

Public collaborations and wicked issues

A study of collaboration structures in dealing with violence in
close relationships

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Abstract

To address wicked issues, public authorities depend on each other. Yet an ongoing trend within contemporary public administration has been to streamline and decentralize welfare service. Consequently, the need for public agencies to work through inter-organisational collaborations has increased. Substantial knowledge of how this works in practice is however lacking.

The aim of this thesis is to understand how public authorities collaborate in wicked policy issues. To achieve this, the thesis applies a theoretical framework of Social Network Analysis on a case of wicked policy issue, namely violence in close relationships in Sweden. A mixed method-approach is applied in which a quantitative survey-study is complemented by in-depth interviews.

A core-peripheral structure of collaboration is found, with certain actors being more central than others. Different actors possess advantages positions in somewhat varying way and the perception of influence in the collaboration structure varies depending on actors' positions within it. Resource exchange was found to have long-lasting implications on the prominence of actors. Smaller organisations, such as municipal actors, were identified as the most vulnerable actors within the collaboration structure, with some exceptions. As divisions in the collaboration structure was only identified through interviews, as such the study also points to the need for mixed methods when studying complex issues such as collaboration in wicked issues.

Key words: Public collaboration, Wicked issues, Mixed methods, Social Network Analysis, Violence in close relationships, Sweden

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1 Introduction

One fifth of the Swedish population will experience violence in close relationships during their lifetime (Frenzel, 2014). For women, self-reported experiences shows that one third to one fourth of Swedish women will be abused by their partner (NCK, 2016). This degree of exposure is in relative accordance with international studies which estimates that every third woman, globally, will experience violence in close relationships (WHO, 2017). For men, it has been estimated that around a sixth of the Swedish men will experienced violence in close relations during their lifetime (Frenzel, 2014). Though abuse against women in close relationships is more frequent, includes more forms of violence and more often sexual abuse as well as coarser forms of violence than violence against men. Criminal statistics from Sweden also show that the suspects of abuse are 80% of the time men and the suspect of sexual abuse are 97% of the time men (NCK, 2016). Put together, this produces a troublesome picture and an unreasonable situation for any society to accept – non the least for the Swedish society which is often considered to be a stronghold for gender equality.

The root cause of this problem is hard to pinpoint. Explanation models tend to emphasis masculinity norms, power dynamics, relationship issues and/or individual psychological factors (NKC, 2016). Explanations thus vary from individual characteristics of the perpetrator, to relational aspects and societal structures. Besides from having an unclear problem definition, many different societal actors are engaged in the policy area. In regulation from the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare¹, regarding violence in close relationships, responsibility is appointed to a variety of actors such as municipal councils for social welfare, social workers, health care professionals and dentistry (SOSFS 2014:4). On top of this, mappings of collaboration conducted by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions² (SKL) show empirical evidence for cooperation between municipal authorities and other public authorities such as law enforcement and correctional facilities, as well as civil society organisations such as shelters and helplines for battered women and victims of crime (Norén - Printz, 2016:29). The complexity of actors involved in the issue increases due to the streamlining of public authorities' responsibly in Sweden (Danermark and Kullberg, 2003:9). Different levels of government as well as different policy sectors are involved which in practice means that local, regional as well as national public authorities are involved in the issue of violence in close relationships.

Such societal problems, that are defined by social pluralism, institutional complexity and scientific uncertainty, can be conceptualized as wicked problems. These problems pose a hard challenge for traditional public administration to

¹ Swedish: Socialstyrelsen

² Swedish: Sveriges kommuner och landsting (SKL)

address. Wicked problems don't have a root cause nor a clear-cut solution. They engage many actors which perceive the problem from different perspectives and thus prescribes different solutions (Head – Alford, 2015).

To solve these problems public authorities often work together in different forms of collaboration to develop shared meaning and solutions (Head 2018; Læg Reid – Rykkja 2014). Collaboration between public authorities, municipalities and civil society is identified as a key success factor as it helps to create common knowledge, clear organizational boundaries of actions and responsibility when addressing violence in close relationships. In the best of cases, collaboration creates a better safety net for battered people (Norén - Printz, 2016:29f). This can be seen as part of a greater development in public administration, in which public agencies become more interdependent and an important aspect of public officials' job is to build "critical links" to other agencies (McGuire, 2006:34). Additionally, interdependencies in wicked societal issues cuts across jurisdictional boundaries which makes policy-formulation in one area interdependent of actions taken in other jurisdictions such as neighbouring municipalities and other levels of government (Hulst – van Montford, 2007:3).

Moreover, there has been a development within public administration from a centralized and hierarchic organisation to decentralization, specialization and streamlining of agencies. This has resulted in so called "siloization" of government authorities (Læg Reid – Rykkja, 2015), which has furthered the need for public authorities to work with each other across organisational boundaries. Thus, contemporary public administration relations seem to be characterized both by interdependencies, in dealing with wicked issues, and autonomy, as a result of streamlining of public agencies. This raises questions about how collaborative public administration work in practice.

1.1 Aim and research questions

To adequately address wicked issues, public authorities need to collaborate with each other, at the same time there has been a development of streamlining of public agencies which creates organisational boundaries between them. How does this interdependency and autonomy influence the relationship between public authorities? Are they able to find adequate working relations across organisational boundaries or have they developed parallel processes addressing wicked policy issues? The aim is to understand how public authorities collaborate in wicked policy issues – to understand the characteristics of public collaboration in these issues as well as to understand how public authorities perceive the collaborative relationships. Within this aim, the study will focus on public collaboration in Scania, Sweden, in regards to the wicked issue of violence in close relationships. The study will be guided by the following research questions:

- What characterize collaborative relationships between public authorities in Scania when working with violence in close relationships?
- How does the public officials working with violence in close relationships in Scania perceive the collaborative relationships between public authorities?

The first research question relates to the structure of collaboration – the actors involved and the relational ties between them. It's about who works with whom and aims to give an overview of established relationships between different public authorities as well as the potential lack of relational ties. The second question is about public officials' perceptions of the relationships – the “lived experience” of collaboration. Together, the hope is that the two questions will generate both an aggregated picture of public collaborations as well as an in-depth understanding of the meaning of those relations. Although focusing on one specific context the ambition is to generate more general knowledge which will aid research on public collaboration in wicked issues.

2 Previous research

There seems to be a general understanding that something has changed in public administration. The traditional organization of public authorities inspired by the Weberian bureaucracy ideal of hierarchy and delegation is no longer as prevalent as it once was. Researchers trying to account for the cause of this change generally fall into two lines of reasoning (see e.g. Klijn - Koppenjan 2016; Danermark – Kullberg 2003). First, there has been a change in the steering of public administration; from centralized agencies to decentralization, de-differentiated tasks and framework regulation. This has resulted in dispersed powers and a diverse society known to some as “an age of networks” (McGuire, 2006:34) and to others as “siloization” of public authorities (Lægreid – Rykkja, 2015:476). A second line of reasoning states that it’s the problems that the state is facing which have changed. New problems emerge that are intangible, open-ended and unpredictable (Head – Alford 2015), and which traditional bureaucracy can’t effectively address (McGuire, 2006). These are so-called wicked problems which are associated with social pluralism, institutional complexity and scientific uncertainty.

2.1 Wicked problems

Research on wicked problems have grown from a critique of so-called evidence-based policymaking. The main argument is that social issues, such as violence in close relationships, poverty or unemployment, is never based on unitary knowledge. The relevant knowledge for policymaking is always pluralistic and, ultimately, policymaking in social issues is characterized by divergent perspectives which are expressed, mobilized and occasionally reconciled (Head, 2018:2). In the 1970’s, Rittel and Webber (1973) made a strong contribution to the critique of central planning and established the concept of wickedness within policy studies.

In their original definition, Rittel and Webber (1973) characterizes wicked issues as problems which are unable to be clearly defined, which have enumerable sets of potential solutions and without any ends in its causal chain. These types of problems are unpredictable, open-ended, complex and intractable. There’s no root cause, and thus no single best approach (Head – Alford, 2015). They are unstructured and relentless, which makes it extremely difficult to determine mechanisms of causality. As wicked issues stretch over a multitude of subset problems that cuts across different policy domains (Weber – Khademan, 2008) the removal of one cause of the problem leads to the emergence of another

problem to which the previous problem was a “symptom” (Rittel – Webber, 1973:165). This implies that wicked problems are changeable and every given attempt to resolve them leads to the emergent of a new dimension of the problem.

Wicked issues involve a multitude of actors and diverse participants which makes information sharing between the actors complicated. Because the actors have different perceptions of the problem, information shared between them is likely to have different meaning, use and value depending on who’s accessing it. Each actor “know” the problem and perceive possible solutions from their perspective of the wicked issue (Weber – Kahdemian, 2008). As there is no “best solution” but only a multitude of provisional responses, policymakers are left with “attitudinal criteria” (Rittel – Webber, 1973:166) to guide their chose, i.e. they will advocate the solution which is most plausible in their opinion. This choice is likely to be guided by, and thus vary extensively depending on, actors’ values and ideological perspectives.

This general understanding of wicked problems has been criticized for being too generic and totalizing. Alford and Head (2017) argue that the framework evokes a concept of “success” that is impossible to achieve. The only way to “solve” such wicked issues is to address all aspects of the problem at the same time in a transformative response, which is not plausible to do. The standard for success is not only impossible to achieve but quite unnecessary, given that wicked issues aren’t solved but better managed (Head 2018). This does not however stand in conflict with the Rittel and Webber’s original argument that there’s no “best solution” to wicked issues, only provisional responses negotiated between stakeholders. This withstanding, Alford and Head (2017) provides a useful typology of wicked issues which situates and enables a deeper understanding of the specific type of wickedness and factors that underpins the problem type in question.

2.1.1 A typology of wicked problems

Alford and Head (2017) argues that wicked problems must be understood as a typology which varies in degree of difficulty and type of difficulty. Their matrix has two dimensions: (1) the problem itself and (2) the actors involved. The first dimension, the problem, can be understood in relation to a solution in three possible ways. First, the definition of the problem and the solution can be clear. These types of issues have elsewhere been called tame problems which could be solved by standardized solutions (Head – Alford, 2015). Tame issues don’t have to be easy to solve, they may require a number of experts and run into all kinds of difficulties. The main difference from the other problem types is that, in tame issues, the problems and solutions are known or knowable. It’s mostly a matter of finding, developing and applying adequate solutions. Secondly, the problem definition can be clear, but the solution is not and due to analytical or political complexities the solution is hard to find. Thirdly, neither the problem definition

nor the solution can be known. According to Alford and Head (2017) the first problem/solution-type is the least wicked and the third is the most.

The second dimension of Alford and Head’s typology (2017) are the actors involved. The central feature of the actors is their inclination to adequately address the issue. Their ability to do so depends on the distribution of knowledge – whether it’s fragmented among the actors or not. For involved stakeholders to identify who possess which knowledge and for actors to share knowledge takes time and effort. As such there’s a transaction cost in transferring knowledge. Secondly, stakeholders can have diverging and conflicting interests. Interest among stakeholders can also diverge or conflict within certain groups. This can resolve in a situation were certain actors, or group of actors, withhold information from others to favour their self-interest. This is of course also affected by the relative power of involved stakeholders. Given these factors, the actors involved can be characterized in three possible ways. Firstly, neither knowledge nor interest are dispersed and no stakeholder has a relative power advantage. Secondly, knowledge can be dispersed between various stakeholders but there’s a broad consensus regarding the problem and solution. Thirdly, both knowledge and interests can be dispersed among actors. The two dimensions of problems and actors in Alford and Head’s (2017) typology can be put together to represent a continuum of wickedness (see figure 2.1). In the bottom-left corner are the tame problems which are the least wicked. In contrast, located at the top-right corner are the most wicked problems the so called “very wicked problems”.

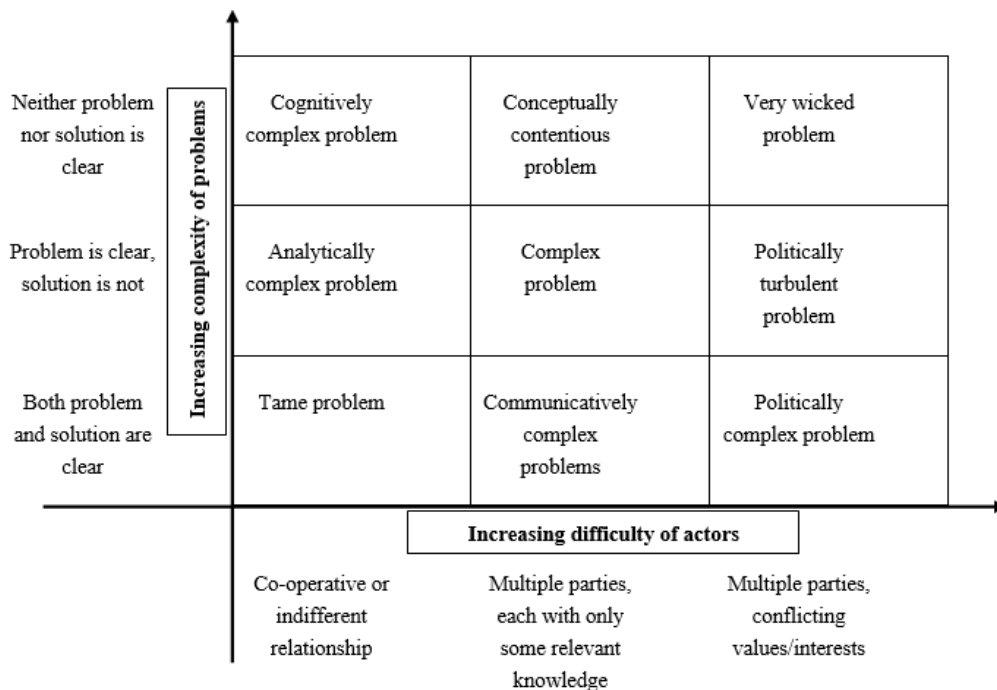


Figure 2.1. A continuum of wickedness
Rendered from Alford – Head 2017

The proposed typology of Alford and Head does not undermine the general assumptions and difficulties associated with wicked issues. It does however nuance our understanding and most importantly, it emphasises that wicked problems vary in both degree of difficulty and types of difficulties. This can be useful, not only for policymakers who are tasked with “solving” wicked issues, but for researchers trying to address the wickedness in societal issues.

2.1.2 The necessity of collaboration in wicked issues

Although wicked problems can't be solved once and for all there are various strategies that public authorities can try to manage wicked issues. Roberts (2000) proposes three coping strategies: authoritative, competitive and collaborative. However, when applying Alford and Head's continuum of wickedness it will become clear that for very wicked issues, collaboration is the only strategy which can mitigate the wickedness of such issues.

Roberts (2000), as Alford and Head, find the level of shared understanding of problems and solutions as well as the distribution of power to be important in understanding wicked issues, but adds whether power is contested or not to be important for the choice of strategy. Authoritative or taming strategies assigns responsibility to a few stakeholders. These appointed stakeholders have the authority to define the problem and to find a solution, whereas the rest must obey. These actors are generally considered to be experts in the area (Roberts, 2000). Experts can however be wrong, especially in wicked issues as they are inherently contested issues. Moreover, this strategy relies upon strong leaders and a high degree of decisiveness (Alford – Head, 2017), which conflicts with the notion of very wicked issues as too complex for one (or a few) actor to comprehend. As such, it's an insufficient strategy for wicked issues.

Roberts' (2000) second strategy, competition, has a long history of being applied to resolve unclear situations. Central to this strategy is a win-lose mind-set and search for power. This strategy can facilitate innovation and induce new ideas. It also has the potential to keep power circulating among stakeholders and thus avoid the institutionalization of power. However, the risk is that competition among actors lead to power advantages for some actors, which centralizes power. Actors can then “tame” the wicked issues and move from a competing to an authoritative strategy. Another risk is that an increase in conflict consumes resources and delays solutions (Alford – Head, 2017). Moreover, there's also the risk of gridlocks among stakeholders which would block provisional solutions.

In contrast to the competitive strategy, the third strategy – collaboration - assumes a win-win mind-set. Collaboration can take many forms such as partnerships or joint ventures, but the common denominator is that the benefits and costs are shared among stakeholders. To collaborate takes time and effort and it's, as previously mentioned, associated with transaction costs. The benefit of synergies between actors becomes harder to achieve as the number of participants increase. This withstanding, the choice of strategy depends on the level of conflict and power dispersion (Roberts, 2000). If there's a conflict over the problem

definition and the solution as well as dispersed power among stakeholders, which is the case for wicked issues, then collaboration should be selected. To mitigate wickedness collaboration between public authorities is necessary. Nevertheless, Roberts (2000) argues that all other strategies have to fail before actors turn to collaboration. Actors must learn what doesn't work, see the shortcomings of the authoritative and competitive strategies, before they engage in collaboration.

2.2 Public collaboration

Collaborations between public authorities can take many forms. Some scholars talk about cooperation, coordination or joint ventures (e.g. Lægreid – Rykkja 2015; Kettl 2008), whereas others focus on public governance through networks (e.g. Sørensen – Torfing 2007; Klijn - Koppenjan 2016). Although closely related, there are small nuances between these concepts and the relationship between them. In cooperation, coordination is a process which facilitates cooperation. In effective collaborations, coordination is the outcome (Lægreid – Rykkja, 2014:7). In itself, coordination is a purposeful alignment of tasks and efforts between actors to achieve a defined goal (Verhoest – Bouckaert, 2005). Collaboration, on the other hand, works in an interactive and cyclical manner. It should be understood as a non-linear process which evolves over time as actors interact with each other (Thomson – Perry, 2006:22). It's a process between autonomous or semi-autonomous organisations who establish rules and structures through formal and informal negotiations, which defines their relationship and the ways they address the issue that brought them together (Thomson et al., 2009:25). As such, public collaboration is a process in which cooperation and/or coordination is negotiated between public authorities in relation to actions in a given policy area.

2.2.1 Dimensions and drivers of collaboration

Thomson et al (2009) emphasises the multidimensionality of the collaboration process. To collaborate, actors need to develop working rules about what's to be done, who's eligible to do it and the constraints of action. As such mutuality and norms are essential social capital dimensions of collaboration. They emphasise interdependency and the necessity of developing trust between the collaborating actors. Due to tensions created by organisational autonomy, participating actors are likely to feel divided between the accountability to their home organisation and the demands of their collaborative partners. Essential for collaborative partners is to find a balance in the collaboration process which can be done through continuous negotiations (Thomson – Perry, 2006:24). This conceptualization of collaboration is mostly based on the notion of rational actors and game theory. The emphasis lies on self-interest, cost and benefits calculations and reciprocity as a mediator for collective action.

Another way to explain collaboration is to emphasize essential drivers without which collaboration would never take place. Emerson et al. (2011) identifies four drivers of collaboration: leadership, consequential incentives, interdependence and uncertainty. The first essential driver is the need for an identifiable leader who can gather support and resources for the collaboration. In general, collaboration structures tend to be less hierarchical and stable than traditional bureaucratic arrangements and more characterized by complexity and fluidity (ibid.). There is however a vast literature, in governance management-research non the least, which emphasises the need for a leader or lead organisation for effective collaboration (see e.g. McGuire 2006; McGuire – Agranoff 2011).

A second driver for collaboration is consequential incentives (Emersson et al., 2011). The incentives are consequential in the sense that they create salience for the issue and/or time pressure for actions. The incentives could be internal to the collaboration network or external in form of e.g. situational or institutional crisis. These incentives can be both negative and positive. Emerson et al. (2011:9) points to the availability of grants and funding as a positive consequential incentive that drives collaboration. Such consequential incentives have a close resemblance to Kingdon's (2010) policy windows which explains the occurrence of a certain policy at a given moment in time.

Interdependencies, which is the third driver for collaboration (Emerson et al., 2011), implicates that actors who cannot accomplish something on their own are more likely to collaborate. This form of interdependency is an inherent characteristic of actors in wicked issues (see previous section). Interestingly, participation in collaborations between autonomous or semi-autonomous actors need to be voluntary and, due to their autonomy, the feasibility of implementing traditional coordination mechanism such as hierarchy is low (Thomson et al., 2009:26). At the same time collaboration often forms around issues where actors are interdependent of each other and unable to solve the issue on their own (Thomson – Perry, 2006:26), which essentially questions the voluntariness of collaboration. In relation to collaboration in wicked issues, voluntariness is therefore best understood as the lack of an overarching mandate or organisation which can command collaboration. Public organisations are thus free to abstain from collaboration, but given the nature of wicked issues they will be less adequate to deal with them if they do so. Fourthly, uncertainty drives collaboration if it cannot be internally resolved by any one actor. This is related to the interdependencies between the involved stakeholders (Emerson et al. 2011) as well as the wickedness of the issue.

To initiate collaboration one or more of these drivers of change must be present. The more drivers that are present in any given situation, the more likely actors are to collaborate with each other. In the initial face, these drivers direct the collaboration between actors but overtime other factor such as the actions taken and the dynamics within the collaboration becomes more directional (Emerson et al., 2011).

2.3 Wickedness and collaboration

As shown by previous studies, wicked problems create interdependencies between public authorities. These problems are constantly changing, and new dimensions of the problem emerges as attempts are made to solve the issue. Wicked problems can vary both in degree of difficulty and type of difficulty, which can be defined through the two dimensions of problem and actors involved. To understand the actors involved, it's interesting to look at the distribution of knowledge as an indicator of their ability to adequately address the issue (Alford – Head, 2017). Other factors of importance are whether or not their interests are conflicting or diverging and the power relations between them (Roberts, 2000). As wicked issues engage a multitude of actors, information shared between actors are likely to be interpreted differently by different actors in terms of meaning, use and value of that information.

When it comes to strategies for dealing with wicked issues, many authors argue for an increased need for public authorities to collaborate. Some even go as far as to call it essential to service delivery in the modern welfare state (Danermark – Kullberg, 2003). As collaboration is closely associated with transaction costs, other strategies such as competition or authoritative strategy can be more appealing, but they are inadequate to mitigate wickedness. Contrarily, collaboration in wicked issues - when working effectively - mitigates wickedness in three ways: (1) Effective collaboration helps to develop a better understanding of the nature of the problem. (2) Effective collaboration helps actors to find provisional solutions, and (3) effective collaboration facilitates the implementation of solutions (Head – Alford, 2015:725ff). Finally, it stands clear that the highest cost of collaboration is not monetary, but the amount of time and energy required (Thomson – Perry, 2006:28).

To collaborate, it's essential for public authorities to find a balance in the multidimensions of the collaboration process (Thomson et al., 2009). These dimensions are partially structural in regard to developing working rules and define membership as well as the constraints of collaboration. Social capital is essential in collaboration and defined by trust between participants. Lastly, there's an inherent conflict in between organisational self-interest and the interest of the collaborating parties. The balance between these multidimensions of collaboration is said to be found through continuous negotiations between stakeholders.

Research on balancing the multidimensional collaboration process gives insights into the workings of actual collaboration. It provides an understanding of essential factors to maintain and succeed in collaboration. In contrast to this, the four drivers of collaboration as identified by Emerson et al. (2011) provides insights as to what might initiate collaboration such as strong leadership, consequential incentives, interdependencies between actors or uncertainty. The more of these drivers that are present, the likelier collaboration is said to be. Interestingly, some of these drivers overlap with the defining characteristics of wicked issues. Accordingly, it could be stated that when a wicked issue lies at hand – an issue characterised by interdependencies and uncertainty - it's likely to

drive public authorities into collaborative relationships. When working effectively, the established collaboration mitigates the wickedness of the issue.

Previous research has provided an understanding of the essential characteristics of wickedness and public collaboration as well as the relationship between the two. As such, it can provide explanations for why public authorities choose to collaborate in wicked issues such as violence in close relationships. It has however been shown that there's a need to further investigate the particular relationships between actors in collaborations, as it can vary between contexts (Sowa, 2008). In essence, there are no satisfactory answers to how public authorities collaborate with each other when dealing with wicked issues and the remains of this study will aim to explore this issue further.

3 Violence in close relationships and public collaboration in Sweden

Public administration in Sweden is characterized by a culture of cooperation, consensus seeking and pragmatism. As the Swedish state is highly decentralized, a considerable amount of responsibility lies on local authorities (Bouckeart et al., 2010:132). On the municipal level, public collaboration has been driven by factor such as strive for economic development, cost efficiency and to increase administration capacity. All 290 municipalities collaborate, in some form, with at least one other municipality (Montin – Granberg, 2007). Some even go as far as to call collaboration - *samverkan* in Swedish - an institutionalized norm in Swedish municipalities (Andersson – Hedlund, 2014:69). Since the 1990's, partly driven by the country's entry into EU and thus eligibility for EU cohesion funds, more complex forms of collaboration between different levels of government has emerged in Sweden (Bouckeart et al., 2010:145).

The increased need for collaboration in Sweden goes hand-in-hand with previously mentioned trends of siloization and decentralization. Commonly, the government initiates policy programs and action plans, and then delegates the implementation task to specialized authorities, organisations or local administrations. Looser forms of collaboration such as projects and networks are more common than more formal collaborations such as colocation of services or collaboration agreements (Gossas, 2006:23). Given that the municipal act recently was adjusted in order to facilitate inter-municipal (and regional) collaboration agreements³ (Prop. 2017/18:151), more formal forms of collaboration might become more common as a consequence.

3.1 Defining violence in close relationships

Violence in close relationships includes any form of violence that is exercised within a close relationship. Most commonly associated with violence is physical violence, such as punches and kicks, but there are multiple forms of violence. Phycological violence, such as psychological abuse, exercising control over someone's behaviour, isolation etc., is the most common form of violence in close relationships. Sexual violence incorporates amongst other things unwanted touches, forced sexual performance or taping/photographing. There's also

³ Swedish: Avtalssamverkan

economic or material violence, including actions such as economic control and material damages. Lastly, neglect is a form of violence in the sense that someone is denied proper care or medication (NCK, 2016).

Violence in close relationships is exercised in close relations - between partners, lovers, siblings or other family members in heterosexual as well as homo- and transsexual relationships. It can also include caretakers to people with disabilities. It's narrower than the concept of men's violence against women, which also incorporates forms of abuse which isn't exercised within a close relation, such as sexual harassment in the streets. Honour related violence, which is a form of violence that is collectively exercised, is also a type of men's violence against women but some of its characteristics differ from violence in close relationships (NCK, 2016). Therefore, this thesis will exclude honour related violence from its focus.

A challenge for policy-makers and others trying to work against violence in close relationships, is that the policy field is a "discursive battlefield" (Andersson – Hedlund, 2014:61) centring around issues of power and gender. This conflict relates to the problem/solution-formulation as to whether or not the problem is an individual or a structural one. That is; is violence in close relationships caused by individual characteristics of the perpetrator or caused by a larger social structure which suppress women? As it is not in the scope of this thesis to explore causality mechanisms of violence in close relationships, it suffices to state that there is a conflict regarding this policy issue. As is common for wicked issues, different actors emphasise different aspects of the problem and thus prescribes different solutions.

3.2 Public responsibility and involved actors

Although there have been laws in Sweden regulating violence against women since the 13th century, it was as late as the 1990's until the issue was increasingly addressed. Initially, violence against women fell under property regulation and the injured party in such cases was not the women themselves but their father or husband. It wasn't until 1884 that violence in close relationships – in this case husbands' violence against their wives – was criminalized (Eliasson – Ellgrim, 2006:11ff). Albeit a long time ago, it has been a tedious process to redefine the issue from as belonging to private domain of the household to a public responsibility.

During the 1990's, major reforms was undertaken regarding violence in close relationships in Sweden. In 1998 *Kvinnofridsreformen* was passed, which was a large reform package related to men's violence against women. The reform broadened the crime of rape to include more forms of sexual actions and criminalized the purchase of sex. A new form of crime in relation to violence in close relationships was also introduced in the reform, which took into account repeated and continuous violence (Eliasson – Ellgrim, 2006). Furthermore, the government decided to formulate the criminal act in gender neutral terms but

include a second paragraph which incorporated the gendered aspect of men's violence against women (Brandt – Wilén, 2019:3).

As the use of violence in close relationships is a criminal act, the police are obligated to intervene and e.g. arrest the violent part as well as offer support to the injured party. After the initial intervention by the police, the court and prosecution services are involved in convicting the perpetrators whereas the municipalities are responsible for the one exposed to violence. As the regional authorities are responsible for healthcare in Sweden, they are often the first public authority in contact with victims of abuse (Eliasson – Ellgrim, 2006:81ff).

The County Administrative boards⁴ in Sweden are responsible for fortifying the implementation of the national strategy against men's violence against women in the Swedish regions. Foremost, they work with strengthening and coordinating actions, providing methods and knowledge to other actors in the region. The County Administrative board are in charge of different networks and offer training related to violence in close relationships and other equality issues (Länsstyrelsen Skåne, 2019).

The Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) is an employers' organisation as well as an organisation that represents and advocates for municipal and regional authorities in Sweden. All municipalities, regional authorities and County Administrative boards are members of SKL (SKL, 2019) and they can turn to SKL for advice and training in relation to violence in close relationships (Olgun - Norén, 2018). SKL also advocate on a national level for increased resources and have been tasked by the Swedish government to strengthen actions initiated by public authorities against violence in close relationships between 2018 and 2020. To achieve this, actors within the counties can apply for funding from SKL to establish a so called regional collaboration and support structure (Nordenmark – Norén, 2019), which means that an organisation will receive project funding to strengthen collaboration between municipal, regional and national actors in their county.

In Scania, which is the selected case for this study (see section 5.1), the responsibility for the regional collaboration and support structure has been assigned to Skåne Association of Local Authorities⁵. The association is not a public organisation per say, but it's a "lead organisation" for the 33 municipalities in the region (Nurmi, 2015). The municipalities of Scania are all members of the organisation and all board positions are held by local politicians. The Association of Local Authorities represents the municipalities' interest in multiple issues towards the County Administrative board, the regional authorities and in Brussels. They are active in policy issues varying from energy to education and culture, and are especially tasked to increase and facilitate collaborations between its members.

The municipalities have the ultimate responsibility to provide support to individual citizens and a particular responsibility for victims of crime and their

⁴ Swedish: Länsstyrelse

⁵ Swedish: Kommunförbundet Skåne (KFSK)

close ones (NCK, 2016). The social service, which is a department within the municipalities, had their national regulations updated in 2007 to specifically name the municipalities as the foremost responsible actor (Andersson – Hedlund, 2014). Moreover, these national regulations, as formulated by the National Board of Health and Welfare, prescribes the social services to offer services such as counselling and assisting with housing and parenting issues as well as assist the once exposed to violence in their contact with other public authorities and non-profit organisations. Healthcare services and dentistry, which are run by the regional authorities, are obliged to have routines for asking questions to detect victims of violence in close relationships and children who have witness violence (SOSFS 2014:4).

In Malmö, the most populated municipality in the region (Karlsson – Lindell, 2019), there's a regional competence centre for violence in close relationships⁶ for training and method development for public officials. The centre is run in collaboration between the city of Malmö and the County Administrative board, but all municipalities in the county can receive training from the competence centre. Currently, 18 municipalities have signed collaboration contracts with the centre (Kompetenscentrum, 2019).

Children and adolescent also have relationships and can become victims of violence in close relationships. For children who witness abuse between parents, the long-term effects are the same as if the child themselves were abused (NCK, 2016). As the school system is very central in children's lives, they can also be considered to be a public authority with a responsibility to address the issue. In regulations from the Swedish National Agency for Education⁷, schools are obliged to file a notification of concern to the social services if they suspect that a child below the age of 18 is maltreated (Skolverket, 2019). Moreover, all schools who target minors are obliged to have a student's health service, dedicated to the well-being of their student (SFS 2018:1368 26 §).

Apart from public actors, there's a strong commitment from non-profit shelters and helplines. Often they are in the forefront of both helping those exposed to violence and drivers of knowledge (Eliasson – Ellgrim, 2016:72). There are about 200 shelters for women and children in Sweden (NCK, 2019). Although the shelters are independent organisations, most of them are part of one of the two large umbrella organisations for women and children shelters in Sweden; ROKS and Unizon which have about 100 and 130 members respectively (ROKS 2019; Unizon 2014). As previously mentioned, the ultimate responsibility for those exposed to violence lies on the municipalities, but many of them have no shelters for those who escape a violent relationship. Instead many municipalities use the shelters offered by non-profit actors. Of all shelters in Sweden, 71% are run by non-profits, 21% by municipalities and a small part, 8%, are run by private actors (Socialstyrelsen, 2013). Although the focus of this thesis lies on public authorities and the independencies and autonomies between them, the prominent

⁶ Swedish: Kompetenscentrum mot våld i nära relation

⁷ Swedish: Skolverket

position of non-profit organisations in this specific wicked issue makes it necessary to include them in the analysis.

3.2.1 Collaborations and violence in close relationships as a wicked issue

The social services and healthcare services are obliged to coordinate their actions in individual cases through so called coordinated individual plans⁸ (SOSFS 2014:4) and efforts are made between these actors to collaborate and to coordinate actions (Eliasson – Ellgrim, 2006). On a more general level, though, it has been shown that public collaboration between these authorities is flawed. There's a lack of routines for collaboration between organisations. This entails that individuals seeking help risk disappearing in the organisational vacuum and in-between of public authorities (IVO, 2019). Violence in close relationships can escalate to the point that the abused is killed. Last year, 2018, 26 people were killed by a partner in Sweden – 22 women and 4 men – which is an increase since last year when 11 people were killed – 10 women, 1 man (BRÅ, 2019). When investigating such incidents of death, the National Board of Health and Welfare found that the occurrence of violence within the relationships was known by multiple authorities and that there was a lack of collaboration, both internally and externally, in public administrations' attempts to work against the violence (Socialstyrelsen, 2014). This further emphasise the centrality for collaboration in this specific wicked issue of violence in close relationships.

This chapter has provided some basic knowledge about the issue of violence in close relationships and showed that the policy area is characterized by a lack of clear problem-solution-formulation and conflicting perspectives. Moreover, the overview of involved actors indicates the institutional complexity of the policy issue. Referring back to Alford and Head's typology of wicked problems (2017) and Figure 2.1, the current chapter has made it possible to say something more specific about the two dimensions of wickedness in this policy issue; namely the problem itself and the actors involved. As such this chapter can be concluded by stating that violence in close relationships is a "Very wicked problem", in the top right corner of Figure 2.1. In the next chapter, a theoretical framework will be developed which provides tools for reaching the purpose of this study.

⁸ Swedish: Samordnad individuell plan (SIP)

4 Social Network Analysis

Social Network Analysis (SNA) is a useful framework to model relationships in a system of actors. It provides key concepts to describe and measure the structure of relations between actors. A social network is conceptualized as a set of relevant actors (nodes) connected by one or more relational ties (Marin – Wellman, 2016). The relational ties, or linkages, are channels through which resources are transferred (Wasserman - Faust, 1994). These flows can be based on transfer of resources, information or influence. The unit of analysis is the pattern of relations between actors (Marin – Wellman, 2016) which makes it well suited for analysis such as this thesis where linkages between actors are of central concern (Lewis – Chatzopoulou, 2015:171). SNA provides ideal types of network structures which will be used to characterize the relationship between different public authorities when working with wicked issues. The relationship between actors, although facilitating some interactions, constrain others (Ernstson – Sörlin – Elmqvist, 2008) and as such it has implications for what kind of collaboration that's possible.

An underlying assumption is that, although actors have agency in the sense that they make and enact social structures, the choices they make are strongly influenced by their position in these structures. Although based on quite simple ideas, SNA has been shown powerful and insightful in explaining both the behaviour of individual actors as well as the behaviour of the whole structure of actors (Hanneman – Riddle 2016; Ernstson – Sörlin – Elmqvist 2008:39). As this thesis aims to understand inter-organisational collaborations between public authorities, core concepts from SNA will be used to guide the analysis. As it covers the general recommendations in the field, the framework is derived from Hanneman and Riddle's (2016) conceptualisation of core concepts and measures for basic network analysis in the SAGE Handbook of Social Network Analysis, if nothing else is clearly indicated.

4.1 Actors and ties

Nodes, or actors, within a social network can be any type of unit that's connectable to other units, most commonly though nodes are individuals or organisations. For the purpose of this study, the actors are public authorities, such as the County Administrative board or departments within public authorities such as municipal department for social welfare. To characterize relationships between actors, the size of the relations is important to consider since actors have limited resources and capacities for building and maintaining relationships. The size of a collaboration structure is most easily recognised by counting the number of nodes that are connected in a collaboration structure. Another measurement of interest is the density of a social structure, which is the proportion of actual ties in relation to all possible ties. This measurement can be calculated for the entire network

structure or for individual nodes. With directed ties (see below), one can differentiate between a node's indegree and outdegree density – i.e. the density of ties *connecting to* the node and the density of the ties *originating from* the node.

Connectivity between actors indicates dependencies and vulnerability of actors and therefore it's a relevant measure to include when characterizing collaborative relationships. It points to the number of ties - the connections - an actor has to a collaboration structure. As a concept, connectivity is measured by the number of relational linkages that would have to be removed for an actor to be unreachable or dis-connected from the others in the collaboration structure.

Marin and Wellman (2016) differentiates between directed and undirected ties as well as between binary and valued ties. Directed ties have a direction in the relationship between nodes, such as advice seeking or information sharing. They are directional in the sense that they originate *from* one actor and goes *to* another. Some directed ties can be reciprocated (e.g. information can be shared in both directions), but others, such as authoritative ties, can't be reciprocated. In contrast to directed ties, Marin and Wellman (2016) states that undirected ties lack any particular direction, such as co-ownership of a project. Directed and undirected ties can be measured either as binary or valued. Valued ties can be stronger or weaker as well as more or less frequent, whereas binary ties either exist or they don't.

One can differentiate between actors in a collaboration structure based on the attributes they possess. Such attributes can be based on different administrative levels of government such as state or regional authorities. Another form of differentiation can be based on authorities of the same administrative level but of different types, such as municipal social services and student health services. Within this thesis, the actors can be differentiated based on attributes such as national, regional or municipal authorities. Some of the actors are neither of these, as such they will be defined as "others", e.g. women shelters or the Association of Local Authorities. Actors can also be differentiated based on which type of departments within the organisations that they represent. This is a form of categorization of the actors involved based on attributes that they possess. Actors with similar attributes tends to possess similar position in a social structure. According to the SNA-framework the similarity between actors is caused by their perceptions, constraints and opportunities being shaped by their position in the social structure (Marin and Wellman, 2016). This means that measurements such as size and density, although providing an overview of the collaboration structure, is less important than understanding the patterns of relationships between actors – i.e. the social structure of collaboration.

4.2 Social structure and positional power

Interactions tend to follow fairly stable structures. Patterns of interaction thus tend to form around "local neighbourhoods" and relational ties tend to cluster (Hannemann – Riddle, 2016:26). This can be deduced from the previously

mentioned fact that we lack cognitive abilities to sustain an infinite number of relations as well as lack of time and resources. Moreover, relational ties are associated with transaction costs which are higher for establishing new relationships than maintaining old ones. As such, relational ties tend to be institutionalised between actors.

Relationships between organisation can be quite different in form. A relationship can be in the form of information sharing or joint-initiatives such as joint projects or joint declarations of intent. When studying inter-organisational relations, Knoke (2016) argues that there are different types of relationships that need to be considered. Organisations can exchange resources between each other which can of course be of both monetary and non-monetary form. Information sharing can also be one important aspect of inter-organisational relations. It's also important to consider power relations between organisations, which will be further developed later in this section in regards to positional power. There could also be boundary penetration between actors, i.e. coordination of actions in order to achieve a common goal. Lastly, organisations can have sentimental attachments. Knoke's typology is useful to understand the flow between actors – the “content” of relations if you so will – but it says less about the structure of relations. To fully understand what characterizes public inter-organisational collaborations in wicked issues, more than considering the content of interaction, the structure of collaboration needs to be understood.

Ideal types are commonly used to establish a framework or criteria against which empiric phenomenon can be measured and categorized (Teorell – Svensson, 2007:42). The different types of network structures that Hanneman and Riddle (2016) mentions can be used as such ideal types against which the structure of collaboration will be categorized (see Figure 4.1 below). If all nodes in a collaboration structure have relational ties to every other node the collaboration structure is known as a clique. In a clique all actors are directly connected to each other and every actor can reach one another without the assistance of a third actor. In an ideal clique network, the density of the social structure would be equal to one. In contrast, a star network represents maximum inequality as one actor is central and everyone else is peripheral. No actor, except one central node, can reach another without the connection being mediated through the one central node. Consequently, one would expect to find a single actor with a high betweenness centrality (see definition below), and all other nodes would have a betweenness centrality equal to zero. Somewhat related to the star-network is the idea of core and periphery in collaboration structures. The two ideals build on similar ideas of groups of actors based on the structure of relational ties. In core-periphery-models there's a high density of relational ties in the centre – among core members – and less density in the periphery. Between the core and periphery some relational ties exist. i.e. it's not a question of division into subgroups.

Nevertheless, collaboration structures can contain divisions between actors or groups of actors and it's therefore important to also incorporate ideal types that can define these divisions or “weak spots”, as Hanneman and Riddle (2016) calls them. Subgroups of collaboration structures can be connected within groups but

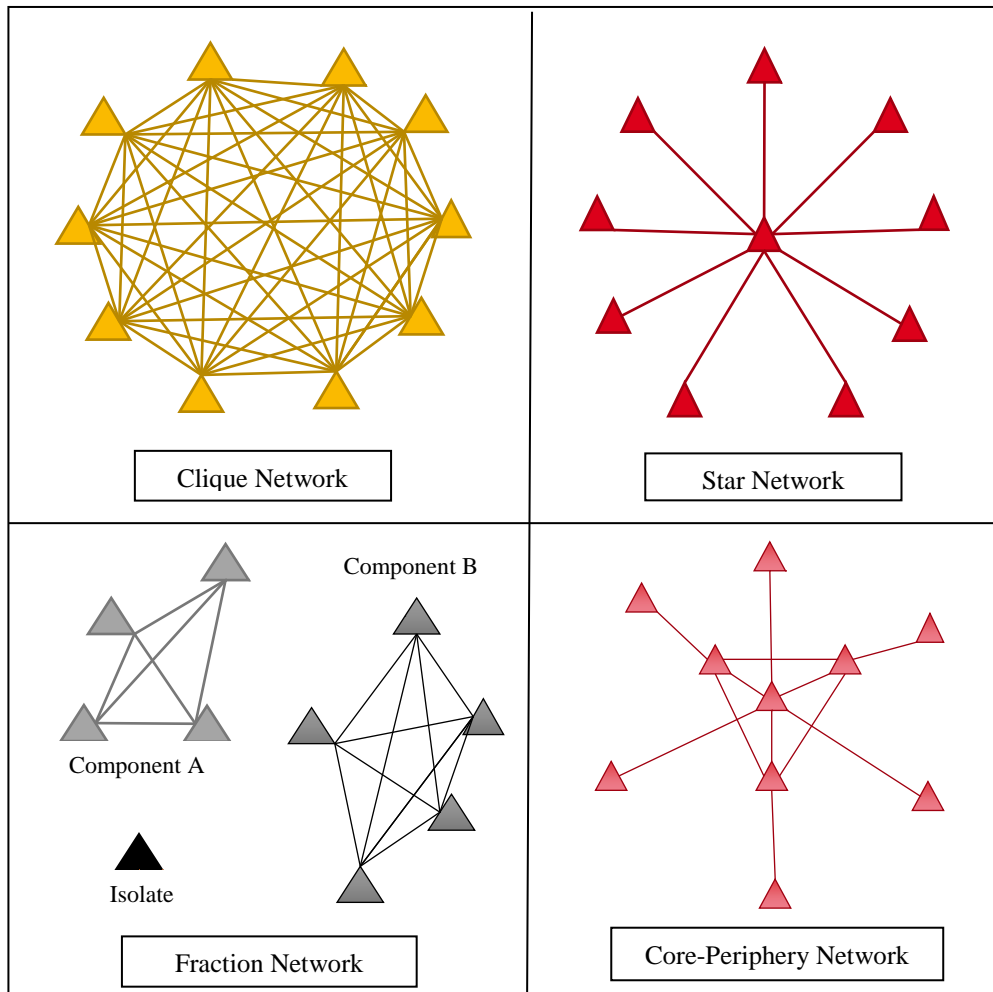


Figure 4.1. Network Structure Ideal Types

disconnected between other nodes. Disconnected nodes can be understood as isolates, and if a collaboration structure contains subgroups of isolates which are connected within the subgroup but not between groups these subgroups are known as components of the collaboration structure. In its most extreme form, this is known as a fraction network where nodes have all possible ties within their subgroup, but no relations whatsoever exist between subgroups. This can be understood as a collection of isolated cliques within one social structure.

A fundamental assumption within SNA is that different social structures can enable and constrain action (Ernstson – Sörlin – Elmqvist, 2008). More than just enabling or constraining action for the whole structure of actors, social structures also have implications for individual actors. Actors within a collaboration structure can have favoured positions which enables them to have greater influence, a better bargaining position or entail attention from other actors (Hanneman – Riddle, 2016). To be able to identify which actors that possess positional power, two measures are commonly applied: In-degree centrality and betweenness centrality (Lewis – Chatzopoulou, 2015:172). In-degree centrality is the extent to which an actor is perceived by others as being in a position of power. Although being derived from SNA-theoretical concepts, it's very much the same notion of power as Dahl (1961) once measured in New Haven when asking “Who

Governs?’. In such a notion of power, actor’s perceptions of other actors in the social structure of collaboration are to be understood as a source of positional power and an indicator of influence.

The other measure of positional power, betweenness centrality, indicates strategic importance of actors. An actor with high degree of betweenness has the potential to connect nodes that would otherwise not be connected (Lewis – Chatzopoulou, 2015:172). Furthermore, positional power of actors can be understood in three ways (Hanneman – Riddle, 2016). Firstly, an actor that has more ties can be more influential. Interestingly, actors who have many ties can actually lose freedom to act as well as gaining it. If the other nodes, to which an actor is linked, have strong relational ties to each other, the actor may actually have less freedom to act than an actor with fewer ties but with connections that are less interrelated. This points to the fact that influence is also about having the right ties and not just about the number of ties. Secondly, actors that are “close” to many actors, i.e. can reach many nodes with little effort, occupies an advantageous position. Thirdly, an actor that bridges gaps between nodes have an advantage.

To understand positional power of actors, one can also differentiate between power and influence. An actor can be close to many actors, which in turn have a high degree of connections to other actors. Such an actor has the potential to reach more people than an actor who is close to actors which lack connections. Which of these two actors have the most positional power? Being able to reach many actors can grant a lot of influence, but if these actors have multiple other connections then they’re not dependent upon one actor, which makes the first actor less powerful. In contrast, the second actor can reach fewer actors, but the ones that are reached are highly dependent upon this actor as it is their only connection. This grants the actor a lot of power, but less influence as the number of actors reached are fewer (Hanneman – Riddle, 2016). As such, the positional power of an actor does not only depend on the individual actor’s relational ties, but the relations of other actors and the whole relational structure between all actors. Intrinsically, the social structure of collaboration is key in understanding positional power.

5 Methodological considerations in a mixed method approach

Mixed methods research is defined as research which integrates quantitative and qualitative viewpoints in research questions, research design, analysis or results to gain a deeper understanding and validation of social phenomena (see e.g. Johnson – Onwuegbuzie – Turner, 2007 or Pluye – Nah Hong, 2014). Mixed methods can be used to combine the strengths of quantitative and qualitative methods as well as to compensate for their limitations (Pluye – Nah Hong, 2014:30). The approach can be useful in providing richer data and used with the purpose to develop a better understanding (Johnson – Onwuegbuzie – Turner, 2007:115) of public collaborations in wicked issues. When studying networks such as i.e. the network of relations between public authorities, the use of mixed methods is helpful to produce both “an outside view of network structure [and] to add an inside view of the content quality and meaning of network ties” (Lewis, 2011:1229). As the research questions in this thesis concerns both the structure of relation as well as the meaning of the network ties, one methodological approach will not be enough - it’s essential for the study to mix methods.

Thus, this thesis will use both quantitative survey method and qualitative interview method to gain an understanding of how public authorities collaborate in wicked policy issues. Multiple data types in one study can be seen as complementary or confirmatory of each other (Small, 2011:64). In this study there will be a dual function to mixing methods. First, the results from the survey will be used in the methodological design of the interviews as it will be used to sample interviewees. This is a form of sequencing (see Johnson – Onwuegbuzie – Turner, 2007:115). Secondly, the interviews will add context to the results from the survey as it will generate a deeper understanding of the sense-making of the relational structure. Thus, there will also be a complementary function of the dual data types. The use of multiple data types as a form of triangulation which strengthens the validity of the research (Bailey, 2018:144ff). Moreover, it provides a comprehensiveness that aids the research of complex study objects (Small, 2011:69), such as a public collaboration in wicked issues.

5.1 Case selection

The study investigates public collaborations regarding violence in close relationships as a case of public collaborations in wicked issues. Violence in close relationships is considered a typical case of a wicked issue as it’s not essentially

different from any other wicked issue. The case specifics are unique in its two dimensions of wicked problem, namely the problem formulations and the actors involved. That is to say that the specific actors and problem formulations involved in this issue is not the same as, say, within gang related violence or youth unemployment. This has to do with the unique nature of every wicked problem (Rittel – Webber, 1973). What is important though is that the general characteristics of the dimensions and the dynamics within this case are similar to any other wicked issue.

Secondly, the study will focus on one specific context, namely public authority collaborations in Scania in the south of Sweden. An administrative boarder was used as a selection criterion to ensure that all actors share the same context. There might be different links and constraints between actors but as they are all part of the same jurisdictional context these differences will not be problematic. Instead they can enrich and nuance our understanding. Looking at the state sponsored “open comparisons” (RKA, 2016), it becomes clear that Scania is an average region in regards to the number of collaboration contracts and agreements in violence in close relationships signed between municipalities and external actors. Therefore, it is plausible to argue that Scania is not fundamentally different from any other region in the country. As the selected case isn’t found to be deviant in any essential manner, it’s considered to be an appropriate choice for this study and have the potential to foster generally applicable insights.

5.2 Survey

To characterize the relationship between public authorities in Scania related to violence in close relationships, an internet-based self-administrative survey was conducted. Surveys are valuable to measure population characteristics (Singleton – Straits, 2014:2) which in this study are the actors, links and constraints of the public collaborations. The survey questions are thus related to measurements of these concepts. The characteristics of the relationships between public authorities will be operationalized as the social structure of relations. The social structure, in turn, is defined as the actors that are involved and the links between them. The relational linkages between actors are important since it indicates how involved an actor is in collaborations and how known this actor is to others (Ernstson – Sörlin - Elmquist, 2008). The lack of links between certain actors is also interesting to include in the study as it can indicate vulnerability or be used to identify isolates or fractions in the network.

By conducting a standardized questionnaire, differences in responses can be deducted to differing experiences of the respondents rather than the way the questions were asked (Singleton – Straits, 2014:8). By supplying the respondents with a range of fixed options the survey responses can be quantitatively coded (Rouleston, 2010) and thus provide an aggregated picture of the social structure

which will be used to answer the first research question related to the characteristics of the relationships between public authorities in wicked issues.

The survey was designed via the website Questback. To avoid language barriers the entire survey was in Swedish, as all organisations surveyed has Swedish as their working language. It contains 60 questions, most of which are multiple choice questions formulated as “how often are you in contact with [organisation name] regarding violence in close relationships?”. To these questions, possible answers are (1) never, (2) once or a couple of times per year, (3) once or a couple of times per month, (4) once or a couple of times per week, or, (5) daily. Besides from indicating whether or not a tie exists between organisations, the options provided indicates frequency in contact. As such, the survey measures valued ties.

The respondents were asked to think about the contact that they have had in the last 12 months. To facilitate a shared understanding of the survey questions, information was provided at the beginning of the survey in regards to the survey’s operationalisation of relational ties between organisations as contact between organisations. To further a shared understanding, contact was exemplified as, but not excluded to, contact via email, network meetings, other forms of meetings regarding the issue or joint projects. Although the relationship between survey length and response rate varies depending on survey topic and target population (Fowler, 2014:108), one can instinctively understand that there’s a trade-off between detail and scope of the survey. To allow the survey to capture as much of the general collaboration structure as possible, the form of contact between organisations was not as prioritized as the scope of contact. More detail understanding of the content of the ties was instead provided through interviews (se section 5.3.).

As costumery in ethical survey research (Fowler, 2014:141), respondents were also informed about the purpose of the study, the ways in which their responses would be used and assured a certain amount of anonymity⁹ as well as asked to consent with the given terms. Some of the questions was followed up by a question regarding what part of the organisation that the respondent had been in contact with. This is relevant for larger organisations such as municipalities or the regional authorities which comprise multiple departments that are quite separate from each other such as the social services and student health administrations in municipal organisations. In total 41 organisations were included in the survey questions (four national authorities, three regional, 33 municipal and women shelters). To avoid the result to be biased by the researcher’s preconceptions by possible relations, the survey included open questions such as “are you in contact with any other public organisation?” or the option of “other” followed by a fill-in-textbox when asked about what departments they were in contact with. All survey questions are included in Appendix I.

⁹ Full anonymity could not be promised as the name of the respondents’ employer organisation are essential to the survey results. The respondents professional title, name and other personal information is however not essential to the study and therefore anonymity in relation to this aspects where promised.

5.2.1 Survey respondent selection criteria

The selection of respondents should be guided by the aim of the study (Beitin 2014). The aim of this study is to understand how public authorities collaborate in wicked problems. Thus, the level of analysis is on the organisational level; the focus is not on the relationships between individual public officials but the relationship between public authorities in wicked policy issues. Hence, the respondents sought were public officials with managing, strategic or coordinating positions such as e.g. gender equality strategist, domestic violence coordinators or managers responsible for coordinating action at given administrations in Scania. As collaboration is prescribed by national regulations in regards to support to those exposed to violence in close relationships, the selection of respondents are public administrations that are responsible for discovering or helping the once that are exposed to violence in close relations. As such, the Prison and Probation service and courts will be excluded. This means that the national actors sampled in the survey are the County Administrative board and the police. Regional actors of relevance are the Regional Authorities, Skåne Association of Local Authorities and the regional competence centre for violence in close relationships situated in Malmö. All of 33 municipalities situated within the borders of Scania are represented in the sample. Within the municipalities the departments targeted for the survey are social services and the municipal authority for student's health.

To avoid sampling error, that the sampled respondents doesn't adequately represent the population (Singleton – Straits, 2014:2), with such a small population the goal would be to get the whole population to respond to the survey. This strategy is still vulnerable to nonresponses errors, which could threaten the accuracy of the result (ibid.). The survey was distributed to 216 respondents representing 38 public organisations. A reminder to answer the survey was sent after one and two weeks and the response rate was 27% representing 59 unique answers. Although representing a lower response rate than the classical 80%-requirement, nowadays response rates tend to be lower and there's no longer an agreed-upon minimum (Fowler, 2014:44). Notably, the actual number of respondents is slightly higher than what the response rate shows. This is due to the fact that a number of respondents stated that they answered the survey together with their colleagues and submitted one joint response which means that some of the respondents will be considered as non-responses whereas in fact their responses were submitted by a colleague. In total, 74% of the surveyed organisations responded to the survey. Naturally, the organisations which didn't respond to the survey lack ties directed from them. Consequently, it's not possible to calculate outdegree density measures for these actors. It is however possible to calculate their indegree density as other organisations were asked about their contact with these organisations. This can partially compensate for the lack of out-directed data and, therefore, they are included in the analysis. More details on potential impacts of this will be discussed in chapter 6.

A possible measurement error is that although relational ties are recorded in the survey, the actual value of these ties might be wrong (Ferligoj et al 2016), or some ties might be missing. However, as self-reported ties tend to be biased

toward typical interaction and routine behaviour (Ernstson – Sörlin – Elmqvist, 2008) the types of ties that are likely to be left out are the rare connections which deviate from the general behaviour. Subsequently, it's considered to be a minor issue in the study.

5.2.2 UCINET – survey data analysis

The data collected in the survey is analysed using UCINET (Borgatti – Everett – Freeman, 2002), a software for Social Network Analysis. This is considered to be the most prominent SNA package over the latest 20 years or so; and is continuously updated with adjusted features (Huisman – van Duijn, 2016). The raw data retrieved from the survey tool Questback had to be adjusted to fit UCINET. This was done by re-coding the response options from text to ordinal categorical variables. Respondents who had replied “never”, or non-responses, were coded as 0. Responses “Once or a couple of times per year” were given the value 1, “once or a couple of times per month” were coded as 2, etc. These variables represent ordinal categories where 0 represents the lowest frequency of contact, namely none, and 4 represent the most frequent contact which is daily contact.

If more than one respondent replied from each organisation, these responses were weight together so that no organisation would seem more prominent in the network due to a higher response rate. In these cases, the responses were added up and divided by the number of respondents to give a mean value. As the respondents were asked to choose from categorial values in the survey and not to state their level of contact on a scale, the means were recoded to fit the ordinal variables. For example, three respondents from one organisation estimated their contact to be “once or a couple of times per month”, “never” and “once or a couple of time per year” with the Skåne Association of Local Authorities. This was coded as 2, 0 and 1. As $2+0+1=3$ the mean value is 1 and the contact was estimated to be “once or a couple of times per year”. In cases where the mean value wasn't an integer, the categorial values was treated as thresholds and if the mean value was over any given categorial value it was considered to have overcome that threshold and belong to the next category. For example, mean values of 0,33 was coded as 1 (as it's >0), means of 2,5 was coded as 3 (as it's >2). This method was found appropriate as it gives a weighted value that lies closer to the respondents stated value than say, choosing the highest given value or to round off the mean to the closest integer. With the later method, a lot of ties disappeared due to that the mean value was <0.5 and thus coded as 0, as such this method was disregarded. The visualizations of the network structures was done in UCINET's ajoint pogram NetDraw (Borgatti, 2002). All interviewees agreed with the plausibility of the results when survey findings and analysis were presented and discussed in the interviews. As this is a form of member checking (Bailey, 2018:149), it strengthens the findings and the survey analysis.

5.3 Interviews

To answer the second research questions related to the lived-experience of public collaboration, it's crucial to gain insights into the public officials' perceptions of the relationships. To gain such insights, semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions was used. The interviews were also used to deepen the knowledge of the collaboration structured mapped out in the survey analysis. An in-depth interview approach is well suited for contexts with a number of actors who holds multiple perspectives on a certain phenomenon (Johnson – Rowlands, 2014:4), such as within wicked problems. In comparison with closed interview questions, where the respondents are restricted in their answers (Rouleston, 2010), open-ended questions have the advantage of providing the interviewee with the opportunity to formulate the answers in their own words. Furthermore, the semi-structured interview design is advantageous since it allows the interviewer to further develop the interviewees' answer by asking follow-up questions and engage in a more conversation-like type of interview. This method usually provides deeper information and knowledge than e.g. surveys or focus groups (Johnson – Rowlands, 2014:2) As is common for interviewing (ibid:13), the interviews started with the interviewee being informed about the purpose of the study, the purpose of the interview and was asked to consent to participating as well as to the interview being recorded.

The questions posed in an interview should guide the interviewee towards the topic at hand, but not rigidly steer their answers (Beitin, 2014:16). As it is their perspectives that's of interests, the interviewees where encouraged to elaborate their opinions. The questions were organised by themes in an interview guide which was used in every interview (see Appendix II). The guide contains three themes – the role of interviewed public authority in dealing with violence in close relationships, collaboration with other organisations (form, influence and usefulness) and reflections of the survey result – and 12 open-ended questions such as *What is, in your opinion, positive with your collaboration with other public authorities?* The interview was rounded off by asking the interviewee if there were anything else that they found important which hadn't been touched upon in the interview. Just as the survey, the interviews were conducted in Swedish. The order in which the questions where posed and the exact formulation shifted between interviews depending on the flow of conversation. Sometimes the interviewees, in their own reasoning, answered a question before it was posed. In such a situation that question was considered to be addressed and was skipped. There was also an occurrence of spontaneous follow-up questions in order to encourage the interviewee to elaborate certain answers which were unclear or touched upon interesting aspects of the topic. This application of an interview guide as a living document, more than a static set-up, is in fact the very essence of a semi-structured interview (Bailey, 2018:107) and allows the researcher a certain amount of control over the topics covered but leave room for the interviewees to more freely direct the conversation and express their perspectives.

5.3.1 Interviewee selection criteria

The selection of interviewees was sampled through clustering, i.e. sampling from naturally occurring groups (Roulston, 2010), which was derived from the analysis of research question one and the survey results. The analysis of the survey result (see section 6.1.4) showed a social structure of core and peripheral actors and the surveyed organisations were thus divided in to three groups – core, semi-core and periphery. From each group two organisations were randomly selected for interviews; The County Administrative board and the Association of Local Authorities (core); The Regional Authorities and Eslöv municipality (semi-core); Helsingborg and Ystad municipalities (periphery). If more than one respondent represented a sampled organisation, a random selection was made between the respondents within that organisation. The respondents were then contacted via email and informed of the aim of the study as well as that the interview is a complement to the survey that they had received a couple of weeks ago. All six sampled interviewees responded and six interviews was conducted. In one case, the request was sent to a manager which forwarded the email to one of her employees who worked more actively with the policy issue and collaborations. This person was then interviewed instead of the manager. As the interviewees were randomly selected, they had different positions. Amongst them were two strategists, one manager, one coordinator, one social worker and one project leader. From the municipalities, two worked in social services and one in Student's health. As is common (Beitin, 2016:2) the number of interviews conducted was not decided upon in advance but rather as a result of reaching a point of theoretical saturation. However, to make sure that the analysis wasn't skewed, special attention was made to ensure a representative amount of variation in relation to the interviewees' attributes, such as position in the collaboration structure and organisational attributes, before the point of theoretical saturation could be said to be reached.

5.3.2 Interview data analysis

The recordings of the interviews were transcribed in Swedish as a verbatim script which include fillers such as “like”, “you know” and “kind of”. This form of transcripts minimizes the risk of misrepresentations when quotes are included in the thesis (Bailey, 2018:118). However, to make the transcripts a bit more condense humming sounds, stammer or similar things were excluded. As recommended when coding transcripts (Bailey, 2018:162ff), a first readthrough of each transcript was conducted with simultaneous initial coding. Descriptive labels were assigned to each statement. This was followed by another readthrough in case some labels that occurred in the later coding was found applicable to the first transcripts. Attempts were then made to sort these labels into categories and exclude statements that lies outside the aim and research question of this thesis. When moving into the focused coding, a difference was made between the interview data which related to the structure of collaboration and that which

represented the interviewees perception of the collaboration. As such, categories that related to the “flow” of relations, i.e. the content within the relational ties, or the positional power of actors were then related to more general theoretical concepts through sequential rounds of focused coding. For example, interviewees stating to participate in a network where the participants shared experiences with each other in relation to a certain topic was coded as belonging to Knoke’s (2016) relational type of information sharing. Whereas financial funding between actors were coded as resource exchange. The data related to interviewees lived experience of the relations, their perceptions of the collaboration, was coded from the initial categories into topical themes. Topical themes are patterns of perceptions, shared meaning or repetition in the interviewees (Bailey, 2018:193ff). In practice, the two methods were performed in a similar manner, the difference was that were as the coding through theoretical concepts was done in a more top-down manner in which the theoretical framework guided the coding, the topical themes emerged from the data. In general, neither of the techniques are superior to the other. What is especially important though (Bailey, 2018:197), is that the concepts which guide the top-down conceptual coding is clearly defined and can be identified through its conceptual definitions. These can all be found in chapter 4. In order to keep the analysis open for unexpected results, categories which didn’t fit the theoretical framework was not excluded but used to adopt the theoretical framework to become more befitting.

The coding and analysis were conducted on the Swedish transcripts. To illustrate the findings and to highlight a point quotes are included in the analysis. These were translated by the author after the analysis was conducted and when they were selected as illustrative quotes to include. In the analysis the interviewees are referred to by an I (for interviewee) and a subsequent number, e.g. I4 which refers to interviewee 4.

6 The structure of collaboration

In this chapter the survey results will be presented and analysed using the softwares UCINET and NetDraw. It will focus on the social structure of collaboration between the public authorities and provide an aggregated picture of collaboration in Scania in relation to violence in close relationships.

6.1 The social structure of collaboration between public authorities in Scania

The survey included questions about relational linkages between 41 organisations. These organisations are the nodes in the social structure of collaboration. All organisations had relational ties to at least one other organisation, either as themselves stating that they were in contact with other actors or due to them being listed by another organisation. This means that there were no isolates found in the collaboration structure, nor were there any fractions between subgroups. If treated as binary data, meaning that there's either a tie present or not, the survey showed a total number of 360 ties out of the possible of 1640 ties, which gives the social structure a density of 0,22. As the values are derived from categorical ordinal values rather than given on a scale, it is more meaningful to consider the mode value of given responses than a mean value in order to take the value of ties, i.e. the frequency of contact, into account. As shown in Table 6.1., the most common answer to how often are you in contact with a certain organisation was "never". This does not mean that relational linkages between organisations are deviant from common behaviour, as stated before, all organisations have them. In fact, if all of the other answers (which presuppose a relationship) are weight together, they represent more than half of the responses and as such it's more common with the presence of a tie than to "never" have contact. Among the answers where there was a relational tie, it was most common for an organisation to be in contact once or a couple times per year with another organisation.

In Figure 6.1., the social structure has been mapped out using NetDraw. Each organisation is represented by a node and the ties between the actors are drawn as arrows. The arrowhead indicates the direction of contact, i.e. it points to the organisation which the other actor has stated to be in contact with. For example, in the top right corner of the image, an arrow shows that Ängelholm has stated to be in contact with Perstorp. If there's an arrowhead in both direction the contact is reciprocated. The thickness of the lines between the actors indicates frequency in contact as the thickest line represents the most frequent contact. The

actors are colour coded based on their attributes (see details in Figure 6.1.). The size of the nodes is based on their betweenness centrality. The higher betweenness centrality, the larger the node figure. The shape of the nodes indicates whether or not the actor is considered to be a core or peripheral actor. These measurements will be discussed in detail in the following sections.

Table 6.1. Frequency of responses

Survey response options	Frequency	Percentage
Never	327	46,7%
Once or a couple of times per year	280	40%
Once or a couple of times per month	81	11,6%
Once or a couple of times per week	7	1%
Daily	5	0,7%
Total	700	100%

Frequency = number of a times an option appeared in the survey results. Percentage = % of all responses.

6.1.1 Density measurements

Density measures can be calculated for each actor and indicate which actors that have more contacts or are more frequent in their contacts with other actors. As the data derived from the survey contains directed ties, it is possible to differentiate between in- and out-degree density where the in-degree is the value of ties going to the node and the out-degree is the value of the ties originating from the node. In this case, the out-degree density is the ties that the actor *themselves* have stated to have with other actors and the in-degree density is the value of the ties that *other actors* have stated to have with the actor. Due to lack of responses or difficulties arising from invalid responses in regards to which organisation respondents represented, it was only possible to derive out-degree density for twenty organisations. Most of the missing data concerns municipal actors. Since there are thirty-three municipal actors within the region, and most of them are represented in the data, these missing values are not considered to have severe impacts on the over all structure. The other non-responses were from the police and as they are the only organisation of its kind, it might have a larger impact on the findings than missing values from certain municipal actors. To mitigate this effect, special care was taken in the interviews to ask about collaborations with the police. Density measures for all actors are presented in Appendix III., and Table 6.2. shows the ten highest values.

Interestingly only one organisation, namely the County Administrative board, has more than half of the maximum value of out-degree density. It also has the second highest in-degree centrality and 40% of the surveyed organisations have stated to be in contact with the County Administrative board, which is the third highest percentage. Only women shelters (42,5%) and the police (45%) have a higher number of organisations stating to be in contact with them. Due to previously mentioned lack of codable data for certain organisation, the highest possible percentage of in-going ties is 47,5%. Given this, almost all organisations can be considered to have stated to be in contact with the women shelters, the

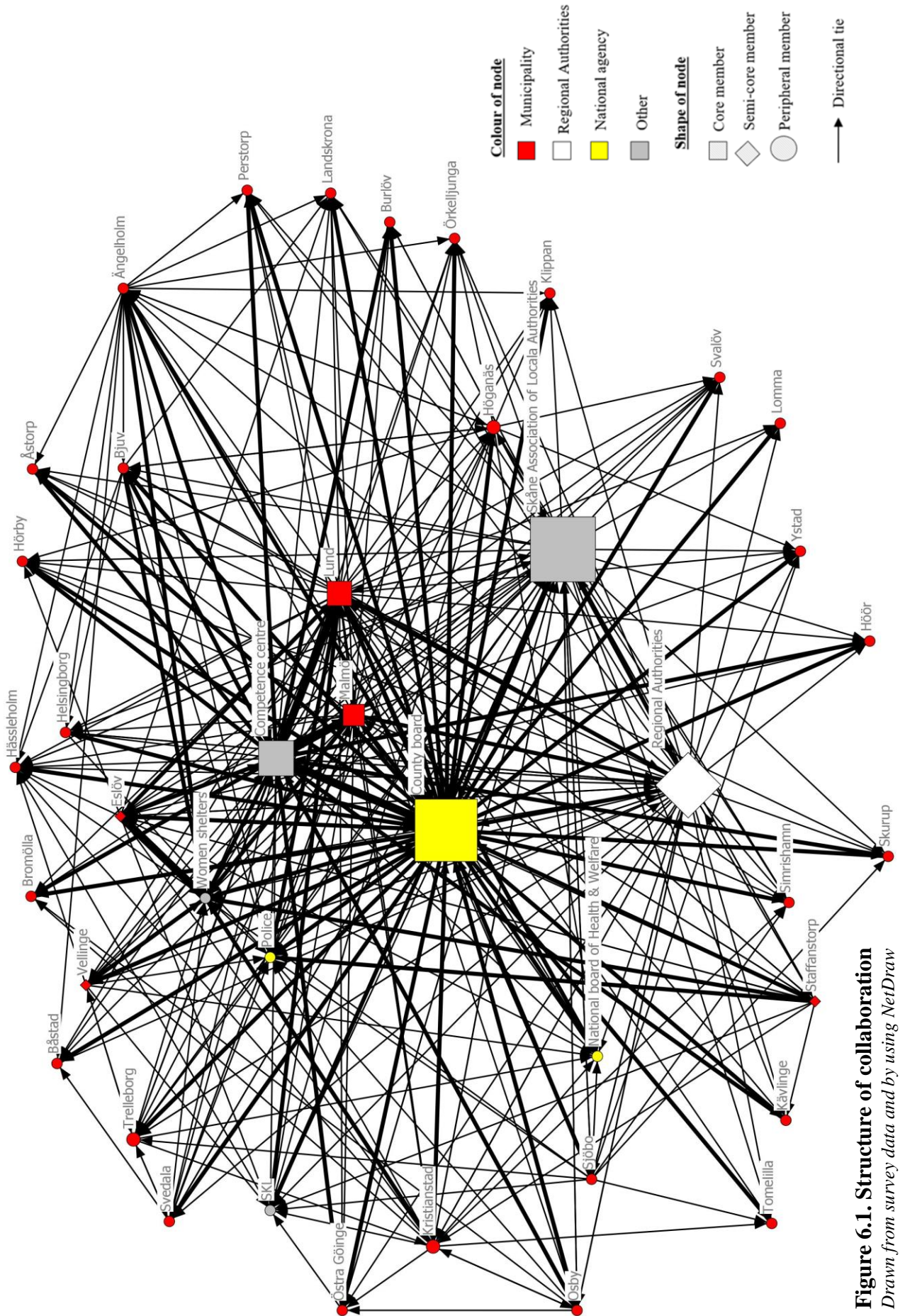


Figure 6.1. Structure of collaboration
Drawn from survey data and by using NetDraw

police and the County Administrative board. However, the total value of the in-degree density (which incorporates frequency in contact) is slightly lower for the police than the County Administrative board. In general it seems like most actors consider themselves to be in contact with these three actors and that this contact is also, in general, more frequent than the contact with other organisations. These findings are visible in Figure 6.1. as thicker lines originate from these actors.

The three actors working with the issue on a regional level in the county - the County Administrative board, the Regional Authorities and the Association of Local Authorities – have stated to be in contact with all organisations in the social structure. This is also true for Lund municipality. However, there's a large difference if one incorporates the frequency in contact. The out-degree density of the County Administrative board is substantially higher than those of the other actors who have more or less the same out-degree measures. This means that even though the actors are in contact with the same number of actors, the County Administrative board tend to have a more frequent contact with other actors. The highest frequency of contact (if self-reciprocal ties are excluded) was stated as once or a couple times per week and reported from Eslöv to women shelters, competence centre to the County Administrative board, Lund and Malmö municipalities as well as from the County Administrative board to the competence centre. This can be seen in Figure 6.1. as the thickest lines runs between these actors.

If one compares the ten actors with highest out-degree with the top ten in-degree density, six actors are present in both. These are the three regional actors,

Table 6.2 Out- and in-degree measures

Node	Outdeg	nOutdeg	% of ties	Node	Indeg	nIndeg	% of ties
County Administrative board	80	0,667	1	Women shelters	27	0,225	0,425
Competence centre	48	0,4	0,727	County Administrative board	23	0,192	0,4
Lund	46	0,383	1	Police	21	0,175	0,45
Association of Local Authorities	43	0,358	1	Regional authorities	19	0,158	0,375
Regional authorities	40	0,333	1	Competence centre	18	0,15	0,325
Malmö	33	0,275	0,75	Association of Local Authorities	16	0,133	0,375
Eslöv	20	0,167	0,4	SKL	16	0,133	0,35
Kristianstad	16	0,133	0,375	National board of health and Welfare	15	0,125	0,325
Ängelholm	16	0,133	0,375	Lund	13	0,108	0,225
Höganäs	15	0,125	0,375	Malmö	13	0,108	0,25

Outdeg=Out-degree density, nOutdeg = nominalized Out-degree density, shown as % of maximum value. Indeg= In-degree density, nIndeg = nominalized In-degree density, shown as % of maximum value. % of ties = % of all possible binary ties. The table include the ten highest in- & out degree values, for a full list see Appendix III.

the competence centre and the two municipalities of Malmö and Lund. Four actors with high in-degree density isn't present among the top ten out-degree

actors. These are three national actors and one non-profit. Of these four, only the police were sampled to answer the survey which they unfortunately didn't. As such, the actors absent from the top ten out-degree density list can potentially be explained by missing values and non-responses.

The four actors that are present among the top ten out-degree measures but not amongst the top ten in-degree measures are quite different from the other actors with top out-degree densities. Unlike the others, these four municipalities don't rank high in in-degree density. Only Kristianstad, with rank 12, come close to the top ten. As such there seems to be a difference in how actors perceive themselves to be in contact with others and how others perceive this contact. It's hard to say what derives this. It might be that these linkages represent relationships that

can't be reciprocal such as authoritative ties. However, since most of the organisations doesn't have any authority over each other, it's not very likely to be the case. As such, it's more likely that this derives from the fact that the respondents have interpreted the definition of contact differently or that the contact that actor x has in mind with actor y is directed towards another part of organisation y than the one that respondent y belongs to. Differences between organisational departments will be discussed in length later in this chapter.

6.1.2 Connectivity

Connectivity is a measure that states how many linkages that would have to be removed for an actor to be unreachable. Connectivity is calculated between different nodes, but if added up it provides a measure which indicates which actors that are least connected to the whole collaboration structure and thus most vulnerable. Lomma and Sjöbo are the least connected nodes in the collaboration structure (see Table 6.3.) with a connectivity measure of 68 and 72 respectively. This can be contrasted against the two most connected actors, the police and the

Table 6.3 Connectivity of actors

Node	Connectivity to node
Lomma	68
Sjöbo	72
Kävlinge	82
Vellinge	82
Osby	85
Eslöv	87
Burlöv	93
Höör	95
Staffanstorp	95
Tomelilla	95
National board of Health and Welfare	124
Hässleholm	126
Malmö	130
Competence centre	148
County Administrative board	150
SKL	152
Regional authorities	162
Women shelters	165
Association of local authorities	170
Police	175

Lowest 10 and highest 10 values included, see full list in Appendix III.

Association of Local Authorities that have a connectivity of 175 and 170. All municipal actors, except for Malmö and Hässleholm, have less connections to the collaboration structure than the national, regional and non-profit actors. From this one can conclude that municipal actors tend to be less connected and thus more vulnerable than the other types of actors. That municipalities have similar vulnerabilities is not surprising, since actors with similar attributes tend to possess similar positions in social structures (Marin – Wellman, 2016). Moreover, as Lomma and Sjöbo also has the lowest connectivity to the actors with high betweenness centrality, which are the actors that can mediate the highest number of relational ties (more on this in next section), their vulnerability further increases.

6.1.3 Positional power as betweenness centrality

Betweenness centrality is a measure of positional power as actors with a high degree of betweenness centrality has the potential to connect nodes that otherwise would not be in contact. As is visible in Table 6.4, there are three actors with substantially higher betweenness centrality. These are the three regional actors: the Regional Authorities, the Association of Local Authorities and the County Administrative board. Each of them has a betweenness centrality measure that is more than double of the fourth actor, the competence centre. All municipal actors have a betweenness centrality that is less than a fourth of the three regional actors and half of the competence centre. In Figure 6.1. Betweenness centrality is indicated by the size of the nodes. Among the municipalities, Lund and Malmö stand out with a higher betweenness centrality than the rest.

Betweenness is an interesting measure as it indicates which actors that have the potential to mediate relational linkages, such as information flows or convey contacts. Since the three regional actors have stated to be in contact with all of the nodes in the collaboration structure, it's not surprising that they have such high betweenness centralities. As such they possess a certain amount of positional power in the social structure. If one also considers the frequency of contacts, which instinctively seems to be a relevant factor if one is to steer the information flow, a difference can be made between the three actors. As previously noted, the County Administrative

Table 6.4. Betweenness centrality

Node	Betweenness
Regional authorities	109,939
Association of Local Authorities	108,848
County Administrative board	105,306
Competence centre	49,161
Lund	25,48
Malmö	21,401
Kristianstad	5,954
Höganäs	5,819
Trelleborg	3,117
Ängelholm	2,171
Eslöv	1,321
Hässleholm	1,125
Bjuv	0,943
Vellinge	0,643
Staffanstorp	0,492
Svedala	0,486
Östra Göinge	0,31
Osby	0,286
Helsingborg	0,2

Betweenness centrality is the sum of all linkages mediated through an actor where the other nodes are distinct. Note: actors with missing values that lead to that no betweenness centrality could be calculated are excluded from the table.

board has a much higher out-degree density than the Regional Authorities and the Association of Local Authorities. This means that even though all of them have more or less the same *potential* to mediate linkages between actors, the *opportunity* to do so appears much more frequently for the County Administrative board as they in general have more frequent contact with the actors in the social structure. As such, they are considered to possess a higher degree of positional power than the Regional Authorities and the Association of Local Authorities.

Interestingly, if one takes betweenness and density into consideration. The competence centre, which scores fourth in betweenness, has quite a similar degree of both in- and out-degree density as the Regional Authorities and the Association of Local Authorities. This means that they have quite the similar general pattern of both in and out-going contact, but the competence centre doesn't have the same potential to mediate relations. Moreover, the competence centre doesn't have connections to all nodes in the structure, which the two others do have. Since the three actors have similar density measures, the competence centre must have a more frequent contact with the nodes to which they are linked. As these nodes in turn are well connected to each other it negatively affects the betweenness centrality of the competence centre. This can be connected back to the theoretical section of 4.2. where it was stated that it's not only the ties that the actor itself has but also the ties of the nodes that it's connected to. If in fact the nodes connected to the competence centre wouldn't be as well connected to each other, the betweenness centrality of the centre would increase as well as its positional power. The opposite is true for the Regional Authorities and the Association of Local authorities which have connections to nodes that aren't that well connected themselves, and thus, increase the positional power of the two regional actors.

6.1.4 A core-periphery network structure of collaboration

As of now the focus has been on different measurements which describe the position of individual actors and the relations within the structure, but one can also focus on the structure itself. This will be done by going back to Figure 4.1. which states four ideal types for the structure of collaboration; clique, star, fraction and core-periphery networks.

As no subgroups were found in the collaboration structure, the ideal type of fraction network can be disregarded. This is also true for the star network as a number of actors demonstrated a certain amount of betweenness centrality and no single actor mediated all relations. This leaves us with either a clique or a core-periphery network. In a clique, all actors are connected to all other actors and can reach each other without assistance. In a core-periphery network there's a higher density amongst actors in the core than in the periphery. As they represent ideal types, the expectations aren't that the empirical findings will represent exact copies of them. Instead the purpose is to establish which ideal is most befitting (Teorell – Svensson, 2007:42). Therefore, it would be premature to disregard the clique network simply because not every single actor has a tie to every single node. Yet,

if the overall density is taken into consideration, it becomes clear that only 22% of all possible ties are present in the current social structure which is quite far from the ideal of a clique network as equal to one. Even if one take non-responses and potential measurements errors into consideration, it's too far from the ideal to be considered a good fit.

This leaves only one ideal type, but is it a good enough fit? UCINET offers a tool that fit a ratio-level core/periphery model to the data and estimate the “coreness” of each actor¹⁰. The tool does not categorize the actors as core or peripheral but gives them a coreness-score. Based on this, different size of the core is modelled, and different measurements of its core/peripheral likeness is given. If no clear core size is given by the different measurements the advice is to first look at the correlation measurement for a clear maximum. If that can't be found, the advice is to try to incorporate the different measurements and find a suitable core-size (Borgatti-Evert, 1999:15-18). By looking at the maximum correlation, four core-sizes were given more or less the same value. These were then compared with the other measurements and two core-sizes were found to have the highest-ranking overall measurement. This was a core-size of eight or nine actors. Since eight actors was the highest-ranking core size on the correlation measurement it was selected as a suitable core size (see actors' membership in Table 6.5.). However, due to the lack of one clear size across all measures this is

Table 6.5. Core and Periphery Membership

Class membership	Members
Core actors	County Administrative board, Competence centre, Lund, Association of Local Authorities, Malmö, <i>Regional Authorities, Vellinge, Eslöv.</i>
Peripheral actors	<i>Staffanstorp, Kristianstad, Trelleborg, Osby, Bjuv, Höganäs, Ängelholm, Sjöbo, Svedala, Hässleholm, Östra Göinge, Helsingborg, Police, Svalöv, Simrishamn, Klippan, Höör, Ystad, Bromölla, Landskrona, Women shelters, Kävlinge, National board of Health and Welfare, SKL, Perstorp, Hörby, Skurup, Örkelljunga, Tomelilla, Burlöv, Båstad, Åstorp, Lomma.</i>

Actors are listed based on their coreness-scores, with the highest scores being listed first. Actors in italics are considered to be semi-core members.

¹⁰ This is done by the “Core/periphery continuous”-tool, which uses a number of measures to decide to which degree data-matrix has a core-periphery structure. The tool estimates closeness to the core (=coreness). The actor with the highest coreness is placed in the core and all others in the periphery. The core is then successively increased by including the actor with the highest coreness score until only one actor remains in the periphery. This is done to assess the degree to which the data matrix falls into a core/periphery structure and gives a number of measures. For details see Borgatti – Evert (1999:15-18).

to be taken as a strict core-size but more of an indication of which actors that are more central in the relational linkages¹¹.

Going back to the ideal type, density is prescribed to be higher among core members. In this case, the density within the core group is 0,452 compared to the density of the periphery which is 0,024. As it is in line with the expectations for the ideal type, it is possible to state that the public collaboration has a core-peripheral structure between actors.

The coreness-score of the core actors vary from 0,64 to 0,182. The competence centre, which has the second highest coreness, has only about 60% of the first actor's, the County Administrative board, coreness. This implies a strong core position for the highest-ranking actor. Furthermore, the three actors in the core with the lowest values have only about 30% of the County Administrative board's coreness-score. As such, it might be fruitful to think of the core as being divided into a core-group and a semi-core group, where the later is to be considered less central than the first and more closer to the periphery. The peripheral actor with the highest coreness will also be included in this semi-core group based on two reasons. Firstly, due to the difficulties in establishing the size of the core it makes sense to loosen the strict line drawn between core and periphery. Secondly, it has a coreness score of 24% of the highest value, which is more similar to the actors in the semi-core than the second highest ranking actor in the periphery, which have a coreness of 19% of the top actor. These were the groupings that were used to sample interviewees for the interviews (see section 5.3.1.).

6.1.5 Other collaboration partners

In the survey, fill-in-boxes were included in which the respondents could list other organisations that they collaborated with against violence in close relationships. Forty-two such answers were provided of which ten were simply saying "No". The twenty remaining answers included a list of sixty organisations, both public and non-public. A compilation of these can be found in Appendix III. Swedish universities such as Malmö and Lund university were listed nine times. The national centre for knowledge on men's violence against women, located at Uppsala university, was listed five times. Five municipalities, or projects run by municipalities, outside of Scania was listed. Among these were the two largest cities Stockholm and Göteborg as well as municipalities from the neighbouring county of Kronoborg. The County Administrative board of Östergötland was listed eight times, which is probably due to the fact that they have the governmental mandate to work against honour related violence in all of Sweden (Hedersförtryck, 2015), which is closely related to the policy field under study. Most of these actors can be considered to be either knowledge centres or

¹¹ Centrality in this sense is not to be confused by centrality as in administrative levels of government. Here it is a measure of centrality in the structure of collaboration measured by the closeness to other actors.

geographically close to the region. Göteborg and Stockholm were listed by a respondent from Malmö, which is not very surprising as these are the three largest cities in Sweden and thus would be expected to have common points of interest.

For the non-public actors the most frequently listed was different types of non-profit organisations, which were listed fourteen times. This is hardly surprising as they often are, as mentioned in section 3.2., in the forefront of this particular policy field. Most commonly mentioned was Freezone, a non-profit in Malmö which target children and adolescents (Freezone, 2019), and Save the Children. Of all of the forty-two answers, only one listed a private actor, which further emphasis the difference of this collaboration structure and the ones addressed in Governance-literature or the market dominated tendering in New Public Management (see e.g. Sørensen – Torfing 2007; Pollitt-Bouckaert, 2011).

6.2 Departmental ties, internal and external collaboration

As some of the nodes represent quite large organisations with relatively separate departments, it's only partially true to say that certain organisations collaborate in a certain way. Thus, the previous section of this chapter needs to be complemented by measurements that differentiate between different departments within organisations and their connections to both internal and external actors. As the survey included questions about which part of certain organisations that the respondents were in contact with it's possible to map out the relational linkages between actors and different departments. These results are visible in Figure 6.2. In this figure all municipal actors have been merged together and divided depending on the municipal department they work with; either Social service or Student's health and School. The names of these departments may vary between different municipalities, but the division was made based on how they describe their departments on their web pages. Social services include social service departments, individual and family care, welfare department, etc. Student's health and school include municipal departments such as child- and education services, school and leisure department, etc. The invalid answers that posed a problem in the coding for the last section wasn't a problem here, consequently all respondents, except for one non-codable answer, are included in this analysis. Figure 6.2. is based on the same logic as Figure 6.1. when it comes to arrows, colours and node size. However, the shape of the nodes in Figure 6.2. doesn't represent class membership, instead it indicates which organisation (or departments) that were represented amongst the survey respondents. Betweenness centrality was not calculated for this analysis as certain nodes consists of multiple organisations (Social services and Student's health and school) and therefore the measure would be misleading.

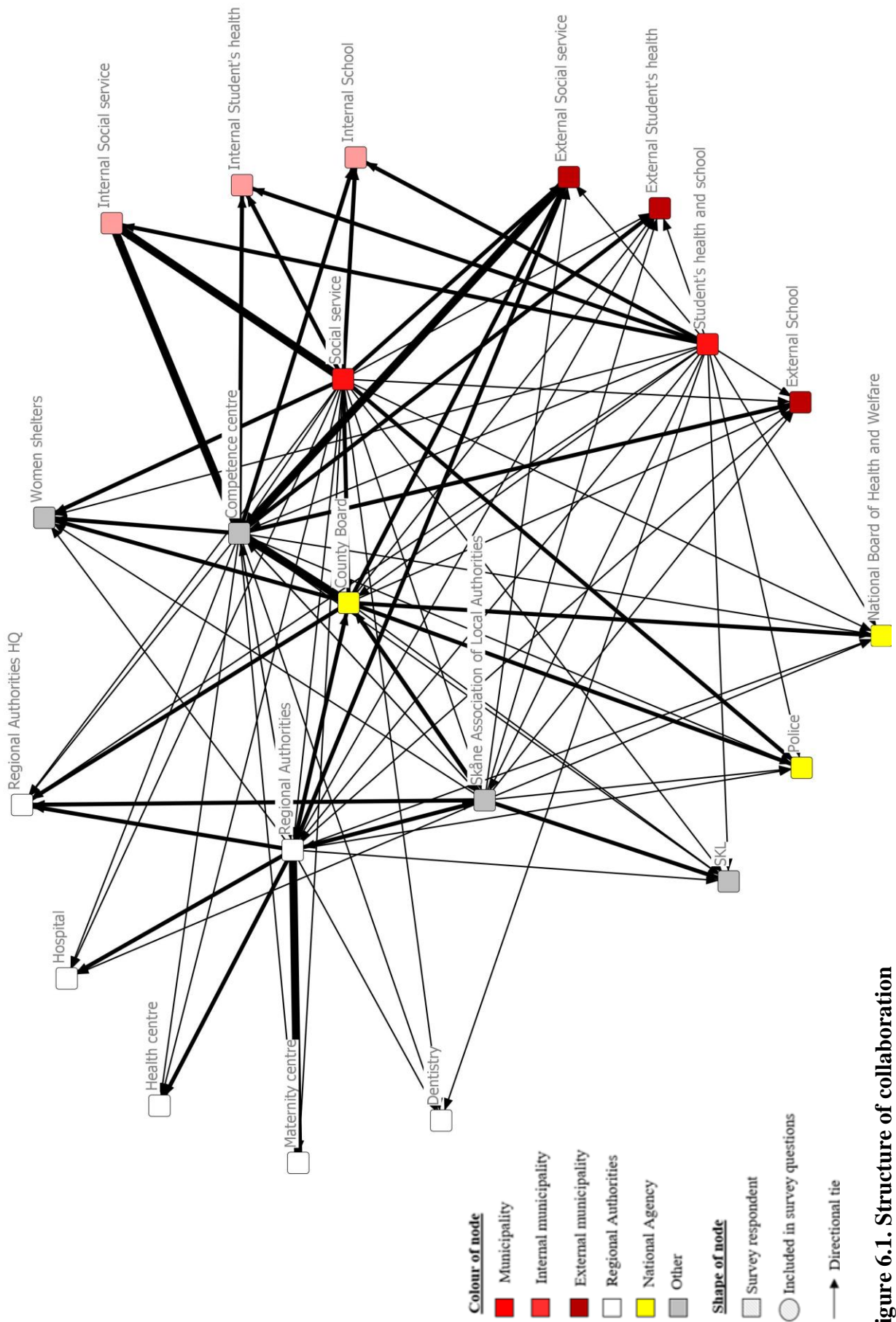


Figure 6.1. Structure of collaboration
Drawn from survey data and by using NetDraw

As is visible in Figure 6.2. by the thicker lines and shown in Table 6.6., some nodes have a higher frequency of contact and a higher in- and out-degree density. All nodes with outgoing linkages have similar level of out-degree density, with only the Association of Local Authorities slightly slipping behind. If one looks at the different municipal department one can see that the Social services has a higher out-degree density than Student's Health and School. This is also true for the in-degree density for both external and internal collaborations. The highest in-degree density amongst all nodes is also possessed by external Social service, which means that they have the densest flow of contacts directed towards them. That the external social services have a higher density than the internal social services might seem a bit counter intuitive. However, it becomes quite obvious if one considers the fact that not all nodes have an internal Social service department but all of them can contact an external one. As such the Social services can be considered to be more involved in the collaboration structure than Student's health and School departments. The lowest in-degree density is possessed by the Regional Authorities' internal department, except for their HQ which scores quite high. If one contrast this image with the previous section, one actor that scored high in density and betweenness, namely the Association of Local Authorities, ranks quite low in Table 6.6. As it is an organisation for increased collaboration between municipalities, it is possible that their figures were heavily impacted by the merge of all municipal actors in to two different nodes, instead of thirty-three.

The most frequent contact was stated as once or a couple of times per week by the competence centre towards the County Administrative

Table 6.6. Out- and In-degree measures departmental ties

Node	Outdeg	nOutdeg
Competence centre	29	0,483
Social service	27	0,45
Regional Authorities	24	0,4
County Administrative board	20	0,333
Student's Health & School	19	0,317
Association of Local Authorities	16	0,267
Node	Indeg	nIndeg
External Social service	11	0,183
County Administrative board	9	0,15
Regional Authorities HQ	9	0,15
Internal Social service	9	0,15
Women shelter	9	0,15
Police	8	0,133
Competence centre	7	0,117
Regional Authorities	7	0,117
National board of Health and Welfare	7	0,117
SKL	7	0,117
External School	7	0,117
External Student's health	7	0,117
Internal School	7	0,117
Internal Student's Health	7	0,117
Association of Local Authorities	6	0,1
Hospital	5	0,083
Maternity centre	5	0,083
Health centre	4	0,067
Dentistry	4	0,067

Outdeg=Out-degree density, nOutdeg = nominalized Out-degree density, shown as % of maximum value. Indeg= In-degree density, nIndeg = nominalized In-degree density, shown as % of maximum value.

board, internal and external Social services. It was also stated between Social services and internal Social services, between the County Administrative board and the competence centre as well as between the Regional Authorities and their maternity centres. Interestingly, the municipal department of Student's health and School don't seem to be in such frequent contact with the other nodes in the collaboration structure. The only nodes they stated to be in contact with more than once or a couple of times per year were other internal municipal departments.

Nevertheless, what have become clear by Figure 6.2 and the connected analysis is that there seems to be a concentration of the density of the collaboration structure and the frequency of information between the Social services, the competence centre, the County Administrative board and Women shelters. The County Administrative board, in turn, seem to have frequent contact with the Association of Local Authorities and the Regional Authorities. The last of which also have strong ties to their internal departments.

6.3 Concluding remarks

This chapter have provided an aggregated picture of the collaboration structure as well as an understanding of different actors' positions in the network. The County Administrative board have stood out as an important actor in this structure of collaboration, both in terms of number of relations, frequency of contact, positional power and coreness. The Regional Authorities, the Association of Local Authorities and the competence centre have also stood out in different sections of the chapter. Though they are all important actors, their importance seem to stream from different positions in the structure. The competence centre seem to be in frequent contact with certain actors who in turn are well connected to each other. The Regional Authorities and the Association of Local Authorities, on the other hand, have less frequent contact but have connections to all nodes in the structure. This means that they can reach actors who are less connected to the rest of the collaboration structure, which implies a certain degree of positional power as it gives a high betweenness centrality. In general, the municipal actors seemed less connected and scored lower in betweenness and density than the other types of actors. Lomma and Sjöbo had the least connections to the network structure. On the other hand, Malmö and Lund stood out as quite important actors, scoring high both in degree measures and betweenness centrality. For the municipal actors, it seems as it's the Social services that are the most involved in the social structure of collaboration whereas the Student's health and School departments seem collaborate with internal municipal actors and in a lower degree than the social services.

Here next the focus will shift towards the interview results which will be used to complement the findings from this chapter. More specifically, it will add context as to what form collaboration take. Actors' perception of the collaboration structure will also be taken into account.

7 Relational ties and perceptions

This chapter will present the results and analysis derived from the interviews. It will add context and meaning to the analysis conducted in the previous chapter and develop the findings further. First the focus will be on the flow within the relational linkages, i.e. the “content” of collaboration. The two later sections will focus on public officials’ perceptions as a form of positional power and as a way to understand the lived experience of collaboration.

7.1 The flow within the relational linkages

The relational linkages as presented in Figure 6.1 and 6.2. are to be understood as channels in which flows of resources are transferred (Marin – Wellman, 2016). The content of these flows signifies different types of relationships. The framework of Knoke’s (2016) types of relationships was used (see section 4.2) as theoretical concepts to guide the analysis of the flows within the relational linkages. Asymmetric power relations will be addressed in a later section of this chapter in relation to positional power. No sentimental attachments were found within the collaboration structure and therefore it will be excluded in the analysis. It is however noteworthy that this does not mean that there are no sentimental attachments between the actors. Had the focus been more on how collaborative relationships emerge, rather than what they look like and what they mean, more of a path dependency and sentimentality might have been discovered.

7.1.1 Resource exchange

Four of the interviewees mentioned different kinds of resource exchange that took place within the collaboration structure. Some of the interviewees had received financial funding from e.g. SKL (I1) and the National Board of Health and Welfare (I4). The County Administrative board have about 4,5 million SEK (about 420 000€) of so called development funds to allocate to projects or initiatives in the region each year. This amount used to be substantially higher, 14-15 millions SEK (I2), but these funds are now administrated via the National Board of Health and Welfare. Interestingly, the interviewee from the County Administrative board mentioned that when actors apply for these funds they often become very frequently in contact with the County Administrative board, which in turn grants them more access to the actors. Moreover, actors within the network – mostly municipal or non-profit actors – contact the County Administrative

board for assistance and funding when they want to initiate or intensify their work against violence in close relationships. Just as Emerson et al (2011:9) pointed out, funding works as a positive consequential incentive for collaboration as it was said in the interview to increase the collaboration between the County Administrative board and the recipient. The interviewee from the County Administrative board mentioned that over the last two years Vellinge had applied for funding and been in increased contact with the County Administrative board. As such, further explanation is provided for the fact that Vellinge was found to be one of the municipalities with a high coreness in section 6.1.4. As Malmö, Lund and Kristianstad was said to have received a lot of funding over the years (I1), it's not surprising that they are amongst the more prominent municipalities in the previous chapter. It was also mentioned that, a long time ago, Hässleholm had received funding from the National board of Health and Welfare to be a pilot for the risk calculation tool FREDA and then later support others in its implementation (I4). As the previous chapter showed, Hässleholm is still one out of two municipalities with the highest connectivity. Thus, financial funding as a consequential initiative seem to have quite a long tenure in the collaboration structure. Additional form of funding was from the municipal actors to non-profit actors such as women shelters (I4).

Another form of resource exchange that was mentioned in the interviews was that actors contract services from other actors. E.g. some of the actors have contracts with the competence centre in exchange for education and personnel training (I4) and in Lund municipality there's a crisis centre within the social services that a number of other municipalities co-fund in exchange for their citizens to be eligible for their services (I2, I4).

7.1.2 Information transmission

In line with previous studies in Sweden (Gossas, 2006:23), the most commonly mentioned form of collaboration was information transmission. This includes information sharing such as exchange of experience and methods, conferences, network meetings and training. Of these, all interviewees mentioned networks as one form of collaboration and almost all mentioned information sharing (I1, I2, I3, I4, I5) or training (I2, I3, I4, I5, I6).

Information was shared between the actors in relation to what was happening on a national level within the policy area and other news updates (I5, I2, I3). Information transmission could also be in the form of exchange of experience where actors shared methods and routines with each other (I2, I5). Some actors (I1, I3, I4) mentioned national networks organized by SKL, the National Board of Health and Welfare or the national competence centre (NCK). The County Administrative board also transfer information to the Swedish government about the progress in the region through a regional status report. Some of the information transmission was done by email but most commonly information sharing was mentioned in relation to different networks such as the regional networks for municipalities held by the County Administrative board or

more sub-regional networks between neighbouring municipalities. In all interviews the County Administrative board's networks was mentioned, although the interviewee working within Student's Health and School was not referring to the network regarding violence in close relationships but mentioned one regarding narcotics. The rest of the interviewees had all been to the network related to violence in close relationships which generally contained sessions of lectures, exchange of experience, workshops or general information sharing (I2). As one respondent put it; *"it's about meeting, talking, informing each other"* (I2). When talking about the sub-regional networks, interviewees described it as finding *"these common points of contacts that we can help each other with"* (I4) or *"to produce corresponding guidelines and we also have joint training initiatives"* (I6). One interviewee talked about the collaboration process as trying to identify joint challenges and then grind it down to a more concrete level of possible joint actions (I5). The sub-regional networks were often smaller and composed of social workers from neighboring municipalities and in some cases local representatives from the police and the women shelters. This might be connected to the fact that it's easier to achieve synergies with a lower number of participants (Roberts, 2000:7). The competence center and the County Administrative board are offering the actors in the collaboration structure training sessions and seminars, which many of the interviewees referred to (I2, I3, I4). One of the interviewees (I4) also referred to an educational project that the municipality arranged together with Save the Children that targeted school staff and which included multiple actors such as Freezone, rescue services, the Swedish Church and other non-profits.

7.1.3 Boundary penetration

Three forms of boundary penetration, i.e. when actors coordinate actions in order to achieve a common goal (Knoke, 2016), was found. Firstly, the municipal actors all mentioned attempts to overcome privacy regulations of personal data between municipal departments in dealing with individual cases. This is not surprising as regulations from the National board of Health and Welfare prescribes municipal and the regional authorities to coordinate their actions though coordinated individual plans when someone needs support from multiple actors (SOFS, 2014:4). Such attempts sometimes also included the police (I4, I6). Secondly, in some municipalities different organisations were co-located in order to facilitate collaboration between the organisations and for individuals in contact with multiple organisations. Interviewees mentioned co-location in so called "children centres"¹² (I4, I5) where e.g. social services from multiple municipalities, police, paediatricians, psychiatrists and other public authorities shared an office space in order to facilitate for the child or family in contact with these actors. Thirdly, actors also meet to initiate action plans or develop joint strategies. It could be in

¹² Swedish: Barnahus

relation to planning activities to reach a region wide strategy to reduce crime (I1, I3) or to achieve the goals in the regional policy for equality. This was the form of boundary penetration which was mentioned by the three regional actors in the interviews. But it was also found within the municipalities (I4, I5) and the Regional authorities operative departments were mentioned by others as being part of the co-locations. Moreover, there seem to be a difference in the forms of boundary penetration that takes place between external organisations and between internal departments.

7.2 Positional power and perceptions

Asymmetric power relations in Knoke's (2016) typology is more about believes of authority and legitimacy than about coercive force. As such it's closely related to the positional power measure of in-degree centrality which measures power as in the eyes of the beholder, i.e. the actor that is perceived as influential possess a position of power in the collaboration structure. In the interviews all actors were asked about which actor that they perceived as influential over the collaboration process in Scania. The most common answer was the County Administrative board (I1, I2, I3, I4), apart from one interviewee who didn't find anyone particularly influential (I6). One actor (I1) mentioned SKL as being influential on the national level. Three actors mentioned the municipalities as setting either the agenda for their work (I4, I5) or as "pushing" – together with non-profit organisation – for certain topics to reach the agenda (I2). In the municipalities it was the managers, politicians and political boards that was found to be influential. Interestingly, the interviewee who didn't mentioned the County Administrative board as influential gave an example which could be interpreted as a reference to them since one of their latest initiatives was about intersectional perspectives in dealing with violence in close relationships.

We might choose to prioritize perpetrators of violence while someone thinks we should prioritize, maybe, intersectional perspectives, but we chose perpetrators of violence, well then that's that. So, municipalities, I do believe they have a lot to say within collaboration. (I5)

This can be contrasted against another interviewee who brought forward a different perspective.

Well it becomes like you, oh okay, it's intersectional perspectives and then you take that in, learn something new and then you bring it home. Also, we talk about it here and really tries to incorporate it into our practice (I4)

As such there seem to be a difference between municipal actors were some consider the County Administrative board to be able to set the agenda for the municipalities were as others disagree. As the two interviewees represent

municipalities where one is a semi-core and the other is a peripheral actor it might indicate that there's a limit to the County Administrative boards reach in the collaboration structure. This is further supported by the fact that it was only the peripheral actors who didn't mentioned the County Administrative board as influential.

More than just focusing on influential actors, the interviews also reflects the interviewees' perceptions of the different actors in the collaboration structure and what positions they have in collaboration. This is especially interesting in connection to the more influential actors in the collaboration structure. The County Administrative board perceives itself as an "*arena for collaboration between different actors*" and as a channel for information both from the government and national actors such as the National Board of Health and Welfare, but also as channeling information from actors within the collaboration structure to the national level. This perception is quite consistent with how others perceive them as well. However, what the County Administrative board perceives as their attempts to connect actors can by some be perceives as them having the control over who is invited into certain networks within the collaboration structure. As one interviewee said: "*It's a collaboration sticking point that we might not even be invited there, you know*". Others talked about it in more neutral terms as the County Administrative board's networks and other events was the place where they meet other actors in the network which they otherwise wouldn't. As one interviewee so befittingly put it:

Well, they are the node that connects us. If the County Administrative board for example would include a non-profit organisation then the probability is substantially higher that we in [organization name] will be in contact with them rather than if the County Administrative board say "we don't want to invite those. (I3)

As the quote emphasize, there seem to be a perception of the County Administrative board as being in control over the boundary of the collaboration structure, whereas themselves only see it as they are an "*arena*" in which all is welcome. While the County Administrative board's self-image was quite coherent with the rest of the actors' perceptions, the Association of Local Authorities have a somewhat different perception of themselves than what others do. The Association of Local Authorities describes themselves as being an "*umbrella*" above the municipalities which represents the municipalities towards the County Administrative board, SKL, and other regional and national actors. They also see themselves as assisting the municipal actors in implementing directives and initiatives from national levels. Whereas the other regional actors recognize their potential in doing so, they're more reluctant in saying that this has been the case. For the municipal actors some of the interviewees didn't even know if the Association of Local Authorities was engaged in the issue. The one who did talk about their relationship to the Association of Local Authorities referred mostly to projects, educations and event within other parts of the policy field of gender equality. And this might be more representative of their role within the collaboration structure since they just initiated their work within this specific policy field about a year ago when they received funding from SKL. Which is also

recognized by the Association as they say that before they received the funding, they were mostly bypassing information from the County Administrative board and SKL to the municipalities.

7.3 The perception of collaboration

Besides from their perceptions of actors in the collaboration structure it's also interesting to look at their perceptions of the collaboration at large. All interviewees expressed the need for collaboration and a need to take responsibility beyond one's own organisation in order to address violence in close relationships. Most of the actors stated that they think collaboration works rather well within the collaboration structure (I2, I3, I4, I5, I6). There were, however, some divergence in what they specifically pointed out as a positive within collaboration. Some pointed to the professionals working with the issue, their competence (I1, I2) and willpower (I1, I2, I4) i.e. that actors actually want to collaborate with others. Others talked more about the out-puts of collaboration such as knowledge exchange (I4, I5) and that, when successful, it minimizes the "in-between" of organisations (I3, I5, I6). As there are multiple organisations dealing with these issues, they have a responsibility to have knowledge of each other's organisational responsibilities and not isolate their strategies, action plans or services from the ones that other organisations have. As such, collaboration helps to make sure that the space between organisations decreases and thus insures a better safety net for battered people.

Another aspect that one interviewee highlighted can be connected to the relentlessness of working with wicked issues and the fact that they never get solved. What was pointed out was that collaboration with other professionals working with the same issue can offer a kind of support and solidarity.

But I think one can pretty easily feel alone within this area of violence in close relationships. It's hard to work with sometimes, it never gets solved, it just goes on and on. [...] So that's what I think, that you get solidarity in that we work with this and it's tough and we struggle. But to be able to pat each other on the back a bit and say that we are still doing a good job, we are moving forward and we are finding new ways to do this, but you can always get better at it. (I5)

This is especially true for those who work in smaller organisations such as certain municipalities where there's only one public official dealing with violence in close relationships (I5). For them it becomes extra important to find collaborations across organisational boundaries since they can't always find this support within the organisation itself.

Although most of the interviewees agreed upon what's good in collaboration, there was a larger divergence as to what they don't believe to be working that well. The negative aspects that was brought forward was either relating to division in the collaboration structure, conditions for collaboration, the form of collaboration or the process of collaboration.

When analysing the survey data in the previous chapter no division in the collaboration structure was found. However, when asked about negative aspects, some interviewees (I1, I2, I5) brought forward features which can be understood as divisions or fractions within the collaboration. One interviewee was concerned that the regional actors was not always that attentive to channelling information from the municipalities as to implementing their perspectives in the collaboration structure. Closely related to this, one interviewee expressed concern in ensuring joint profit within the collaboration structure. The interviewee saw it as a challenge to make sure that all actors found collaboration useful and feared that it would still go on even if only one actor found it useful. There was also said to be a division between the collaborative relationships between street-level bureaucrats and the more strategic relations which is investigated in this thesis. The strategist might not always encounter the ones working with the individuals exposed to violence. Another interesting aspect was that aspects of the internal organisations could hinder collaboration with external actors. One interviewee stated that they have had trouble reaching a certain actor for some time now, due to a vast reorganisation which that organisation was conducting. Sometimes the interviewees felt like the internal organisation of other actors could pose a problem for their collaboration as there was no clear connection between different parts of the organisation and their collaborative relationships with other actors. One interviewee perceived it as they were engaged in collaborations in networks organised by the same actor and within closely related policy fields, such as one for equality and one for violence in close relationship. But the two different networks had no clear relationship with each other. This was also true for the interviewee who worked within student's health, who participated in collaborations within different regional networks than what was mentioned by the other interviewees. Although there were no divisions found in the survey results, the lived experience of the actors within the collaboration structure points to the fact that even though there's a relational linkage between actors there could still be divisions within the network.

Another negative aspect brought forward by two interviewees (I2, I6) relates to the conditions for collaboration. One interviewee talked about the importance of having a mandate to collaborate. Even though they themselves were instructed to collaborate, the mandate of public officials from other organisations could be less substantial than theirs and thus hinder a more profound collaboration. This was something that could hinder what was previously stated as a positive aspect of collaboration, namely that all actors want to collaborate. Albeit true, what is actually meant by collaboration and the mandate that's given by managers and governing politicians might hinder collaboration between willing actors. Another condition mentioned was resources, both in form of finance but also time to actually work together. One interviewee (I6) expressed concerns due to municipalities more often being in financial difficulties and cutting budgets which means that public officials have to prioritize quite harshly. And when it comes down to it, collaboration is not as prioritize as the individual cases or ordinary activities within the organisation. This can be contrasted against what another interviewee (I3) said about the ones who work on a more strategic level and that

they rarely have problems finding time or opportunity to collaborate with others, whereas those working closer to the target group lack this opportunity. This further emphasise the vulnerability of smaller organisations such as some municipalities.

Two interviewees (I3, I4) criticised the form of collaboration. Referring to collaboration on the strategic level, one interviewee called it “basic”, meaning only “*meeting, having a dialogue and informing each other, maybe bring something back to one’s own organisation*”. This was contrasted to the co-locations of certain organisations working more directly with the target population. Another aspect that was brought forward by an interviewee was that it’s hard to establish a collaborative relationship with new actors, especially if they’re not used to working with the specific issue and they might feel uncomfortable dealing with it.

Lastly, the process of collaboration was critiqued in two sense: it’s time consuming and hard to cope (I4, I5, I6). It takes time to establish a good working relationship and to build trust between those involved. It also takes time to travel to different meetings and demands engagement and energy from those involved in collaboration. To stay engaged can be a challenge and as such it’s also a difficulty to cope in collaboration. Collaboration, in wicked issues especially, can be energy-consuming and challenging to cope with. As one interviewee put it:

The challenge, both in our municipality and others, well it is to cope. It’s always to throw more wood on the fire. And sometimes I am so tired [...], there’s not even a form of definition, you still argue about it. And I am not saying that it’s easy, because it’s hard as hell, but it feels like if you take two steps forward then we take one step back (I4)

7.4 Concluding remarks

This chapter has further explored the collaboration structure that was mapped out in chapter 6. The relational linkages that was found between the actors in previous chapter was her understood as containing three different types of relationships: Resource exchange, information transmission and boundary penetration. Funding from one actor to another has the potential to increase the funding actors’ access into the workings of the other organisation and be an initial point from which collaboration between them increases. The actors with financial resources to share, namely the County Administrative board, SKL and the National board of Health and Welfare, thus have a useful tool through which they can reach actors and initiate collaboration. Moreover, the actors who receive the funding seem to develop a more prominent position in the collaboration structure, an effect that seem to have a long tenure.

The second type of relationship was information transmission which was the most commonly mentioned form of collaboration. In its most common form, methods, experience and information was shared at networks meetings which can

either be regional networks where all actors in the collaboration structure are invited or sub-regional networks with neighbouring municipalities and local actors. Thirdly, three types of boundary penetration were found. The first two, case bound collaboration and co-locating, was mentioned by the municipal actors. The third type of boundary penetration, joint action plan and strategies, was the only form of boundary penetration that the County Administrative board and the Association of Local authorities were found to participate in.

Much in line with the findings of the previous chapter, the County Administrative board was perceived by almost all as an influential actor. However, a limitation in their reach and influence was indicated as no peripheral actor named them as influential. Moreover, it was found that actors do not always perceive their role in the collaboration structure in the same way as others perceive it. Most notably was the Association of Local Authorities which had a self-image that did not correspond to the other's perception of the association.

All interviewees perceived collaboration between public authorities as positive and as a necessity in dealing with the policy issue. They differed some in regards to what was brought forward as positive. Some emphasised the professionals working with the issue and others pointed to the out-put of collaboration as positive. Interestingly, collaboration was said to provide support and solidarity for public officials working with relentless problems. This is especially true for smaller organisations where only one public official is working with the issue. As such, public collaboration in wicked issues can be said to have an intrinsic value for the public officials addressing them.

As to the negative aspects of collaboration the interviewee brought forward quite differing aspects of collaboration. Problems were found as divisions in the collaboration structure, within the conditions for collaboration, the form of collaboration as well as within its process. Whereas the previous chapter didn't show any divisions in the collaboration structure in regards to relational linkages, the lived experience of the public officials showed that such a measurement is not comprehensive enough. Even though organisations are in contact with each other, they can perceive this contact as one-sided, as isolated from other forums or fragmented between the strategic and operative public servants. More than deepening our understanding of the issue at study, this emphasises the need for a mixed method approach when investigating complex issues such as public collaboration in wicked issues. Moreover, it can be concluded that the public officials within the collaboration structure works primarily with the wicked policy issue at hand, those who work in related policy fields – which are connected to the wicked issue – are harder to reach. If these actors collaborate in the wicked policy issue, it is done within established forums within their main policy field. E.g. in this case, public officials in student's health was more likely to collaborate in forums regarding health issues than in the forums for violence in close relationships which have been the focus of this study.

Lastly, collaboration was found to be a time-consuming process which is difficult to cope. As noted before, collaboration can be a positive engagement for public official working with wicked issues as it helps them cope. However, as the process of collaboration can be tiring in its own way, it might not always be the

case that public officials can cope with both a wicked issue and collaboration. This further emphasises one of the main findings through out these chapters, that smaller organisations, such as certain municipalities, have a harder time in both dealing with wicked issues and coping with collaboration. As such, they are the most vulnerable actors in the collaboration structure. In contrast, the County Administrative board has been found to possess a position of power within the collaboration structure. This position allows them to connect actors within the structure, but also makes them perceived as being in control of the boundaries of the collaboration structure. However, this finding is not true for the entire structure of collaboration as peripheral actors was found to have a different perception of who's influential. This indicates that positional power of central actors can be limited in a collaboration structure and that peripheral actors perceive collaboration differently than more central actors in the core or semi-core.

8 Conclusions and final remarks

The aim of this thesis was to understand how public authorities collaborate in wicked policy issues. The focus has been on public collaboration in Scania in dealing with the wicked issue of violence in close relationships. This last chapter summarizes the main findings of the thesis as well as discuss their implications for the more general theoretical field of public collaboration in wicked issues.

Collaborative relationships between public authorities in Scania, when working with violence in close relationships, is best characterized as a core-periphery structured collaboration. The core of which comprises about 8-9 actors with a higher density in the relational linkages, four of which are considered to be semi-core actors. In the periphery, the density of relation is lower than in the core. Public authorities within the collaboration structure often collaborate by information transmission via network meetings. Some of these are region-wide networks with many actors and others are sub-regional networks with neighbouring municipalities and local actors. Collaboration within this policy field can also entail boundary penetration between actors or resource exchange. Resource exchange was found to be a consequential incentive for collaboration which intensified the contact between actors. Actors who distribute financial funding is granted more access to the recipient and, as collaboration intensifies, the recipient becomes a more prominent actor within the collaboration structure. These effects seem to have a long tenure in the collaboration structure as actors who have received funding are still prominent in some aspects of the structure.

In both of the methods applied, the County Administrative board emerged as an important actor with a prominent position of power, with an ability to mediate contacts and control the boundary of the collaboration structure. It was however indicated that the positional power of this most central actor was limited in its reach. No peripheral actor stated the County Administrative board as an influential actor, whereas all of the core and semi-core actors perceived it as such. This indicates that the perception of the collaboration structure can vary depending on an actor's position within it. Moreover, other actors within the core was also found to possess positional power, albeit in somewhat varying ways. The Regional Authorities and Skåne Association of Local Authorities both had a prominent position to mediate connections in the network, especially in reaching those peripheral actors that was less connected. This was also true for the County Administrative board, who also had the opportunity to do so more frequently. The competence centre in Malmö was also found to be a prominent actor in the sense that it had a high frequency of contact with a number of actors within the collaboration structure. However, as its connections were well connected to each other, the positional power of the competence centre decreases. This points to the fact that positional power is not just about individual actor's number of ties and frequency of contact, but also about the collaboration structure connecting all actors.

For the municipal actors it was the Social services that was most involved in the collaboration structure. The Student's health and School departments seemed

to be most in contact with other internal municipal actors and less frequently than the Social services. Although no isolates or sub-groups was found in the quantitative analysis, the interviews indicated divisions within the collaboration structure. Parts of this relates to parallel processes between as well as within public authorities, with certain policy networks – such as violence in close relationships and student’s health – was perceived as isolated forums with somewhat unclear connections to each other. Furthermore, collaboration was perceived as being fragmented between those who work purely strategically with the issue and those who work more operative. It can also be concluded that those who work in related policy fields – which are connected to the wicked issue, but not primarily designated to it – are harder to reach. If these actors collaborate in the wicked policy issue, it is done through established forums within their main policy field. As such, multiple forums which all try to mitigate the wickedness of the issue risk working parallelly without any clear connections.

In general, the municipal actors were found to be the most vulnerable type of actors in the collaboration structure. Not just in density measures and number of connections, but they are also most vulnerable to the challenges of collaboration and wicked issues. Furthermore, as wicked issues are such intractable and un-solvable issues, they’re tiresome for public officials to deal with. For smaller organisations, where often only one public official works with the issue, collaboration with others becomes a forum for support and solidarity. Consequently, smaller municipalities are the most vulnerable actors in the collaboration structure, at the same time their public officials might need collaboration the most.

Although it has been stated before that collaborative relationships tend to vary with context (Sowa, 2008), this thesis has found a collaboration structure that is fairly coherent to what has been said about collaboration in Sweden before. In this case just as in others, looser forms of collaborations seem to be more common than more regulated ones such as boundary penetration. That all interviewees were positive to collaboration might be derived from the so called culture of collaboration within the Swedish bureaucracy. Moreover, the positive aspects and challenges with public collaborations in wicked issues are clearly related to the general features of both collaboration and wickedness. As such, they are most likely applicable in other contexts where public officials collaborate in wicked issues.

The specific actors involved and their position within the collaboration structure will most likely vary in other context, but the structure of collaboration might however be fairly similar across cases. Given that this stretch beyond the scope of this thesis, it needs to be further investigated in other studies. Another interesting aspect to consider would be the administrative culture’s impact on public collaborations in wicked issues as well as variation between different types of wicked issues. Lastly, this thesis has also demonstrated the essentiality of mixing methods when researching complex concepts such as collaboration and wicked issues.

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Appendix I

Survey Questionnaire

Background information

1. What type of employer do you have?
 - a. Municipal
 - b. Regional authority
 - c. State authority
 - d. Other [free text]
2. Which organisation are you employed by [free text]
3. What is your professional title [free text]
4. To what extent do you work with issues related to violence in close relationships?
 - a. Rarely
 - b. Partially
 - c. Full time

Collaboration

Collaboration can take many forms and be conceptualized in a number of different ways. In this mapping, the interest lies on understanding **how often** you are in contact with different organisations. Therefore, you will be asked to state how often that you are in contact with a number of different organisations **in questions related to violence in close relationships**. Examples of contact can be, but is not excluded to, information sharing via email, network meetings, other forms of meetings that touches upon the issue, joint projects, etc.

We have consciously chosen to define collaboration in very broad terms in this survey in order to capture an overall image of the contacts that exist between organisations in Scania. When replying, we ask you to consider the contact that you have had **during the last 12 months**.

2. How often are you in contact with **the County Administrative board in Scania** in relation to violence in close relationships?
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
3. How often are you in contact with **the Regional Authorities in Scania** in relation to violence in close relationships?
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month

- d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
4. Out of this contact with the Regional Authorities, how often is it with:
- Health centers
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 - Hospital
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 - Dentistry
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 - Maternity centre
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 - Regional Authorities HQ
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 - Other [free text]
5. How often are you in contact with **Skåne Association of Local Authorities** in relation to violence in close relationships?
- a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
6. How often are you in contact with **the police** in relation to violence in close relationships?
- a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week

- e. Daily
7. How often are you in contact with **the National board of Health and Welfare** in relation to violence in close relationships?
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 8. How often are you in contact with **the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL) Scania** in relation to violence in close relationships?
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 9. How often are you in contact with **the competence centre for violence in close relationships** in relation to violence in close relationships?
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 10. Which of the following **municipalities** are you in contact with in relation to violence in close relationships?
 - List of all 33 municipalities in Scania
 - Respons options for every municipality: Never, Once or a couple of times per year/month/week, Daily
 11. Out of this contact with the municipalities in Scania, how often is it with:

If you're employed by a municipality, please answer in regards to your contact with **other municipalities**.

 - Social services
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 - School
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
 - Student's health
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month

- d. Once or a couple of times per week
- e. Daily
- Other [free text]

The following questions are **only relevant if you're employed by a municipality**. If this is not the case, please proceed to the next section.

12. In **the municipality in Scania (in which you're employed)**, how often are you in contact with the following departments in relation to violence in close relationships?

- Social services
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
- School
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
- Student's health
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
- Other [free text]

Other collaborations

- 13. Are you in contact with any other **public authority** in relation to violence in close relationships? [Free text]
- 14. How often are you in contact with **Women shelters** in relation to violence in close relationships?
 - a. Never
 - b. Once or a couple of times per year
 - c. Once or a couple of times per month
 - d. Once or a couple of times per week
 - e. Daily
- 15. Are you in contact with any other organisation in relation to violence in close relationship? [Free text]
- 16. If you have any other comments or remarks, please state them here. [Free text]

Appendix II

Interview guide

The aim of the thesis is to understand how public authorities collaborate in wicked policy issues.

The aim of the interviews is to capture the public officials' perceptions of the relationships – the “lived experience” of the collaborations.

Collect consent to participate and to record interview.

Role of interviewed organization in dealing with violence in close relationships

- How do you work at [organisation name] with violence in close relationships?
- What is your professional role in this work?

Collaboration with other organisations

Form

- In what way would you describe that you're collaborating with other organisations?
- Why do you collaborate in order to counteract violence in close relationships? (The purpose)
- What, in your opinion is the essence of your collaboration with other organisations?
- Do you perceive any variation in how collaboration works with different actors?

Influence

- Which actor(s) would you say have influence over how collaboration works today, in Scania?

Usefulness

- In regards to how it works today, what do you perceive as positive in your collaboration with others?
- In regards to how it works today, what do you perceive as negative in your collaboration with others?

Survey results

- Do these results correspond to your perception of collaboration in Scania today? Why/Why not?
- Why don't you collaborate with [organisation name]?

Appendix III

Density measures for all nodes.

Node	Outdeg	nOutdeg	% of ties	Node	Indeg	nIndeg	% of ties
County Administrative board	80	0,667	1	Women shelters	27	0,225	0,425
Competence centre	48	0,4	0,727	County Administrative board	23	0,192	0,4
Lund	46	0,383	1	Police	21	0,175	0,45
Association of Local Authorities	43	0,358	1	Regional authorities	19	0,158	0,375
Regional authorities	40	0,333	1	Competence centre	18	0,15	0,325
Malmö	33	0,275	0,75	Association of Local Authorities	16	0,133	0,375
Eslöv	20	0,167	0,4	SKL	16	0,133	0,35
Kristianstad	16	0,133	0,375	National board of health and Welfare	15	0,125	0,325
Ängelholm	16	0,133	0,375	Lund	13	0,108	0,225
Höganäs	15	0,125	0,375	Malmö	13	0,108	0,25
Staffanstorp	14	0,117	0,3	Hässleholm	12	0,1	0,275
Vellinge	14	0,117	0,3	Kristianstad	10	0,083	0,225
Sjöbo	12	0,1	0,3	Östra Göinge	10	0,083	0,2
Bjuv	10	0,083	0,2	Landskrona	10	0,083	0,225
Trelleborg	10	0,083	0,25	Hörby	10	0,083	0,2
Osby	8	0,067	0,2	Bromölla	10	0,083	0,2
Svedala	7	0,058	0,175	Ängelholm	9	0,075	0,175
Hässleholm	4	0,033	0,1	Bjuv	9	0,075	0,175
Östra Göinge	3	0,025	0,075	Trelleborg	9	0,075	0,2
Helsingborg	2	0,017	0,05	Helsingborg	9	0,075	0,2
Women shelters	-	-	-	Svalöv	9	0,075	0,2
Police	-	-	-	Simrishamn	9	0,075	0,2
SKL	-	-	-	Örkelljunga	9	0,075	0,2
National board of Health and Welfare	-	-	-	Perstorp	9	0,075	0,175
Landskrona	-	-	-	Åstorp	9	0,075	0,175
Hörby	-	-	-	Eslöv	8	0,067	0,175
Bromölla	-	-	-	Höganäs	8	0,067	0,175
Svalöv	-	-	-	Osby	8	0,067	0,15
Simrishamn	-	-	-	Höör	8	0,067	0,15
Örkelljunga	-	-	-	Klippan	8	0,067	0,175
Perstorp	-	-	-	Ystad	8	0,067	0,175
Åstorp	-	-	-	Burlöv	8	0,067	0,15
Höör	-	-	-	Båstad	8	0,067	0,175
Klippan	-	-	-	Kävlinge	8	0,067	0,15
Ystad	-	-	-	Skurup	8	0,067	0,15
Burlöv	-	-	-	Staffanstorp	7	0,058	0,175
Båstad	-	-	-	Svedala	7	0,058	0,15
Kävlinge	-	-	-	Tomelilla	7	0,058	0,15
Skurup	-	-	-	Vellinge	6	0,05	0,125
Tomelilla	-	-	-	Sjöbo	5	0,042	0,1
Lomma	-	-	-	Lomma	5	0,042	0,1

Outdeg=Out-degree density, nOutdeg = nominalized Out-degree density, shown as % of maximum value. Indeg= In-degree density, nIndeg = nominalized In-degree density, shown as % of maximum value. % of ties = % of binary ties.

Connectivity of actors

Node	Connectivity to node
Lomma	68
Sjöbo	72
Kävlinge	82
Vellinge	82
Osby	85
Eslöv	87
Burlöv	93
Höör	95
Staffanstorp	95
Tomelilla	95
Bjuv	97
Skurup	97
Örkelljunga	97
Simrishamn	98
Ystad	98
Svalöv	100
Landskrona	102
Perstorp	102
Åstorp	102
Klippan	103
Kristianstad	103
Bromölla	104
Helsingborg	104
Östra Göinge	104
Båstad	106
Svedala	107
Hörby	109
Ängelholm	109
Höganäs	112
Trelleborg	118
Lund	121
National board of Health and Welfare	124
Hässleholm	126
Malmö	130
Competence centre	148
County Administrative board	150
SKL	152
Regional authorities	162
Women shelters	165
Association of local authorities	170
Police	175

Other public and non-public organisations listed by the survey respondents

Public organisations	Count
Swedish universities	9
Criminal and prohibition agency	7
Prosecution authority	5
Public employment service	5
National centre for knowledge on men's violence against women (NCK)	5
Municipalities from other regions	5
Police	4
Web page on honour related violence run by the County Administrative board of Östergötland	4
Other national agencies	4
Municipalities in Scania	4
Migration agency	3
Child centre in Lund	3
Other County Administrative boards	3
Public Insurance agency	2
Internal municipal departments	2
Psychiatric clinics	2
Kriscentrum Lund	1
Association of Local Authorities in Scania	1
Finsam	1
Non-public organisations	Count
Non-profits	14
Shelters and helplines	4
Knowledge providers	5
Religious actors	3
Other (landlords, politicians)	2
Private actors	1