production and health system reform – from re-imagining to re-making", *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 68 No. 1, pp. 39-52.
- Fountain, J.E. (2001), *Building the Virtual State: Information Technology and Institutional Change*, Brookings Institution, Washington, DC.
- Freidson, E. (2001), *Professionalism: The Third Logic*, Polity, Cambridge.
- Fung, A. and Wright, E.O. (Eds) (2003), *Deepening Democracy: Institutional Innovations in Empowered Participatory Governance*, Verso, London.
- Garland, D. (2001), *The Culture of Control: Crime and Social Order in Contemporary Societies*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL.

- Gilbert, N. (2002), *Transformation in the Welfare State: The Silent Surrender of Public Responsibility*, Oxford University Press, New York, NY.
- Glynos, J. and Speed, E. (2012), "Varieties of co-production in public services: time banks in a UK health policy context", *Critical Policy Studies*, Vol. 6 No. 4, pp. 402-433.
- Hajema, L.H. (2001), "De glazenwassers van het bestuur", unpublished PhD thesis, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rotterdam.
- Hajer, M.A. and Wagenaar, H. (Eds) (2003), *Deliberative Policy Analysis: Understanding Governance in the Network Society*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.
- Harris, M.I., Cowie, C.C. and Howie, L.J. (1993), "Self-monitoring of blood glucose by adults with diabetes in the United States population", *Diabetes Care*, Vol. 16 No. 8, pp. 1116-1123.
- Heverin, T. and Zach, L. (2010), "Twitter for city police department information sharing", *Journal of the American Society for Information*, Vol. 47 No. 1, pp. 1-7.
- Hobbes, T. (1651), *Leviathan*.
- Hume, D. (1739), *A Treatise of Human Nature*.
- Jakobsen, M. and Andersen, S.C. (2013), "Coproduction and equity in public service delivery", *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 73 No. 5, pp. 704-713.
- Ling, R., Jihong, Z., Lovrich, N. and Gaffney, M. (2006), "Participation community crime prevention: who volunteers for police work?", *Policing*, Vol. 29, pp. 464-481.
- Locke, J. (1689), *Second Treatise on Government*.
- Lukes, S. (1974), *Power: A Radical View*, Macmillan Press, London.
- Mann, S., Nolan, J. and Wellman, B. (2003), "Sousveillance: inventing and using wearable computing devices for data collection in surveillance environments", *Surveillance & Society*, Vol. 1 No. 3, pp. 331-355.
- Manning, P.K. (2008), *The Technology of Policing: Crime Mapping, Information Technology and the Rationality of Crime Control*, New York University Press, New York, NY.
- Meijer, A.J. (2007), "Publishing public performance results on the internet: do stakeholders use the internet to hold Dutch public service organizations to account?", *Government Information Quarterly*, Vol. 24 No. 1, pp. 165-185.
- Meijer, A.J. (2014), "New media and the coproduction of safety: an empirical analysis of Dutch practices", *American Review of Public Administration*, Vol. 44 No. 1, pp. 17-34.
- Meijer, A. (2015), "Government transparency in historical perspective: from the ancient regime to open data in the Netherlands", *International Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. 38 No. 3, pp. 189-199.
- Michels, A. and Meijer, A. (2008), "Safeguarding public accountability in horizontal government", *Public Management Review*, Vol. 10 No. 2, pp. 165-173.
- Osborne, D. and Gaebler, T. (1992), *Reinventing Government: How the Entrepreneurial Spirit is Transforming the Public Sector*, Addison-Wesley, Reading, MA.
- Ostrom, E. (1978), "Citizen participation and policing: what do we know?", *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, Vol. 7 Nos 1-2, pp. 102-108.
- Osborne, S.P. (2006), "The new public governance", *Public Management Review*, Vol. 8 No. 3, pp. 377-387.
- Osborne, S.P. (Ed.) (2010), *The New Public Governance? Emerging Perspectives on the Theory and Practice of Public Governance*, Routledge, New York, NY.
- Ossewaarde, M.R. (2007), "The new social contract and the struggle for sovereignty in the Netherlands", *Government and Opposition*, Vol. 42 No. 4, pp. 491-512.

- Parks, R.B., Baker, P.C., Kiser, L., Oakerson, R., Ostrom, E., Ostrom, V. and Wilson, R. (1981), "Consumers as co-producers of public services: some economic and institutional considerations", *Policy Studies Journal*, Vol. 9 No. 7, pp. 1001-1011.
- Pestoff, V. (2006), "Citizens and co-production of welfare services: childcare in eight European countries", *Public Management Review*, Vol. 8 No. 4, pp. 503-519.
- Pestoff, V. (2012), "Co-production and third sector social services in Europe: some crucial conceptual issues", in Pestoff, V., Brandsen, T. and Verschuere, B. (Eds), *New Public Governance, the Third Sector and Co-Production*, Routledge, New York, NY, pp. 13-34.
- Pestoff, V., Brandsen, T. and Verschuere, B. (Eds) (2013), *New Public Governance, the Third Sector and Co-Production*, Routledge, New York, NY.
- Pierre, J. (Ed.) (2000), *Debating Governance: Authority, Steering, and Democracy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Pollitt, C. and Bouckaert, G. (2011), *Public Management Reform: A Comparative Analysis – New Public Management, Governance, and the Neo-Weberian State*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Radnor, A., Osborne, S.P., Kinder, T. and Mutton, J. (2014), "Operationalizing co-production in public services delivery: the contribution of service blueprinting", *Public Management Review*, Vol. 16 No. 3, pp. 402-423.
- Reiner, R. (2010), *The Politics of the Police*, 4th ed., Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Rhodes, R.A.W. (1997), *Understanding Governance: Policy Networks, Governance, Reflexivity and Accountability*, Open University Press, Buckingham.
- Rich, R.C. (1981), "The interaction of the voluntary and governmental sectors: toward an understanding of the co-production of municipal services", *Administration and Society*, Vol. 13 No. 1, pp. 59-76.
- Rousseau, J.J. (1762), *The Social Contract, or Principles of Political Right*.
- Scharpf, F. (1999), *Governing in Europe: Effective and Democratic?*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Schillemans, T. (2011), "Does horizontal accountability work?", *Administration and Society*, Vol. 43 No. 4, pp. 387-416.
- Stol, W.P. (1996), *Politie-optreden en informatietechnologie – Over Sociale Controle Van Politiemensen*, Koninklijke Vermande, Lelystad.
- Sundeen, R.A. and Siegel, G.B. (1986), "The uses of volunteers by police", *Journal of Police Science and Administration*, Vol. 14 No. 1, pp. 49-61.
- Thomsen, M. and Jakobsen, M. (2015), "Influencing citizen coproduction by sending encouragement and advice: a field experiment", *International Public Management Journal*, Vol. 18 No. 2, pp. 286-303.
- Torfiing, J. and Triantafillou, P. (2013), "What's in a name? Grasping new public governance as a political-administrative system", *International Review of Public Administration*, Vol. 18 No. 2, pp. 9-25.
- Torfiing, J.B., Peters, G., Pierre, J. and Sørensen, E. (2012), *Interactive Governance: Advancing the Paradigm*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- van Rossum, T.R. (2012), "Mag de buurt besturen? Een onderzoek naa de legitimiteit van het Rotterdamse veiligheidsproject Buurt Bestuurt", unpublished MSc thesis, Erasmus University Rotterdam, Rotterdam.
- Weber, M. (1922/1968), "Economy and society", in Ruth, G. and Wittich, C. (Eds), University of California Press, Berkeley, CA.
- Wellman, B. (2001), "Physical place and cyberspace: the rise of personalized networking", *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, Vol. 25 No. 2, pp. 227-252.

Wicks, P., Massagli, M., Frost, J., Brownstein, C., Okun, S., Vaughan, T. and Heywood, J. (2010), "Sharing health data for better outcomes on PatientsLikeMe", *Journal of Medical Internet Research*, Vol. 12 No. 2, p. e19.

Williams, B., LePere-Schloop, M., Silk, P. and Hebdon, A. (2016), "The co-production of campus safety and security: a case study at the University of Georgia", *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, Vol. 82 No. 1, pp. 1-21, doi: 10.1177/0020852315573157.

About the author

Albert Meijer is a Professor of Public Innovation at the Utrecht School of Governance in the Netherlands. His research focusses on e-government, government transparency, co-production in the public sector and public innovation. Albert Meijer can be contacted at: a.j.meijer@uu.nl