THE LINK BETWEEN STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE OF MUNICIPALITIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Master thesis

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December 2015

UNIVERSITEIT TWENTE.

MASTER THESIS

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Faculty:	Behavioural, management and social sciences (BMS)
Date:	December 18th, 2015
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Title master thesis:

The link between strategy and performance of municipalities in the Netherlands

Enschede, December 2015

ABSTRACT

Studies in public management consistently show that 'management matters', but little research has considered the effect of strategy on performance for local government, in a non Anglo-Saxon context. This article examines the link between strategic orientation and organizational performance of local government in The Netherlands. Strategic orientation is herein measured as to what extend municipalities are prospectors, defenders and reactors, using the Miles and Snow strategy operationalization for the public sector by Boyne and Walker (2004). The analysis uses data on strategic orientation from 110 Dutch municipalities. Results validate the Miles and Snow strategy framework. Namely, the framework seems appropriate for measuring organizational strategy in the Dutch public sector; and it clearly shows the presence of strategic orientations used by municipalities in the Netherlands. Organizational performance of municipalities is operationalized by economic, social-cultural, and ecological capital. Findings show no significant linear effects between strategic orientation and organizational performance. However, effects indicate complex curve linear interactions patterns of strategy on performance.

KEYWORDS

Public sector, strategy, performance, Dutch, municipalities, Miles and Snow, typology, Netherlands, Boyne and Walker

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INTRODUCTION

Local governments face constant challenges on how to organize their public tasks and processes as efficient and effective as possible, always with the aim to provide as much added value and quality for their citizens. Due to numerous transitions and transformations, Dutch municipalities[1] are currently looking for new and improved ways to perform their tasks (KING, 2014). One of the main developments in the Dutch public sector is the decentralization of tasks from national to local government. Not only are Dutch municipalities now responsible for more tasks, they should also provide these services on a lower budget. Examples of these new responsibilities for Dutch municipalities are child welfare, employment and income, and long-term care for the sick and elderly (Rijksoverheid, 2014).

To execute tasks and services in an optimal way, performance management is becoming increasingly important for organizations in the public sector(Flynn. 2007; Moynihan & Pandey', 2005)Performance management aims to monitor the performance of organizations, and seeks ways to improve public decision making and organizational performance (Bjornholt & Larsen, 2014; Moynihan & Pandey, 2005; Van Dooren, Bouckaert, & Halligan, 2015).

"The performance of public organizations is influenced by many variables. Some of these variables are largely outside control of public managers" (Boyne & Walker, 2010, p. 185). Campbell et al (1974, in Andrews, 2010, p. 91) make a division to understand the scope of control of managers. They divide the characteristics of organizational structure in structural and structuring characteristics. Structural characteristics "comprise the physical attributes of an organization; its size, span of control and administrative intensity. Structuring characteristics are the policies and activities which actively shape the behavior of organizational members; the relative centralization of decision making, formalization of rules and procedures and specialization of job tasks" (Campbell et al 1974 in Andrews, 2010, p. 91). Boyne and Walker (2010) make a call to focus on structuring variables which are inside the span of control of managers and can therefore be influenced; more specifically organizational strategy (Boyne & Walker, 2010).

Studies from business research have shown that organizations with a clearly defined organizational strategy that is aligned with their external environment perform better, compared to organizations that do not have a clear strategy (Bryson, 2011). While this positive influence of a clearly defined organizational strategy for business organizations is very promising, the influence of strategy on the performance of organizations in the public sector is less clear (Boyne & Walker, 2010). Evidence from prior research supports the general overall proposition that "management [strategy] matters in measurable ways for performance" (Meier, Andersen, O'Toole, Favero, & Winter, 2015, p. 131), "but the precise findings also vary across these and other contexts" (O'Toole & Meier, 2014, p. 2). Even though more and more research is conducted on the relationship between organizational strategy and the performance of local government, there is still a considerable lack of knowledge in this specific field (O'Toole & Meier, 2014; Walker & Andrews, 2015). Therefore, the aim of this research is to get a better understanding of the association between organizational strategy and public performance of local government. This is done by replication research, assessing the association between strategy and performance in the Dutch context.

[1] In Dutch: gemeenten.

This study aims to contribute to a better understanding of the association between strategy and performance of local authorities in the public sector in general, and for the Dutch context in particular. Previous studies on the effects of strategy on the performance of local government provide various results, use the same (limited) available data, which is mostly drawn from the same geographical area (Walker, 2013). Almost all research is conducted in the context of the United Kingdom and the United States. In the United Kingdom the separate and joint influences of strategy (and other variables) on performance of local Welsh government are investigated (R. Andrews, G. A. Boyne, J. Law, & R. M. Walker, 2009; Rhys Andrews, George A. Boyne, Jennifer Law, & Richard M. Walker, 2009; R. Andrews, Boyne, G. A., Law, J., & Walker, R. M, 2008). The replication of research helps to test and/or confirm the findings of the relationship between two variables (Babbie, 2015). By replicating research on the influence of public sector strategy on organizational performance in new a context, the previous findings of public sector strategy on organizational performance are either confirmed or questioned.
Relevance to society is the better understanding of the influence of strategy on the performance of local government. The findings from this study will indicate more or less favourable organizational strategies. Hopefully, this research on the effect of strategy will yield new insights that can be used by politicians and policymakers. This enhanced knowledge will help them to make better decisions on management and control, making this research very relevant to society.

To investigate the influence of strategy on public service performance of local government in the Netherlands the following descriptive research question is formulated:
“What is the association between organizational strategy and public service performance of Dutch municipalities in 2015?”

RESEARCH CONTEXT

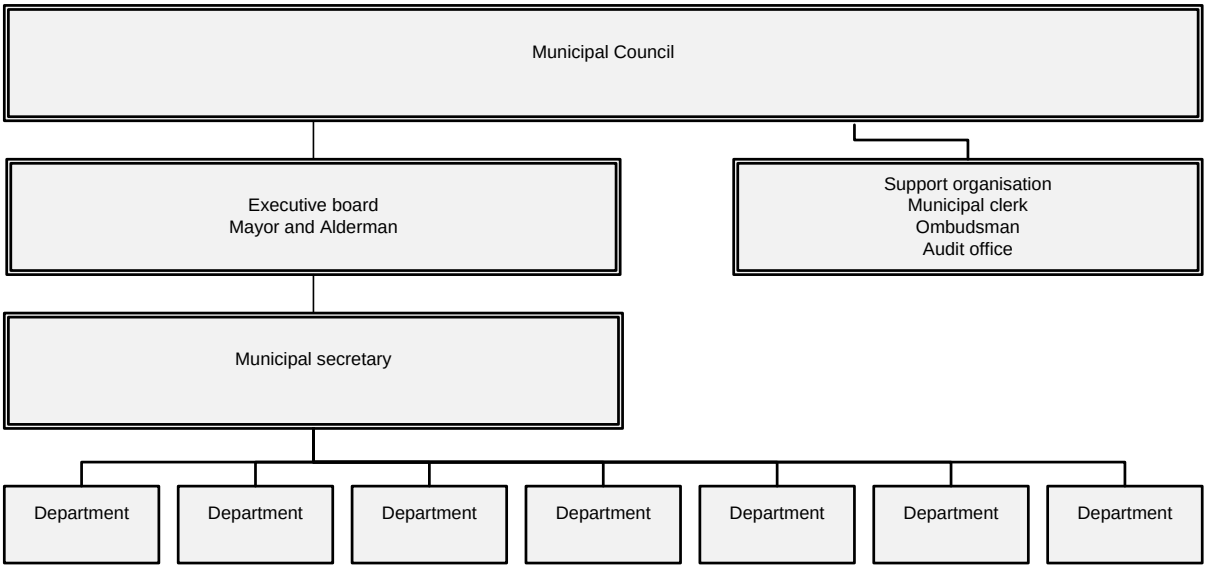
As this study is a replication of earlier conducted research in a new different context, it is important to take a closer look at the influence of context on the association between strategic orientation and organizational performance. Context affects the link between strategy and performance (L. J. O'Toole & Meier, 2015). Different contextual opportunities and constraints affect the effects of management on performance, and the effects of strategy in particular (Meier et al., 2015). Johns (2006, p. 386) defines context as the "situational opportunities and constraints that affect the occurrence and meaning of organizational behavior as well as functional relationships between variables" (L. J. O'Toole & Meier, 2015, p. 238). Context consists of three main dimensions; political context, environmental context, and internal context. The most important aspect of the political context is separation of powers (unitary versus shared powers). Other variables that define the political context are federalism (single or multiple-level), process (corporatist versus adversial), and performance appraisal. The environmental context consists of the variables complexity, turbulence, and munificence (the ability to access resources). The internal context consists of the extent of goal clarity and consistency, organizational centralization, and degree of professionalism within an organization (L. J. O'Toole & Meier, 2015).

The context of organizational strategy in the present study is local government in the Netherlands, in particular Dutch municipalities. The governance approach is often described as Northern Europe or Rhineland, which is characterized by broadly corporatist and consensus-oriented approaches. The context of municipalities in the Netherlands is characterized by a complex highly politicized institutional environment (Brown, 2010). Dutch municipalities are the first and primary level of government in which citizens come into contact with (Figee, Eigeman, & Hilterman, 2008). Municipalities are multipurpose authorities who provide a range of tasks and services for their citizens. Their tasks consists of physical planning, public housing, transport, environment, social services, education, culture and welfare (Figee et al., 2008). "In principle all municipalities have the same tasks, though due to their size, the large municipalities require a different approach to the way their work is done than ~~in~~ the smaller municipalities" according to the Association of Netherlands Municipalities, VNG (Figee et al., 2008, p. 29). The political context of municipalities is characterized by a proportional representation-style system. There is limited room for managerial discretion since municipalities are rule bound administrative systems (Brown, 2010). Finally, Dutch municipalities are rarely focused on efficiency and effectiveness alone. Decision making of the municipal council and/or the executive board is not solely based on arguments, but is also considered in a broader political rationality in which risk aversion, symbolic behaviour, rhetoric, media and ideology influence the process (Figee et al., 2008; Twist, Peeters, & Steen, 2008).

Most research within the field of public management on in the influence of organizational strategy on performance, took place in the United Kingdom and United States. These countries are characterized by an Anglo-Saxon public management and governance approach, which is indicated by low government involvement in the public sector and providing fewer services (Meier et al., 2015; L. J. O'Toole & Meier, 2015).
The political context of local government in the United Kingdom, in particular, Wales's local authorities, is characterized by governance by elected bodies with a Westminster-style cabinet system of political management. In this system, "the cabinet represents the de facto

executive branch of government and is usually made up of senior members of the ruling political party, all of whom collectively decide public policy and government strategy" (R. Andrews et al., 2009, p. 63 footnote). Municipalities are herein multipurpose authorities that provide a range of services such as "education, social care, regulatory services, housing, welfare benefits, leisure, and cultural services" (R. Andrews et al., 2009, p. 64). The internal organization is through this range of services characterized by ambiguous goals.
In the Anglo-Saxon world management has big influence, in contrast to concentrated-consensual systems wherein the effect of management diminishes. This reduced effect is due to the fact consensus building becomes more of a routine in countries characterized by a governance approach (Meier et al., 2015).

Figure 1: Organogram of municipalities in the Netherlands



In the Netherlands, municipalities are led by the Mayor and municipal executives[2]. The municipal executive board consists of Alderman[3] who belong to the ruling political coalition. The people's representation carries herein the power; this institution is named the municipal council[4]. The representatives of the municipal council are elected by a four year electoral cycle. A typical municipal council consists of groups and factions of political parties. The task of the municipal council is to supervise, question, criticize and attack the municipal executives if necessary. The size of the municipal council depends on the number of residents living in the municipality; the biggest municipalities have 45 seats and the smallest only seven. There is a system of political accountability in place in which the executives are accountable to the Council for their policies and implementation. The municipal secretary[5] has herein the task to advise and support the municipal executives, and heads the municipal administrative system (Figee et al., 2008; Twist et al., 2008). The organizational structure is visualized in Figure 1.

[2] In Dutch: College van Burgemeesters en Wethouders
[3] In Dutch: Wethouders
[4] In Dutch: Gemeenteraad
[5] In Dutch: Gemeentesecretaris

Influence of New Public Management on Dutch municipalities

New Public Management had a major influence on Dutch municipalities. Organizational strategy to improve the performance of public sector organizations originates from New Public Management (NPM). NPM is used as a broad term for public sector reforms since the 1980s. It aims to improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of public services by implementing private sector characteristics into public organizations (Desmidt & Heene, 2005). Organizations tried to improve through reforms such as stimulation of more competition, less regulation, and more autonomy for local government. An attempt was made to reduce the too extensive bureaucratization, transform inward looking organizations into more open agencies, and make public organizations more adaptive and responsive to citizens (Morales, Wittek, & Heyse, 2012).

On a local level in the Netherlands, the higher level of autonomy became especially visible in two major reforms: municipal service departments were granted self-management; and policy formulation and policy implementation were separated, by dividing those tasks between the City Council and executive board of Mayor and Municipal Executive (Morales et al., 2012). Proponents of NPM strongly belief public organizations will become more flexible and adaptive after administrative reforms (Morales et al., 2012) and the reforms result in lower costs and better service (Desmidt & Heene, 2005). Critics emphasize the incompatibility of NPM with the traditional values in public sector (Desmidt & Heene, 2005).

Definition of strategy in the Dutch context

Strategy in the Dutch context can be generally described as a plan to achieve one or more goals with (limited) available resources (Desmidt & Heene, 2005). This meaning of strategy in Dutch public management is strongly influenced by Anglo-Saxon public management literature (Mouwen, 2006; Twist et al., 2008). Dutch government uses the term strategy in numerous reports (such as ambition documents, visions, and explorations) as a mean to achieve goals; operate in a coordinated way; use and deploy resources in an efficient and effective manner; differentiate and excel on specific domains (see, e.g. Erfgoed (2015); Schultz van Haegen (2015)), but do not offer a standard definition or a description about what strategy is. The Dutch influential Social and Economic Council, SER, implicitly describes strategy as a way ‘to achieve goals’. It functions to act together with a shared vision, describe the role of the government in relation to other actors, and strive for effectiveness (SER, 2002).

The importance of strategy is acknowledged by the Dutch (national) government (Twist et al., 2008). As improved strategic policy making was desired (Twist, Peeters, & Steen, 2007), two committees were established (Borstlap, 2002a; Leeflang, 2003) to investigate the perceived lack of strategy, and to come up with recommendations on the desired meaning of strategic thinking (Leeflang, 2003). The result of these investigations was the formulation of four ambitions to improve the use of strategy. First, formulate future proof policies, with an emphasis on long-term goals and by doing so to reduce the impact of ‘news of the day’. Second, application of knowledge and research to accomplish well deliberate (less populist) policies. Third, strengthening of the external orientation (Leeflang, 2003). Finally, reach coherent policies by breaking down compartmentalization (Twist et al., 2008). Borstlap (2002b) concludes that strategy is necessary for all government, both on a local and national level. Strategic policy making is herein defined as "the ability to develop and execute coherent daily policies, accounted for international, social and economic, social cultural and

environmental trends, and wherein this policy is developed in a medium term perspective" (Borstlap, 2002b, p. 53).

Strategy of municipalities in the Netherlands

The organizational strategy of Dutch municipalities itself is strongly influenced by the need to cut back, according to recent findings from Dutch public sector consultant BMC (Geuzendam, 2014). The need for savings is caused by disappointing revenues from land development, reduction of income from the national government, and additional tasks related to decentralizations with corresponding efficiency reductions (Geuzendam, 2014). Municipalities choose to solve these financial problems through enhanced financial and technical efficiency, discussion about the core tasks, and strategic reorientation (Geuzendam, 2014). However, improved efficiency of current processes to optimize their internal organization is not solving all (financial) problems for municipalities. This forces organizations to make real strategic choices and discuss their core tasks and rethink their role in society (Geuzendam, 2014). See footnote[6] for some examples of organizational strategies of municipalities in the Netherlands.

[6] Examples of organizational strategies of municipalities in the Netherlands:

- "The Municipality of Bussum wants to remain a financially sound municipality and offer an attractive residential, working and living environment for residents, organizations and businesses" (GemeenteBussum, 2015).
- "A society-oriented approach as a starting point, with legitimacy (laws, rules and systems) and a market approach (commercial) as support. To establish these goals we have to be continuously connected as organization whit society. With this new approach we are (even) closer to the residents of Enschede" (Municipality of Enschede, 2015).
- "Boxtel, sustainable and dynamic centre in the Green Forest". The six ambitions of Boxtel:
  Boxtel remains at the forefront of sustainability;
  Boxtel develops tourism and leisure into a full-fledged industry;
  Boxtel strengthens its position as municipality offering high employment;
  Boxtel develops a strong city centre;
  Boxtel is in 2020 still an excellent residential community;
  Boxtel has a modern administration" (GemeenteBoxtel, 2009).
- "Maintain and where necessary improve the pleasant residential, work, and living environment of Drimmelen, associated with the blue-green character, scale, and medium-sized rural municipality. We do this in partnership with our community partners and consider continuously the general and individual interest. Drimmelen is a municipality to be proud of!" (GemeenteDrimmelen, 2015).

THEORY: STRATEGY AND PERFORMANCE

To investigate the association between strategy and public service performance, it is necessary to understand what strategy is and how it functions. Strategy is a way to cope with challenges and new expectations (Bryson, 2011). Chandler (1962) argued "Strategic choice was the critical variable in explaining how organizations could successfully achieve the optimum fit between the articulation and achievement of their goals" (R. Andrews et al., 2009, p. 62). Chandler defines "strategy is the determination of the basic long-term goals of an enterprise, and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals" (p. 13). K. R. Andrews (1971, p. 28) further describes strategy as "a pattern of objectives, purposes or goals and major policies and plans for achieving these goals, stated in such way as to define what business the company is in or is to be in and the kind of company it is or is to be". In 1980 Porter defines strategy as the "broad formula for how a business is going to compete, what its goals should be, and what policies will be needed to carry out those goals" and the "combination of the ends (goals) for which the firm is striving and the means (policies) by which it is seeking to get there" (Porter, 1980, 2008). This definition of Porter (1980) emphasizes two components of strategy; the position of an organizations within its environment, and second the use of resources to realize goals (Desmidt & Heene, 2005). Strategy is closely connected to strategic planning[7] but differs in the fact that strategy has multiple sources, and is planned and unplanned influenced during the process of strategy making (Bryson, 2011). "Strategy [content] can be defined as the patterns of service provision that are selected and implemented by organizations" (Boyne & Walker, 2004, p. 231). Organizational strategy is defined as "the overall way in which an organization seeks to maintain or improve its performance. This overall way is a relatively stable approach of acting by a organization and not likely to change dramatically in the short term" ((Zajac and Shortell, 1989) in (R. Andrews et al., 2009, p. 62).

Organizational strategy in the public sector

The function and understanding of strategy differs in the public sector from the private sector. In the public sector there is emphasis on the creation of public value. Public managers produce public value for the citizenry who comprise of a range of various stakeholders, which express needs and wants through elections and deliberative processes. In the private sector, strategy is often used as weapon to outperform competitors and to defeat rivals (Boyne & Walker, 2004). Another important difference is the use of a range of resources in the public sector; such as money but also public power (Scholes & Johnson, 2001). Through these differences, theories from private sector are not (always) appropriate for public sector since they approach strategy as a tool to beat the competition between actors over scarce resources, maximizing the access to those resources, and secure a competitive advantage (Brown, 2010). However the boundaries between public and private sector erode and the distinction between the two sectors becomes vaguer and shows some overlay. These reduced differences are caused by increasingly uncertain and turbulent environment, and the development of more interconnectedness of organizations (Bryson,

[7] Strategy is closely connected to strategic planning a "disciplined effort to produce fundamental decisions and actions that shape and guide what an organization is, what it does, and why it does it" (Bryson, 2011, p. 20). And strategic planning "can help organizations to develop and implement effective strategies" (Bryson, 2011, p. 21). But strategic planning is not a synonym for strategy, because strategy has multiple sources, and is planned and unplanned influenced during the process of strategy making (Bryson, 2011).

2011). Through this development, (business) strategies emerge more and more in the public sector because it enables organizations to set priorities and give a profile to an organization. In this way, public organizations are able to provide more transparency and secure funding. Strategy signals responsibility to acquire resources and to achieve results. Politicians desire more control over the professionals, and simultaneously want to make professionals more responsible for outcomes (Llewellyn & Tappin, 2003). These reasons, have created broad awareness in the public sector about the importance of strategy as variable that influences performance of organizations (Walker & Andrews, 2015)[8].

This study follows the widely used public sector strategy conceptualization of Boyne and Walker (2010, p. 185) in which strategy is "a means by which organizations can improve their performance and provide better services". Strategy making is herein defined as the practice of "the development and execution of a plan of action to guide behavior in pursuit of organizational goals" (Brown, 2010, p. 212).

Contingency theory

The concept of strategy is often approached from the perspective of the contingency theory. In this line of reasoning, certain organizational types (characterized by size, structure, process and environment) are more likely to be more successful than others, under certain conditions (Walker & Andrews, 2015).

Classification of public sector strategy

Various authors seek to classify strategy for the private and public sector of whom the strategy classifications of Porter (1980) and Miles, Snow, Meyer, and Coleman (1978) are most dominant. These two frameworks have inspired others to develop strategic management frameworks for public organizations. J. M. Stevens and McGowan (1983) asked respondents to assess their agreement with 25 strategic alternatives concerning sources of revenue for municipalities, authority and the financial position. Wechsler and Backoff (1986) employed a large scale document study in combination with unstructured interviews to measure the strategic management approaches within the public sector. They looked among others at strength of control, strategic action, orientation towards change, scope of management, and management activity level. Greenwood (1987) used a paragraph/ categorical approach to measure strategy. Respondents were asked to choose, from four short strategy type descriptions, that would fit their organization most. Conant, Mokwa, and Varadarajan (1990) used eleven multi-items scales to create categories concerning entrepreneurial, engineering, and administrative problems.

However, these specific developed frameworks still have their limitations for application in public organizations. The main four problems are: false conflicting typologies, simplistic and unidimensional classification of strategy classifications, failure to recognize public sector characteristics, and unclear public sector strategies (Boyne & Walker, 2004).

[8] Besides strategy, there are other important variables which influence performance. These variables can be categorized under economic theory, contingency theory, or resource based theories. The key concepts of economic theory are: organizational size, contracting out, competition, collaboration, and coproduction. Following resource based theories: management systems, staff quality, personnel stability, leadership, human resource management practices, representative bureaucracy, networking. Contingency theory includes the following key concepts: administrative intensity, centralization, integration, strategy content, strategic planning.

Boyne and Walker (2004) further operationalized the Miles and Snow strategy framework to measure the strategic orientation of organizations using multi-item scales allowing strategy to vary. The Miles and Snow strategy typology "is based on the idea that managers seek to formulate strategies that are congruent with the external environment that their organizations confront" (Rainey, 2009, p. 198). The operationalization of Boyne and Walker (2004) captures the strategic orientation of organizations via twelve questions. This framework covers the three main strategic options that are open to public organizations, namely: search for something new, try to optimize current services, or await instructions (Walker, 2013). Therefore, this exhaustive operationalization seems most appropriate to measure strategy in the public sector (R. Andrews et al., 2009; Rhys Andrews et al., 2009; R. Andrews, Boyne, Law, & Walker, 2011; R. Andrews, Boyne, G. A., Law, J., & Walker, R. M, 2008; Boyne & Walker, 2004).

The Miles and Snow (1978) strategy framework further developed by Boyne and Walker (2004) for use in the public sectorby, describes four 'ideal types' of organizational distance: prospectors, defenders, reactors, and analyzers.

- Prospectors are organizations that "almost continually search for market opportunities, and regularly experiment with potential responses to emerging environmental trends'' (Miles and Snow 1978, p. 29). Prospectors are innovators who are constantly looking for development of new products.
- Defenders are organizations that take a conservative view of new product development. They typically ''devote primary attention to improving the efficiency of their existing operations'' (Miles and Snow 1978, p. 29).
- "Analyzers represent an intermediate category, sharing elements of both prospector and defender" (Boyne & Walker, 2004, p. 233). They are rarely 'first movers', and prefer to "watch their competitors closely for new ideas, and ... rapidly adopt those which appear to be most promising'' (Miles and Snow, 1978, p. 29).
- Reactors are by nature organizations which lack a consistent and stable strategy for responding to perceived change and uncertainty in their organizational environments. A reactor ''seldom makes adjustment of any sort until forced to do so by environmental pressures'' (Miles and Snow 1978, p. 29).

It is likely that a mix of strategies is pursued over time. A single exclusive categorization in boxes is therefore not appropriate. All organizations are therefore characterised by the strength of the strategic orientations.
The Analyzers use a mix of defender en prospector strategies which they pursue at the same time, or one after the other. Still, one strategic orientation will be dominant, and therefore the analyzer strategy as middle category was left out by similar research (R. Andrews et al., 2009), because they argue all organizations have one dominated strategy, and are therefore prospectors and defenders to some extent.

Findings of the Miles and Snow framework

In recent years, the results of more large-N quantitative studies on public sector performance have become available. However, these studies have produced various (and sometimes conflicted) outcomes (O'Toole & Meier, 2014). On the basis of a literature study on the findings of the Miles and Snow framework in public organizations some key findings can be concluded (Walker, 2013):

A mix of strategies matters

The ability for municipalities, as multipurpose organizations, to pursue a range of strategies it is important to perform well in the public sector, because strategies are not a pure type, but more of a combination in practice (Walker, 2013). Furthermore, public managers typically have to make some tradeoffs between different goals and outcomes (Walker, 2013). These recent insights are contrary towards the propositions by Miles and Snow (1978) that organizations adopt a single strategic archetype as prospector, defender, analyzer, or reactor. The literature study by Walker (2013, p. 679) shows a majority of the studies "implicitly assumes that strategies varies across an organization by using scales that capture the defender and prospector strategy types and the features of an analyzer". A scale implies an organization can display prospecting and defending characteristics at the same time. As for example, a strategy of optimization of core services combined with innovative characteristics; or the addition of some efficiency of current processes in the search for new opportunities; may be best combinations of both prospecting and defender strategies (Walker, 2013).

Prospectors and defenders outperform reactors

Organization are more likely to achieve high organizational performance when they follow a prospector or defender characteristics or a combination of prospecting and defending (Walker, 2013). Studies in the public sector prove that "prospecting and defending strategies result in better organizational performance than reacting strategies" (p. 680). This is due to the deliberative character of prospecting and defending strategies. Reacting on the contrary, is an awaiting strategy since organizations are responding to constrains and pressure from the external environment (Walker, 2013).

However, Boyne and Walker (2004) argued that a reacting strategy might be beneficial based on demands of citizens. Walker (2013) describes this as the strategic lemon, because organizations are more likely to achieve high organizational performance when they follow a mix of prospector and defender characteristics instead of reacting. The recent findings that prospectors and defenders outperform reactors are consistent with the propositions of Miles and Snow (Boyne and Walker 2010)".

Organizational strategies work best in stable environments

Organizational strategies work best in stable environments. Complex situations reduce the effectiveness of all strategies. The performances of organizations following a reactor organizational strategy will drop even further in unstable environments; this is likely the result of the inability of managers to respond with rapid change, or keep up with pressure from the external environment (Walker, 2013).

Incremental implementation styles overcome complex and dynamic environments

Incremental implementation of organizational strategies work better in complex and dynamic environments, than big changes at once. This is probably due to flexibility and adaptability of incremental strategies, which are needed to cope with challenging circumstances caused by complex and uncertain external environments.

Hypotheses

These findings of the Miles and Snow model of strategy and performance in the public sector lead to the following hypotheses:

H1: A prospector strategic orientation is positively related to organizational performance.
H2: A defender strategic orientation is positively related to organizational performance.
H3: A reactor stance is negatively related to organizational performance.
H4: Prospectors perform better than defenders and reactors on organizational performance
H5: Defenders perform better than reactors on organizational performance.
H6: A combination of prospecting and defending (analyzer) organizational strategies performs better than pure prospecting or defending strategic orientations.

Multivariate interaction patterns of management on performance

Walker, Boyne, and Brewer (2010) mention the existence of nonlinear interaction patterns of management on performance in the public sector. Due to various resources and constraints, management sometimes interacts in a nonlinear manner with organizational performance. Hicklin, O'Toole, and Meier (2008) assessed the nature of the relationship between management and performance and what the functional link between them looks like. A straightforward linear link between management and performance forms a possibility; however, alternative curvilinear relations are very likely. This is to say, that in certain situations the effect of management rises until it diminishes after a certain cut off point, or there is a critical contribution of management needed after which management accelerates organizational performance and pays off. Additionally, the relationship can be too complex, in which the management-performance curve shows a winding and twisting line with no clear pattern (Hicklin et al., 2008).

Critique on the Miles and Snow strategy framework

The Miles and Snow strategy framework is criticized by various authors in terms of the cross sectional research design; differences between intended, realized, and emerging strategies; and the determination of strategy.

Zahra (1987) criticizes the cross sectional research designs used in the Miles and Snow strategy typology, since it only offers a snapshot of the strategy of an organization at one moment in time, instead of giving an overview of the development of 'the adaptive circle' over time. As an effect, the differences between intended, realized, and emerging strategies, as distinguished by Mintzberg (1987), are ignored. Furthermore, it is difficult to distinguish between intended change in strategy, and normal adjustment to the external environment (Zahra, 1987). Another critique is the context dependency of the Miles and Snow strategy typology, as different strategic groups will perform better in specific environments (Zahra, 1987). Shortell and Zajac (1990) question to what extent the assessment of organizational strategy by top management is reliable and valid for the entire organization. The results of their study show that the perceptions of knowledgeable key informants' are a valid approach to measure organizational strategy. In an ideal situation, a combination of perceptual and archival data is used to obtain a more complete description of the strategy of an organization (Shortell & Zajac, 1990).

RESEARCH DESIGN

To look into the effect of organizational strategy on public service performance of Dutch municipalities, a cross sectional study is performed among local government in the Netherlands. As described by Babbie (2015, p. 106), "a cross-sectional study involves observations of a sample, or cross section, of a population or phenomenon that are made at one point in time". This study consists of two parts; first, the strategic orientation of municipalities is examined. Second, the link between strategic orientation and performance of municipalities in the Netherlands is studied.

DATA COLLECTION

To be able to test the hypotheses, a dataset was constructed integrating two separate datasets. Data on the strategic orientation of Dutch municipalities, the independent variable, is collected through a survey. Data on the public sector performance of Dutch municipalities is derived from the dataset 'waarstaatjegemeente.nl'.

The data of the independent variable strategic orientation of Dutch municipalities was collected through a questionnaire. This questionnaire was sent by e-mail to almost all municipal Secretaries[9] during the second quarter of 2015. The survey was distributed by the Association for Municipal Secretaries, VGS[10], among all their (approximately) 400 members by e-mail. Since nearly all municipal secretaries are affiliated with this organization, this is a very convenient way to reach as many respondents as possible. Municipal secretaries were asked about the strategic orientation of the organization they were working for. They were invited via e-mail by the VGS to participate in the survey[11]. To enhance the response rate, a reminder was sent after two weeks. The electronic questionnaire was self-coding and collected through the online platform 'typeform.com', and converted to SPSS (Corp, 2014) format for further analysis.

For the measurement of the performance of Dutch municipalities, data from the open access database 'waarstaatjegemeente.nl' ('how is your municipality doing') was used. This dataset is collected by research organization Quality Institute of Dutch Municipalities[12], KING, part of the Association for Dutch Municipalities[13], VNG. This research organization performs a benchmark every year about the performance of municipalities on many different variables, based on a combination of 'hard' (quantitative) and soft (perception) measures. Organizational performance is herein measured by indicators such as: safety, living climate, health, welfare and care, labor and employment, local economy, services to citizens, companies and other organizations, and the relationship between citizens and government.

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[9] *The municipal secretary has the task to support and advise the municipal executives. As general manager of the municipal administrative system, the municipal secretary ensures maximum service of the administrative system for society (Rijksoverheid, 2015).*

[10] *In Dutch: Vereniging voor Gemeentesecretarissen.*

[11] *The survey instrument was piloted with senior managers (working at municipalities within the East of the Netherlands, and the VGS) to prevent mistakes, such as multi interpretable terms or double barred questions. Based on prior research and in line with respondent's recommendations, some textual improvements were made. The introduction was extended to further explain the aim of this research, the research design, and terms used. Finally, a more personal introduction was added to increase the response rate.*

[12] *In Dutch: Kwaliteits Instituut Nederlandse Gemeenten.*

[13] *In Dutch: Vereniging van Nederlandse Gemeenten.*

A selection of representative indicators is chosen based on the appropriateness and availability of the data. The two datasets were matched by name of the organization.

Operationalization of strategic orientation

For the measurement of strategic orientation, this study follows prior studies on organizational strategy on the performance of local government in the United Kingdom. In this way, this study builds further build upon prior research and it is possible to compare the results. These studies use the operationalization of the Miles and Snow strategy typology by Boyne and Walker (2004) (Rhys Andrews et al., 2009; R. Andrews et al., 2011; R. Andrews, Boyne, & Walker, 2006; R. Andrews, Boyne, G. A., Law, J., & Walker, R. M, 2008).

To measure the strategic orientation of municipalities in the Netherlands, the original questionnaire is translated into Dutch, and further operationalized for the Dutch context. Organizational strategy is measured by twelve validated questions tapping the prospecting, defending, and reacting characteristics, on a 7 point Likert scale which runs from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree with the statement (7)(Rhys Andrews et al., 2009; R. Andrews et al., 2011; R. Andrews, Boyne, G. A., Law, J., & Walker, R. M, 2008). The twelve survey questions measuring the strategic orientation of public sector organizations are presented here below:

Prospecting

We continually redefine our service priorities
We seek to be first to identify new modes of delivery
Searching for new opportunities is a major part of our overall strategy
We often change our focus to new areas of service provision

Defending

We seek to maintain stable service priorities
The service emphasizes efficiency of provision
We focus on our core activities

Reacting

We have no definite service priorities
We change provision only when under pressure from external agencies
We give little attention to new opportunities for service delivery
The service explores new opportunities only when under pressure from external agencies
We have no consistent response to external pressure[14]

The results of these twelve questions show the strength of the strategic orientation for the organizations, and classify public sector organizations into types based on their dominant orientation. Organizations characterized with a prospector strategic orientation are innovative organizations that are constantly looking for development of new products and services. Defenders are conservative organizations that devote their attention to improve optimize current processes. Reactor type organizations lack a consistent and stable strategy, and will only move under pressure of external agencies (Miles et al., 1978).

[14] See Appendix A for the survey questions in Dutch.

Operationalization of organizational performance

The organizational performance of municipalities is measured by a range of performance indicators. Performance of municipalities forms a complex concept which is difficult to operationalize, since organizations have multiple and sometimes conflicting goals. In addition, at this moment there is no standardized way of measuring organizational performance of local government. To make matters even more difficult, performance data of municipalities is limited available and accessible, and sometimes difficult to compare[15].

The organizational performance of municipalities in the Netherlands is measured by three overarching variables: ecological, socio-cultural, and economic capital. These three sustainability indicators show the performance of municipalities on the three pillars of people, profit, and planet. This model is developed by public sector research institute Telos, with the aim to measure balanced growth of municipalities in the Netherlands. This is done by looking at the resilience and quality of nature (ecological capital), the physical and mental well-being of people (socio-cultural capital), and the sustainability of economic production and consumption (the economic capital). All three indicators are measured on a scale from 0 to 100, with an average sustainability score of 45 for all municipalities. The average score for the ecological capital is 45, socio-cultural capital 38, and economic capital score of 52. Within the limitations of availability and accessibility, these overarching performance indicators ecological, socio-cultural, and economic capital are most appropriate to show the organizational performance of municipalities. These three 'umbrella' performance indicators are considered 'second best', since these are not the sole responsibility of municipalities, are (sometimes) influenced by other organizations, and partially go beyond the influence of municipalities. The organizational performance of participating municipalities is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics for organizational performance filtered by participation

	M	SD	Min	Max	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
Ecological Capital	50,055	4,66	38,00	64,00	26,00	,066	,483
Socio Cultural Capital	51,193	6,71	33,00	67,00	34,00	-,443	,003
Economic Capital	49,798	5,38	37,00	62,00	25,00	-,127	-,320

Note: N= 109; Due to a recent amalgamation of some northern municipalities, the organizational performance data is missing for one organization. Performance is measured on a scale from 0 – 100.

Ecological capital considers the different ecosystems within the region. These systems must have sufficient resilience to cope with natural and human disturbances, without causing irreparable damage to the different functions. This score is among others adversely affected by natural resources, amount of waste and waste management.

Socio-cultural capital captures the social interactions within a society. Key concepts herein are social justice and community engagement. In a socially and culturally sustainable society, there should be social justice, equal opportunities, freedom, wide accessibility of facilities and security. The socio-cultural capital score is among others measured by social cohesion, social participation, art and culture, safety, and education.

[15] For example, the 'Overall service performance of municipalities' is only available for 14 out of 393 municipalities, due to limited participation of municipalities in the 'Burgerpeiling' conducted by the VGS. Other variables which measure the tasks and services in policy domains with discretionary freedom such as sports, arts and culture, were not robust.

Economic capital forms the central function of the regional economy. It is about maintaining and strengthening the ability of a region to generate sufficient income. A sustainable regional economy generates enough wealth for present and future generations, and has enough momentum to respond to changing social and economic developments. Economic capital is therefore among others operationalized by looking at the health of the economy, and functioning of the labor market.

The three performance variables are based on 87 indicators, of which 37 relate to the socio-cultural capital, 28 to ecological capital, and 22 to economic capital. See www.telos.nl for a complete overview of underlying indicators. Data for these indicators was derived from 22 different sources by Telos. This includes national, regional and local government, agencies (CBS, RIVM, DUO, UWV, and GGD), Chamber of Commerce, National Database Flora and Fauna, and property consultants.

Operationalization of control variables

This study checks for differences in municipal characteristics size and level of urbanization. The variable size is measured by five groups which range from very small municipalities with up to 25.000 citizens, to very large municipalities with more than 300.000 citizens. Table 2 shows the distribution of municipalities in size categories. Almost 75% of the municipalities can be categorized as a small municipality with up to 50.000 citizens. 12% of the participating municipalities are categorized as a mid-size municipality and 15% is categorized as a large municipality with more than 100.000 citizens or very large municipality with more than 300.000 citizens (KING, 2015).

Table 2. Size of municipalities

Size classification	Size	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
Very small	Until 25.000	45	40,9	40,9
Small	25.000 - 50.000	37	33,6	74,5
Medium	50.000 - 100.000	13	11,8	86,4
Large	100.000 - 300.000	13	11,8	98,2
Very large	More than 300.000	2	1,8	100,0
	Total	110	100	

Note: N= 110

Urbanization is measured in five classes which are based on the neighborhood address density per square kilometer. Very high levels of urbanization are characterized by more than 2500 addresses per square kilometer, high levels by more than 1500 until 2500, moderate levels by more than 1000 until 1500, low levels of urbanization by more than 500 and less than 1000, and not urbanized by less than 500 addresses per square kilometer (KING, 2015). The distribution of municipalities in urbanization classes is presented in Table 3. Most municipalities are categorized by no urbanization, low, and moderate levels of urbanization (72.2%). 30 municipalities which participated in the survey can be characterized as highly urbanized.

Table 3. Urbanization of municipalities

Classification	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
Not urbanized	22	20,0	20,0
Low levels of urbanization	37	33,6	53,6
Moderate levels of urbanization	21	19,1	72,7
High levels of urbanization	23	20,9	93,6
Very high levels of urbanization	7	6,4	100,0
Total	110	100	

Note: N= 110

METHODS

The strategic orientation of municipalities is measured by means of a questionnaire. The questionnaire is self-coding and converted to SPSS (Corp, 2014) for further analysis. 122 members of the VGS answered the questionnaire. Seven responses were left out because they were from top managers not working for municipalities. To generate a single measure for each organization, the average score was taken as a representative for that specific organization[16], this aggregation method follows R. Andrews et al. (2009). Therefore, we end up with 110 valid measures for strategic orientation of municipalities out of 393, which leads to a response rate of 28%. This percentage is in line with similar public and private sector strategic management and performance research (e.g., Gomez-Mejia 1992; Zahra and Covin 1993) in (R. Andrews et al., 2009, p. 66).

The answers of the questionnaire are checked for central tendency bias and acquiescence bias, to control for respondents who choose the middle options or respectively agree with every statement as presented. Further, the answers are checked for social desirability bias, although there are no correct or incorrect answers.

To check the proportionality of the respondents, differences between the two groups of participants and non-participants are compared on the characteristics 'size classification', 'urbanization classification', 'private disposable household income', 'average property value', and 'unemployment', by means of a Mann-Whitney U-test and Independent-samples t-test, with $\alpha = 0.05$.

A serious threat to the internal validity of this study is the risk for self selection. Since municipal managers can decide for themselves whether to fill in the questionnaire or not, the threat of self selection is evident. This can be solved by testing if there are differences between the municipalities of which a municipal secretary joined the project, and municipalities that are not taking part in this research (Babbie, 2015). Differences are tested on the municipal characteristics 'size classification', 'urbanization classification', 'private disposable household income', 'average property value', and 'unemployment'; by means of a Mann-Whitney U-test and Independent-samples t-test, with $\alpha = 0.05$.

The external validity is high when participants in this research form a good representation for the overall population (Babbie, 2015). To check whether participating municipalities form well representation for all municipalities in the Netherlands, proportionality tests on size, urbanization, private disposable household income, average property value, unemployment, ecological capital, social cultural capital and economic capital are performed by means of a Mann-Whitney U-test and Independent-samples t-test, with $\alpha = 0.05$.

To determine how well the twelve questions measuring the strategic orientations of municipalities in the Netherlands, represent the constructs of prospecting, defending, and reacting, a confirmatory factor analysis is performed. The aim of this analysis is to find out how well the different items measure the underlying constructs of strategic orientation of municipalities in the Netherlands. The internal consistency between items measuring the same construct (i.e. loading on the same factor) of strategic orientation, is checked by conducting a reliability analysis measuring Cronbach's alpha. A factor score is created for each municipality for further analysis.

[16] Although some variance is lost, this aggregation method creates a more robust measure.

To be able to classify municipalities in the Netherlands into specific types based on their dominant strategic orientation, an explorative cluster analysis is performed.

The link between strategic orientation and organizational performance of municipalities in the Netherlands is examined by correlation and regression analysis. Strategic orientation factor variables reacting, prospecting, and defending are transformed to T-scores with mean 50 and standard deviation 10 for analytical purpose, and range from 0 till 100. The strength of a linear association between strategic orientation (prospecting, defending, and reacting factors) and organizational performance (performance indicators of social, economic, ecologic capital) of municipalities was assessed using Pearson correlation coefficient (r).
Multiple regression analysis was performed to understand to what extent the dependent variable organizational performance can be predicted by the independent variable strategic orientation, controlled for municipal characteristics. To avoid multicollinearity effects between the interaction effects (which are composed of the three strategic orientations), the interaction effects are added as separate models. Also the overall fit (explained variance) of the model has been looked into.

DATA ANALYSIS

Proportionality of participants

A Mann-Whitney U test was conducted to determine if there were differences between participants and non-participants on the categorical variables 'size classification', and 'urbanization classification'. All relevant assumptions of dependent variable of ordinal or continuous level, independent variable consists of two categorical independent groups, independent observations, and normality, were met. Median latencies in groups for the variable 'urbanization classification' were 193.24 for non participants, and 206.67 for participants. The distributions between the two groups was not significantly different, Mann-Whitney U= 14501.50, Z= -1.089, p .276 two-tailed. Median latencies in groups for the variable 'size classification' of municipalities were 193.24 for non participants and 206.67 for participants. The distributions between the two groups was not significantly different, Mann-Whitney U = 14063.50, Z=-1.599, .110 two-tailed.

An independent sample t-test was conducted to determine if there were differences between participants and non-participants on the continuous scale variables 'private disposable household income', 'average property value', and 'unemployment'. All relevant assumptions were checked. There were some significant outliers. Normality was checked by investigation of histograms and met. Homogeneity of variances was met for 'private disposable household income', 'average property value', and 'unemployment', as assessed by Levene's test for Equality of Variances. For the WOZ-value, the equal variances assumption was violated; therefore the equal variances not assumed values were used. There was no significant difference in the scores for 'private disposable household income' for respondents (M= 35.98, SD= 3.53) and non respondents (M= 36.20, SD= 5.15) in thousands of Euros; t(391)= -.484, p= .629. There was no significant difference in the scores for 'average property value' in thousands of Euros between respondents (M= 226.60, SD= 43.77) and non respondents (M= 228.09, SD= 60.78); t(274)= -.270, p= .788. There was no significant difference in the scores for percentage 'unemployment' between respondents (M= 6.56, SD= 1.18) and non respondents (M= 6.525, SD= 1.12); t(391)= .284, p= .776.

There were no significant differences in the performance of municipalities who participated (Economic capital: M=50.06, SD 4.66; Socio-Cultural capital: M=51.19, SD= 6.71; Economic capital: M= 49.80, SD=5.38) and who did not participated (Economic capital: M=50.28, SD 4.70; Socio-Cultural capital: M=51.18, SD= 6.26; Economic capital: M= 49.08, SD=5.55) in the strategic orientation survey; Ecological capital: t(390)= .424, p= .672; Socio-Cultural Capital: t(390)= .022, p= .982; Economical capital: t(390)= -1.156, p= .248.

At the $\alpha = 0.05$ level of significance, there is not enough evidence to conclude that there are differences between the municipalities that have taken part and have not taken part in the survey, on the characteristics of 'size classification' 'urbanization classification', 'private disposable household income', 'average property value', 'unemployment', and 'performance'.

The municipalities that participated in the strategic orientation survey show no differences on municipal characteristics (size, urbanization, private disposable household income, average property value, and unemployment) and performance indicators (ecological capital, social cultural capital and economic capital) with municipalities did not participate.

Descriptive statistics of organizational strategy

To obtain an understanding of the data on the strategic orientations of municipalities the relevant descriptive measurements are presented in the first two columns in Table 4.

Confirmatory factor analysis

To determine how well the twelve questions measuring the strategic orientations, represent the constructs of prospecting, defending, and reacting in a Dutch context, a confirmatory factor analysis is performed. The aim of this analysis is to find out how well the different items measure the underlying constructs of strategic orientation of municipalities in the Netherlands.

Table 4. Measures of organizational strategy and principal component analysis of municipalities

Measures	X	SD	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Prospecting					
We continually redefine our service priorities	3.62	1.46	.14	**.70**	.27
We seek to be first to identify new modes of delivery	4.30	1.47	-.25	**.73**	-.05
Searching for new opportunities is a major part of our overall strategy	5.75	1.08	-.22	**.71**	-.21
We often change our focus to new areas of service provision	4.74	1.34	-.21	**.69**	.09
Defending					
We seek to maintain stable service priorities	5.12	1.11	-.30	-.02	**.61**
The service emphasizes efficiency of provision	4.26	1.33	.23	.21	**.63**
We focus on our core activities	4.40	1.37	.01	-.09	**.61**
Reacting					
We have no definite service priorities	2.37	1.32	**.72**	-.07	-.10
We change provision only when under pressure from external agencies	2.36	1.08	**.70**	-.12	.10
We give little attention to new opportunities for service delivery	2.35	1.48	**.59**	-.27	.13
The service explores new opportunities only when under pressure from external agencies	2.31	1.03	**.77**	-.06	-.25
We have no consistent response to external pressure	3.30	1.34	.41	-.33	.19
Eigen values			2.41	2.26	1.41
Variance			20.10	18.87	11.72
Cumulative variance			20.10	38.97	50.69

Notes: N = 110; Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 6 iterations

The final sample for factor analysis was 110, using list wise deletion to exclude organizations of which no information on strategic orientation was available. Strategic orientation is measured by twelve items, providing a ratio of over 9 cases per variable. The data contains no outliers or missing values. Relevant assumptions were checked to make sure that requirements are met to perform a confirmatory factor analysis, CFA. The data is appropriate to perform a Principal Component Analysis, PCA, since assumptions of linearity of variables, sampling adequacy, data suitable for reduction, and outliers are met (Neill, 2008; Statistics.laerd.com, 2015c).

Principal component analysis (PCA) was used as extraction method, since the purpose was to identify and compute scores for factors. The number of factors was set on three, based on theory of Boyne and Walker (2004), and previous studies (e.g. Andrews, 2009). The appropriate number of factors was double checked by use of a 'spree plot'. The point of inflexion indicates three factors, after which the eigenvalues levels off, and become less than 1.0. Twelve items measure the strategic orientation of municipalities. None of the twelve items were eliminated since all were having a minimum primary factor loading of at least .4 (Hair et al. 1998) in Andrews et al., 2011), and all items are relevant for measuring different aspects of the three constructs (prospecting, defending, reacting).
The strategic orientation measures of prospecting, defending, and reacting, load all on one common factor each. The strategic orientation of prospecting loads on factor 2, defending on factor 3, and reacting on factor 1. The eigenvalues for all three factors are high. The rotated factor loadings are presented in Table 4. According to J. P. Stevens (2012) in (Field, 2009, p. 637) for samples bigger than 100, loadings greater than 0.512 are considered significant. Therefore, the first eleven items can be considered significant (alpha level 0.01, two tailed).
A varimax rotation was used, to show maximum dispersion between variables. The results were reached in six rotations. The factor labels of prospecting, defending, and reacting proposed by Andrews et al. (2009, 2011) are also appropriate for the strategic orientations of municipalities in the Dutch context.

Internal reliability of strategic orientation factors

The internal consistency between items measuring the same construct (i.e. loading on the same factor) of strategic orientation, was checked by conducting a reliability analysis measuring Cronbach's alpha. The prospecting factor has a good internal reliability Cronbach's alpha score of 0.706. The three items measuring the defending factor have a very low score of 0.302. The five items measuring the reacting strategic orientation have an acceptable internal reliability Cronbach's alpha score of 0.690. Elimination of any of the items did not result in a higher internal reliability score to improve the alpha for any of the three scales.

For further analysis, factor scores were created (factor 1 reacting, factor 2 prospecting, factor 3 defending) for each municipality. The strength of the factor scores for strategic orientations (i.e. prospecting, defending, and reacting) for each municipality is plotted on a map in figure 2, figure 3, and figure 4. The strength range from 0 to 100, wherein 100 is the maximum score for an orientation, and 0 indicating an absence. In the figures, dark colored areas represent high factor scores, where light grey areas indicate low scores; for the white areas no information was available.

Overall, the CFA and internal reliability analyses indicate that there are three distinct factors for strategic orientation of municipalities. All twelve items load on their respected factors (prospecting, defending, and reacting) as expected from theory. The three factors explain 50.69% of the variance in the data. The factors were respectively .706, .302, and .690 internally consistent. The results confirm the existence of the strategic orientations of prospecting, defending, and reacting for local government in the Netherlands. The original public sector strategy operationalization as proposed by Boyne and Walker (2004) and used by R. Andrews et al. (2009) is therefore confirmed.

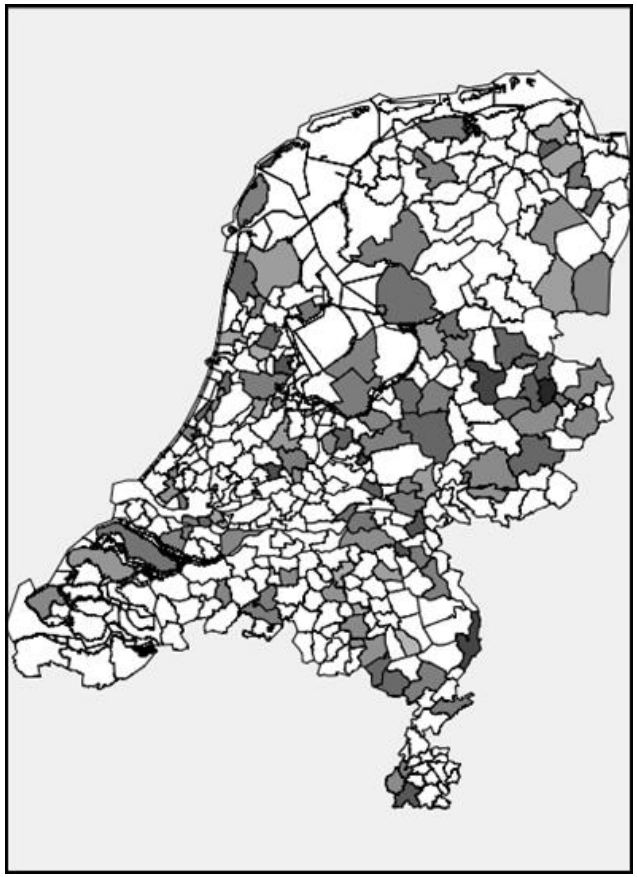

Figure 2. Strength of reacting strategic orientation

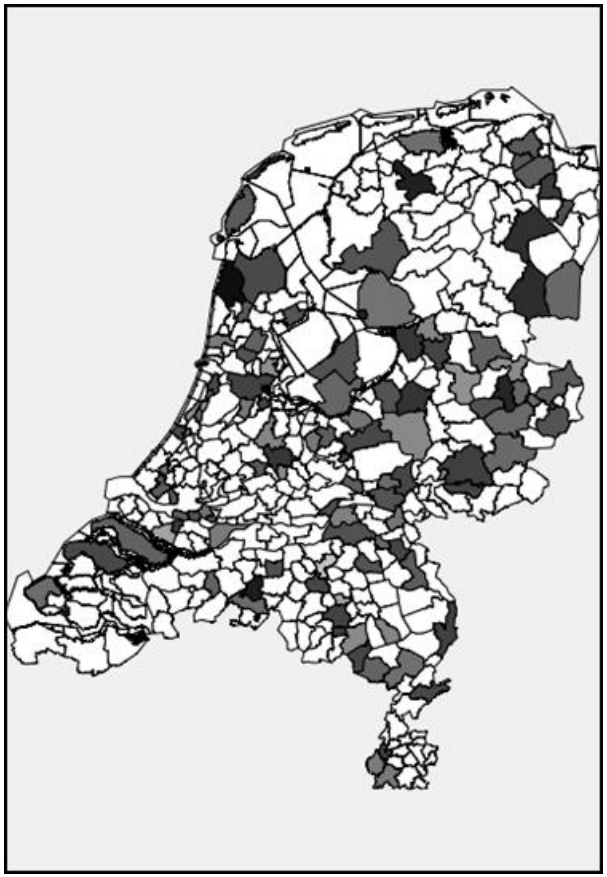

Figure 3. Strength of prospecting strategic orientation

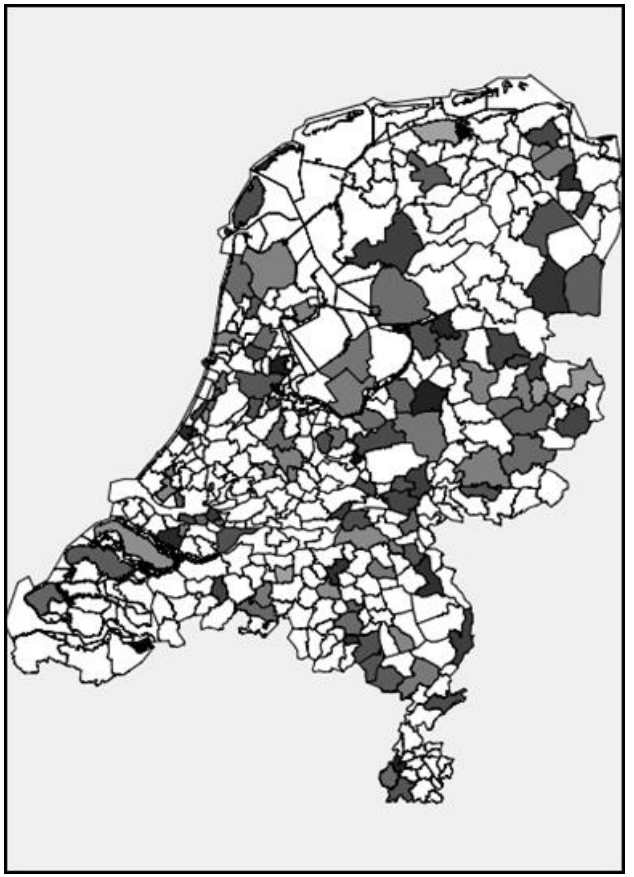

Figure 4. Strength of defending strategic orientation

Cluster analysis

To classify municipalities in the Netherlands into specific types based on their strategic orientation, a cluster analysis was performed. A "cluster analysis is a way of grouping variables of data based on the similarity of responses to several variables" (Field, 2000). In an explorative way, homogenous groups of cases are identified, based on similarity and dissimilarity between cases. The similarity is measured through correlation and Euclidian distance between cases. Clusters are merged based on the Ward's method. This is a model which joins cases into clusters in a way that the variance within a cluster is minimized. The limitations of cluster analysis, such as different methods provide different results, the effect of ordering of the variables, and the hierarchical nature of the method, were taken into account. Based on theory four to ten clusters were expected: three clusters characterized by pure strategic orientations, three by one dominant strategic orientations with characteristics from other orientations, and four clusters characterized by hybrids or mixed forms.

The clustering analysis offers seven distinctive clusters, namely: organizations who employ a pure strategic orientation (i.e. prospecting, defending, reacting), organizations that show combinations of different strategic orientations with one dominant strategic orientation (i.e. prospecting with defending characteristics, defending with prospecting characteristics), and organizations that alternate between two (dominant) strategic orientations (i.e. prospecting and defending). See Table 5 for a distribution of the strategic orientations.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of seven specific clusters of strategic orientations

Group	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
Prospecting	13	11,8	11,8
Defending	20	18,2	30,0
Reacting	9	8,2	38,2
Prospecting and defending	29	26,4	64,5
Defending with prospecting	5	4,5	69,1
Prospecting and defending (both dominant)	15	13,6	82,7
Prospecting with defending	19	17,3	100,0
Total	110	100,0	

Out of this 110 organization, 42 organizations (38%) employed a pure strategic orientation. 24 organizations (22%) have a dominant strategic orientation, but show also strong characteristics from another orientation. 15 organizations alternate between two dominant strategies, and 29 organizations alternate between prospecting and defending strategies.

A more general clustering into four distinctive groups shows three groups of organizations employ strategic orientations of prospecting, defending, or reacting and one hybrid group in which organizations are characterized by alternation between prospecting and defending organizational strategies. Organizations that showed combinations of different strategic orientations were grouped by their dominant strategy; and the two clusters of organizations that alternate between two equal strategic orientations were grouped together. See Table 6 for a distribution of the four main strategic orientations.

Table 6. Descriptive statistics of the four main clusters of strategic orientations

Group	Frequency	Percent	Cum Percent
Prospecting	32	29,4	29,4
Defending	24	22,0	51,4
Reacting	9	8,3	59,6
Prospecting and defending	44	40,4	100,0
Total	109	100,0	

Almost 30% of all municipalities (32 out of 109 organizations) are characterized by a prospecting strategic orientation. 24 organizations employ a defending strategic orientation (22%), and only the small amount of 9 municipalities followed a reacting stance. The largest part of the municipalities (44 municipalities, 40%) employed a mix of organizational strategies, that is to say they alternate between prospecting and defending strategic orientations. This group is very similar to the 'analyzer' type described by Miles and Snow, because they combine prospecting and defending strategies: they watch closely which innovations work and rapidly adopt those who appear promising, and try to optimize their organization to fulfill their tasks and services as efficient and effective as possible.
The strategic orientation of Dutch municipalities is visualized in figure 5 by plotting them on a map. The light grey areas represent municipalities with a dominant prospecting strategic orientation; grey defending; dark grey reacting; and black represents a combination of prospecting and defending orientation. From the blank areas on the map, no information was available.

Figure 5. Strategic orientation of municipalities in the Netherlands

LINK BETWEEN STRATEGIC ORIENTATION AND PERFORMANCE

The association between strategic orientation and organizational performance of municipalities in the Netherlands is examined by correlation and multiple regression analysis. Strategic orientation of municipalities is herein operationalized by factors.

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

The strength of a linear association between strategic orientation (prospecting, defending, and reacting factors) and organizational performance (performance indicators of social, economic, ecologic capital) of municipalities was assessed using Pearson correlation coefficient (r). Table 7 provides summaries of the descriptive statistics and correlations between the explanatory and dependent variables in the analysis. The results show absence of a systematic, statistically significant correlation between strategic orientation variables (prospecting, defending, and reacting) and organizational performance (ecological, social cultural, and economic capital), and unclear directions (positive or negative), $r(107) = \pm > .15$, $p = < .10$ ($df = N - 2$); even after adding of control variables for municipal characteristics via partial correlation. All interaction effects correlate with their underlying variables as expected (for example: prospecting*defending correlates with prospecting and defending, as with prospecting*prospecting and defending*defending). The three organizational performance indicators (ecological, social cultural and economic capital) correlate weakly with each other. Control variables size and urbanization correlate weakly with ecological and social cultural capital, and moderately with economic capital. Some of the interaction variables correlate highly with each other (Field, 2009; Statistics.laerd.com, 2015a).

Table 7. Descriptive statistics and correlations for all variables in the analysis

		M	SD	MIN	MAX	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1	Reacting	50	10	28.54	84.58	1													
2	Prospecting	50	10	18.34	75.11	0	1												
3	Defending	50	10	28.96	75.53	0	0	1											
4	Reacting*Reacting	2599.09	1061.47	814.72	7153.63	.99**	-.03	-.02	1										
5	Prospecting*Prospecting	2599.09	979.63	336.31	5641.76	-.01	.99**	.02	-.04	1									
6	Defending*Defending	2599.09	1014.84	838.44	5705.31	.020	0	.99**	.01	.03	1								
7	Reacting*Prospecting	2500	684.79	612.86	440.97	.68**	.71**	.01	.66**	.70**	.03	1							
8	Reacting*Defending	2500	717.66	1083.52	4927.09	.67**	.01	.72**	.65**	.02	.74**	.48**	1						
9	Prospecting*Defending	2500	73.98	1084.51	4387.21	.01	.72**	.68**	-.02	.72**	.68**	.53**	.51**	1					
10	Ecological capital	5.22	4.68	37	64	-.02	-.03	.12	-.03	-.02	.12	-.02	.10	.08	1				
11	Social Cultural capital	51.18	6.38	31	67	-.06	-.14	.01	-.06	-.12	.02	-.15	-.03	-.11	.26**	1			
12	Economic capital	49.28	5.5	35	67	.08	.01	-.10	.07	-.01	-.13	.04	-.02	-.07	-.15**	.10*	1		
13	Size	.08	.27	0	1	.05	.10	-.03	.05	.09	-.05	.10	.02	.04	-.28**	-.27**	.36**	1	
14	Urbanization	.23	.42	0	1	.01	-.05	-.02	.03	-.07	-.04	-.05	-.03	-.05	-.21**	-.30**	.35**	.47**	1

Notes:
Strategic orientation variables Reacting, Prospecting, Defending and interaction effects: N=110.
Performance indicators ecological, social cultural, and economic capital: N=392. Control variables N=393.
Strategic orientation factor variables Reacting, Prospecting, and Defending are transformed to T-scores with M=50 and SD=10 for analytical purpose, and range from 0-100.
Performance variables Ecological Capital, Social Cultural Capital, and Economic Capital are measured on a scale from 0-100
Levels of significance: * Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two-tailed tests).

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

This study has shown the strategic orientations of municipalities in the Netherlands, and that these organizational strategies match the predictions of public management literature for local government. But the question remains, does strategic orientation matter for organizational performance? Multiple regression analysis was performed to understand to what extent the dependent variable organizational performance of municipalities can be predicted by the independent variable strategic orientation, controlled for municipal characteristics. Also the overall fit (explained variance) of the model and the relative contribution of each of the predictors to the total variance explained was looked into (Field, 2009; Statistics.laerd.com, 2015b).

Table 8, Table 9, and Table 10 present the results of an OLS-regression analysis of the performance of municipalities. Organizational performance of municipalities is herein defined in terms of the three organizational performance indicators ecological, social-cultural, and economic capital. The analysis controls for specific municipal characteristics such as size and urbanization. Size is a dummy variable and consists of large and very large municipalities with more than 100.000 citizens, with smaller municipalities as reference category. Urbanization is a second dummy variable and consists of municipalities which are characterized by high and very high levels of urbanization; municipalities with low levels of urbanization function as reference group. Interaction effects of strategic orientations consist of reacting*reacting, prospecting*prospecting, and defending*defending. The interaction effects between the different strategic orientations (reacting*prospecting, reacting*defending, and prospecting*defending) are added in separate models.

Ecological capital

The first model in Table 8 estimates the effect of the three strategic orientations: reacting, prospecting, and defending, for the performance indicator ecological capital. We find that the factor scores have no significant effect. In Model 2 the control variables size and urbanization are added. The control variable size has a significant negative effect on organizational performance ($p<.10$), while urbanization has no significant effect. The adjusted R-Square, the adjusted proportion of variance in the dependent variable which can be explained by the independent variables (UCLA, 2015) is just above 4%. In Model 3 the interaction effects of reacting*reacting, prospecting*prospecting, defending*defending are added. We find no significant effects for the strategic orientations and interaction effects. The control variable size remains significant ($p<.10$) and the effect size is in the same order as in previous models. In Model 4, Model 5, and Model 6 the interaction effects of reacting*prospecting, reacting*defending, and prospecting*defending are added separately to the model. In Model 4 the interaction effect of reacting*prospecting is added to the model. There are no new significant effects; control variable size remains significant ($p<.10$). In Model 5 the interaction effect of reacting*defending is added to the model. The interaction effect -3.040 (SE 1.598) is negatively significant ($p<.05$), and control variable size remains significant ($p<.05$). The adjusted explained variance is about 8%. Model 6 adds the prospecting*defending interaction effect. The interaction effect is significant ($p<.10$), and has a moderating effect on link between strategic orientations and ecological capital. The strategic orientations of prospecting and defending now both have a negative significant effect on ecological performance. The control variable size remains negatively significant ($p<.10$). It is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study to examine this relationship in further detail.

Table 8. OLS Regression of Strategic Orientation for Municipalities; Dependent Variable: Ecological capital
(Unstandardized Coefficients; Standard Errors between brackets)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
Strategic orientations												
Reacting	-.008	(.045)	-.003	(.044)	.395	(.343)	-.138	(.194)	-.412	(.191)	-.011	(.043)
Prospecting	-.014	(.045)	-.005	(.044)	-.222	(.310)	-.147	(.202)	-.010	(.044)	-.458*	(.233)
Defending	.054	(.045)	.05	(.044)	-.098	(.379)	.048	(.044)	-.392	(.206)	-.381*	(.222)
Control variables												
Size			-3.011*	(1.593)	-3.161*	(1.618)	-3.040*	(1.598)	-3.431**	(1.576)	-2.762*	(1.576)
Urbanization			-.719	(1.223)	-.362	(1.264)	-.651	(1.229)	-.283	(1.216)	-.905	(1.209)
Interaction effects												
Reacting*Reacting					-.004	(.003)						
Prospecting*Prospecting					.002	(.003)						
Defending*Defending					.001	(.004)						
Reacting*Prospecting							.003	(.004)				
Reacting*Defending									.009**	(.004)		
Prospecting*Defending											.009*	(.004)
Constant	48.480***	(3.927)	48.543***	3.86	47.641***	(13.199)	55.260***	(10.106)	70.075***	(10.490)	71.608***	(12.242)
N	109		109		109		109		109		109	
R^2	.015		.087		.102		.092		.128		.121	
Adjusted R^2	-.014		.043		.03		.038		.077		.069	

Note: significance levels: *p<.10. **p<.05. ***p<.0005 (two-tailed tests)

Social Cultural capital

The first model in Table 9 estimates the effect of the three strategic orientations: reacting, prospecting, and defending, for the performance indicator social cultural capital. We find that the factor scores have no significant effect. In Model 2 the control variables size and urbanization are added. The control variable size has a large significant negative effect on organizational performance (p<.0005) of -8.452 with a standard error of 2.144, while urbanization has no significant effect. The adjusted explained variance of the model is above 16%. In Model 3 the interaction effects of reacting*reacting, prospecting*prospecting, defending*defending are added. We find no significant effects for the strategic orientations and interaction effects. Size remains significant (p<.0005) in the same order, with urbanization still no significant effect. The adjusted explained variance of the model is around 15%.

In Model 4, Model 5, and Model 6 the interaction effects of reacting*prospecting, reacting*defending, and prospecting*defending are added separately to the model, see appendix B. Model 4, Model 5, and Model 6 shows no significant effects for the strategic orientations and interaction effects, although size remains significant (p<.0005). The adjusted explained variance of the models is around 16.5%. It is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study to examine this relationship in further detail.

Table 9. OLS Regression of Strategic Orientation for Municipalities; Dependent Variable: Social Cultural capital (Unstandardized Coefficients; Standard Errors between brackets).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Strategic orientations						
Reacting	-.042	(.064)	-.027	(.059)	.280	(.463)
Prospecting	-.093	(.064)	-.064	(.060)	-.507	(.417)
Defending	.004	(.065)	-.004	(.059)	-.146	(.511)
Control variables						
Size			-8.452***	(2.144)	-8.598***	(2.180)
Urbanization			.235	(1.645)	.631	(1.703)
Interaction effects						
Reacting*Reacting					-.003	(.004)
Prospecting*Prospecting					.004	(.004)
Defending*Defending					.001	(.005)
Reacting*Prospecting						
Reacting*Defending						
Prospecting*Defending						
Constant	57.749***	(5.629)	57.001***	(5.195)	63.431**	(17.783)
N	109		109		109	
R^2	.023		.203		.214	
Adjusted R^2	-.004		.164		. 151	

Note: significance levels: *p<.10. **p<.05. ***p<.0005 (two-tailed tests)

Economic capital

The first model in Table 10 estimates the effect of the three strategic orientations for the performance indicator economic capital. We find that the factor scores have no significant effect. In Model 2 the control variables size and urbanization are added. The control variables size and urbanization have both a significant positive effect on organizational performance ($p<.05$). In Model 3 the interaction effects of reacting*reacting, prospecting*prospecting, defending*defending are added. We find a positive significant effect for the defender strategic orientation ($p<.10$), and a very small negative significant interaction effect for defending*defending; while the control variables size and urbanization remain significant. The adjusted explained variance of the model around 30%.

In Model 4, Model 5, and Model 6 the interaction effects of reacting*prospecting, reacting*defending, and prospecting*defending are separate added to the model, see appendix B. Model 4, Model 5, and Model 6 show no significant effects for the strategic orientations and interaction effects. Size remains positive significant ($p<.05$), and urbanization also has a positive significant effect on economic capital ($p<.0005$). The adjusted explained variance of the models around 28.5%. It is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study to examine this relationship in further detail.

Table 10. OLS Regression of Strategic Orientation for Municipalities; Dependent Variable: Economic capital (Unstandardized Coefficients; Standard Errors between brackets)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Strategic orientations						
Reacting	.041	(.052)	.033	(.044)	.261	(.337)
Prospecting	.003	(.052)	.001	(.044)	.002	(.304)
Defending	-.056	(.052)	-.049	(.044)	.622*	(.373)
Control variables						
Size			3.759**	(1.586)	3.375**	(1.589)
Urbanization			4.480***	(1.217)	4.426**	(1.241)
Interaction effects						
Reacting*Reacting					-.002	(.003)
Prospecting*Prospecting					.000	(.003)
Defending*Defending					-.007*	(.004)
Reacting*Prospecting						
Reacting*Defending						
Prospecting*Defending						
Constant	50.363***	(4.526)	48.815***	(3.842)	26.749**	(12.966)
N	109		109		109	
R^2	.017		.321		.349	
Adjusted R^2	-.011		.288		.297	

Note: significance levels: *p<.10. **p<.05. ***p<.0005 (two-tailed tests)

TESTING THE HYPOTHESES ON STRATEGIC ORIENTATION AND PERFORMANCE

The statistical results presented in Table 8, Table 9, and Table 10, are mostly not consistent with the hypotheses 1 to 5. On the basis of the results of the OLS regression analysis, we need to reject most hypotheses on the link between organizational strategy and performance of municipalities in the Netherlands.

The results presented in Model 6 of Table 8 are in contrary to Hypothesis 1 '*A prospector strategic orientation is positively related to organizational performance'*. Other models show no significant effects. Therefore, we need to reject the hypotheses and conclude there is no significant positive effect of prospecting on performance.

Hypothesis 2 *'A defender strategic orientation is positively related to organizational performance'* offers conflicting results. Model 3 in Table 10 supports the hypotheses and shows that a defender strategic orientation is positively related to economical capital, although the interaction effect defender*defender has a very small negative influence. At the same time, a defender strategic orientation is negatively related to ecological capital in Model 6 Table 8, and socio-cultural capital shows no significant results at all. These mixed findings show the contingent nature of (defending) strategy.

The findings for Hypothesis 3 *'A reactor stance is negatively related to organizational performance'* are all insignificant. Thus providing no proof for possible negative (long term) effects of waiting, unclear strategies, and acting under pressure.

The results do not support Hypothesis 4: *'Prospectors perform better than defenders and reactors on organizational performance'*, and Hypothesis 5: *'Defenders perform better than reactors on organizational performance'*. Even more, Model 6 of Table 8 shows effects contrary to what expected based on theory, since prospectors perform even less than defenders on ecological capital. Socio-cultural capital only shows insignificant effects for all three strategic orientations. On the basis of these results, we need to conclude that prospecting and defending do not triumph reacting strategic orientation on organizational performance, operationalized by ecologic, socio-cultural, and economic capital.

It is not possible to put Hypothesis 6 '*A combination of prospecting and defending (analyzer) organizational strategies performs better than pure prospecting or defending strategic orientations'* to the test, on the basis of the OLS regression analysis, since there is no information on the combination of prospecting and defending strategic orientations.

CONCLUSION

Studies in public management show consistently that 'management matters', but the precise findings vary across different contexts. This study examines the link between strategy and performance of local government in a non Anglo-Saxon context, by investigating the association between strategic orientation and organizational performance of municipalities in the Netherlands. This study follows previous research of R. Andrews et al. (2009) on the influence of strategy on performance of local government in the United Kingdom. This study uses the public sector strategy conceptualization of Boyne and Walker (2010, p. 185) in which (organizational) strategy is described as "a means by which organizations can improve their performance and provide better services". The meaning of strategy in the Netherlands largely follows Anglo-Saxon strategy definitions, although in the Dutch political context of proportional representation there is more emphasis on consensus building and deliberation. The concept of organizational strategy is approached from the perspective of contingency theory. Strategy is measured by the strategy framework of Miles and Snow further operationalized for the public sector by Boyne and Walker (2004). This framework captures the three main strategic options that are open to a public organizations, namely: search for something new, try to optimize current services, or await instructions (Walker, 2013), by measuring the strategic orientation of organizations via twelve questions[17].

The confirmative factor analysis validates the Miles and Snow strategy framework for use in the Dutch context. The CFA and internal reliability analyses clearly show that there are three distinct factors for strategic orientation of municipalities. The results confirm the existence of the strategic orientations of prospecting, defending, and reacting for local government in the Netherlands. The original public sector strategy operationalization of the Miles and Snow strategy framework as proposed by Boyne and Walker (2004) is therefore confirmed, and has shown to be suited to measure the strategic orientation of municipalities. In addition, the results of the cluster analysis offer a clear picture of the dominant strategic orientation of each individual organization. The results follow previous findings that organizations are likely to pursue a range of strategies, especially the combination of prospecting and defending is present; this particular combination of organizational strategies is also referred to as 'analyzer'.

The organizational performance of municipalities is measured by the overarching performance indicators of ecological, socio cultural, and economic capital. These variables are most appropriate within the limitations of accessibility and availability of performance measures.

The strength of a linear association between strategic orientation and organizational performance was assessed using Pearson correlation coefficient. The results show absence of a systematic, statistically significant association between the two variables, and unclear directions (positive or negative). In contrast, control variables size and urbanization correlate significantly with performance indicators ecological, socio-cultural, and economical capital.

[17] Results of proportionality analysis show that there are no significant differences between respondents and the population, and indicate that the respondents of this study form a good representation of the entire population. There is no question of self selection, indicating good internal validity. The results of the proportionality analysis indicate good external validity as well, since the municipalities who participated in the survey form a good representation of the entire population of municipalities in the Netherlands.

It is expected that prospectors and defenders are associated with high organizational performance, and outperform organizations who follow a reacting strategic orientation. The results of the OLS regression analysis show that differences in organizational performance of municipalities are in very limited situations accounted for by strategic orientation. The findings of this study on the link between organizational strategy and performance are in contrast to theory. The results further indicate that the link between organizational strategy and performance of municipalities in the Netherlands is very complex, and may have a curve linear form. It is unfortunately beyond the scope of this study to examine this relationship in further detail.

The different findings of this study on the link between organizational strategy and performance of local government is likely caused by the complex nature of the relationship between strategy and performance, context, and the selection of performance indicators used. Political context characterized by consensus building and deliberation may reduce the effect of management. Turbulence in the environment, such as for example the new responsibilities for Dutch municipalities on child welfare, employment and income, and long-term care for the sick and elderly, may reduce the effect of management even more. Further, the very limited accessibility and availability of appropriate organizational performance data (with discretionary freedom for municipalities, without influences from other organizations) may cause a misrepresentation of reality.

Other studies look for explanations amongst others at the separate and joint influence of influence of strategy and size (Boyne 1998, Davies 1969 in Walker and Andrews (2015)) and strategy and structure. Especially the separate and joint influence of cooperation and strategy (i.e. Agranoff and MacGuire (2003) in Walker and Andrews (2015), and the separate and joint effect of citizen participation and strategy on performance, would be interesting to further look into. Since more and more tasks and services are performed in close cooperation between municipalities, province, and executive organizations, a moderating effect on performance is expected. The growing impact of citizen participation on politics and performance of municipalities, may influence the link between strategy and performance even more. Further, it would be interesting to see if the Miles and Snow strategy framework is appropriate to measure organizational strategy throughout the whole public sector in the Netherlands; starting points for further research could be water boards, and provinces; or semi-public organizations such as housing corporations, health agencies, and schools.

The main limitation of this study is the problem of causality between strategy and performance. Because of the cross sectional design, the possibility of reverse causality of performance on strategy is present. Therefore it is not possible to draw any conclusions about strategic orientation resulting in good or bad performance. More, the results of this study may simply be a product of the time in which this study was conducted, although past performance has a big impact on actual performance should be taken into account (R. Andrews et al., 2009; Laurence J O'Toole & Meier, 2004). A longitudinal research design could tackle the problem of reverse causality and specific timing. Only a very small number of studies uses prior-performance variables to control for the impact of performance over time on strategy (Walker, 2013). It was not possible to perform a longitudinal study since

there is no previous data available on the strategic orientation of municipalities; the amount of collected data available on the performance of municipalities is limited.

The use of multiple sources to measure the strategic orientation of municipalities could improve the measurement of strategic orientation, since this study uses self-reports by Municipal secretaries. A combination of 'soft' self reporting information, with objective 'hard' data on strategic orientation of municipalities helps to further validate the strategy used by the organizations.

It is recommended to further look into the link between strategic orientation and performance by using other performance indicators. Variables with discretionary freedom for municipalities, within the full range of influence, and with less shared responsibilities, will probably offer a better representation of the actual performance of municipalities. Fortunately, more and more data on the performance of public organizations will become available in the coming years, examples are the 'Burgerpeiling' and 'Ondernemerspeiling' (a survey about the satisfaction of citizens and businesses with the services of local government). It is further expected that in the near future more datasets will be connected with the 'waarstaatjegemeente.nl' database. This will offer more opportunities to perform a benchmark, and compare organizational performances on transparent, accepted, and validated indicators. In addition, the 'Vensters' (pilot) project by ICTU[18], which offers politicians and managers a simple dashboard with all relevant performance indicators of municipalities, looks very promising. This dashboard contains scores on five layers with information for all domains, these are: tasks and services, costs, quality, process, and degree of digitalization.
For municipalities, it is highly recommended to measure organizational performance on clear, transparent, and validated indicators, and work together towards a 'standard' way of measuring performance. A first start could be the participation in surveys such as 'Burgerpeiling' and 'Ondernemerspeiling', and/or participation in the 'Vensters' project. This will generate more transparent, open access, and comparable performance data. In this way, following studies can contribute further to more clarity and transparency on organizational strategy, performance, and the link between them. This will help policy makers and politicians in delivering as much quality as possible for their citizens.

[18] ICTU is the ICT executive body of the government. ICTU is working on a better digital government, and assists municipalities and other government in enhancing their ICT services, by developing among others a 'dashboard' for municipalities to have a clear view on their performance for all policy domains.

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APPENDIX

Table A. OLS Regression of Strategic Orientation for Municipalities; Dependent Variable: Social Cultural capital (Unstandardized Coefficients; Clustered Standard Errors).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
Strategic orientations												
Reacting	-.042	(.064)	-.027	(.059)	.280	(.463)	.082	(.261)	-.309	(.262)	-.018	(.059)
Prospecting	-.093	(.064)	-.064	(.060)	-.507	(.417)	.049	(.272)	-.067	(.060)	.428	(.315)
Defending	.004	(.065)	-.004	(.059)	-.146	(.511)	-.002	(.060)	-.309	(.281)	.464	(.300)
Control variables												
Size			-8.452***	(2.144)	-8.598***	(2.180)	-8.429***	(2.153)	-8.740***	(2.158)	-8.722***	(2.135)
Urbanization			.235	(1.645)	.631	(1.703)	0.181	(1.1657)	.535	(1.665)	.438	(1.638)
Interaction effects												
Reacting*Reacting					-.003	(.004)						
Prospecting*Prospecting					.004	(.004)						
Defending*Defending					.001	(.005)						
Reacting*Prospecting							-.002	(.005)				
Reacting*Defending									.006	(.005)		
Prospecting*Defending											-.009	(.006)
Constant	57.749***	(5.629)	57.001***	(5.195)	63.431**	(17.783)	51.64***	(13.622)	71.822***	(14.362)	31.971*	(16.585)
N	109		109		109		109		109		109	
R^2	.023		.203		.214		.204		.212		.222	
Adjusted R^2	-.004		.164		. 151		.157		.166		.176	

Table B. OLS Regression of Strategic Orientation for Municipalities; Dependent Variable: Economic capital (Unstandardized Coefficients; Clustered Standard Errors).

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
Strategic orientations												
Reacting	.041	(.052)	.033	(.044)	.261	(.337)	.193	(.192)	-.121	(.194)	.033	(.044)
Prospecting	.003	(.052)	.001	(.044)	.002	(.304)	.168	(.201)	-.001	(.044)	.039	(.236)
Defending	-.056	(.052)	-.049	(.044)	.622*	(.373)	-.046	(.044)	-.215	(.209)	-.013	(.225)
Control variables												
Size			3.759**	(1.586)	3.375**	(1.589)	3.792**	(1.588)	3.601**	(1.600)	3.738**	(1.598)
Urbanization			4.480***	(1.217)	4.426**	(1.241)	4.400***	(1.222)	4.643***	(1.235)	4.496***	(1.226)
Interaction effects												
Reacting*Reacting					-.002	(.003)						
Prospecting*Prospecting					.000	(.003)						
Defending*Defending					-.007*	(.004)						
Reacting*Prospecting							-.003	(.004)				
Reacting*Defending									.003	(.004)		
Prospecting*Defending											-.001	(.004)
Constant	50.363***	(4.526)	48.815***	(3.842)	26.749**	(12.966)	40.891***	(10.047)	56.884***	(10.650)	46.876***	(12.414)
N	109		109		109		109		109		109	
R^2	.017		.321		.349		.326		.325		.321	
Adjusted R^2	-.011		.288		.297		.286		.285		.281	

Table C. Correlation matrix for strategic orientation

	We continually redefine our service priorities	We seek to be first to identify new modes of delivery	Searching for new opportunities is a major part of our overall strategy	We often change our focus to new areas of service provision	We seek to maintain stable service priorities	The service emphasizes efficiency of provision	We focus on our core activities	We have no definite service priorities	We change provision only when under pressure from external agencies	We give little attention to new opportunities for service delivery	We change provision only when under pressure from external agencies	We have no consistent response to external pressure
We continually redefine our service priorities	1	.377**	.245**	.326**	.096	.247**	-.014	-.058	-.059	-.039	-.033	-.118
We seek to be first to identify new modes of delivery	.377**	1	.494**	.432**	.028	.023	-.047	-.259**	-.305**	-.256**	-.200*	-.201*
Searching for new opportunities is a major part of our overall strategy	.245**	.494**	1	.426**	-.009	-.020	-.101	-.090	-.205*	-.320**	-.235*	-.316**
We often change our focus to new areas of service provision	.326**	.432**	.426**	1	.103	.021	.071	-.144	-.193*	-.291**	-.212*	-.221*
We seek to maintain stable service priorities	.096	.028	-.009	.103	1	.141	.125	-.166	-.090	-.030	-.245**	-.102
The service emphasizes efficiency of provision	.247**	.023	-.020	.021	.141	1	.119	-.012	.153	.069	.005	.073
We focus on our core activities	-.014	-.047	-.101	.071	.125	.119	1	.064	.117	.016	-.125	.127
We have no definite service priorities	-.058	-.259**	-.090	-.144	-.166	-.012	.064	1	.344**	.421**	.420**	.252**
We change provision only when under pressure from external agencies	-.059	-.305**	-.205*	-.193*	-.090	.153	.117	.344**	1	.245**	.508**	.184
We give little attention to new opportunities for service delivery	-.039	-.256**	-.320**	-.291**	-.030	.069	.016	.421**	.245**	1	.308**	.295**
The service explores new opportunities only when under pressure from external agencies	-.033	-.200*	-.235*	-.212*	-.245**	.005	-.125	.420**	.508**	.308**	1	.213*
We have no consistent response to external pressure	-.118	-.201*	-.316**	-.221*	-.102	.073	.127	.252**	.184	.295**	.213*	1

Notes: Pearson Correlation coefficient

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

APPENDIX QUESTIONNAIRE

In deze vragenlijst worden u enkele vragen gesteld over de strategie die door uw gemeente wordt toegepast. Hierbij zijn er geen goede of foute antwoorden; het gaat om het inzicht dat u heeft als gemeentesecretaris in de strategische oriëntatie van uw organisatie. Het doel van dit onderzoek is beleidsmakers en politiek te faciliteren door middel van een vergroot inzicht in “succes combinaties” van strategie en prestaties.

Deze vragenlijst is gebaseerd op internationaal onderzoek naar de strategie van lokale overheden in Engeland en verder ontwikkeld voor de specifieke context van Nederlandse gemeenten. De strategie van uw organisatie wordt gemeten door middel van twaalf vragen over de mate van vernieuwing, aandacht voor het verbeteren van bestaande activiteiten, en handelen onder druk van externe factoren. Op basis van deze antwoorden kan de strategische oriëntatie van een organisatie worden gekarakteriseerd.

Het invullen van de vragenlijst neemt ongeveer 5 minuten in beslag. Uiteraard worden uw antwoorden volkomen vertrouwelijk behandeld en de gegevens anoniem verwerkt.

Alvast hartelijk dank voor uw deelname.

HOOFDSECTIE I KENMERKEN

De volgende vragen gaan over een aantal persoonlijke kenmerken.

- Voor welke gemeente werkt u?
  - [OPEN]
- Wat is uw functie binnen de organisatie?
  - [OPEN]
- Wat is uw leeftijd?
  - [JAAR]
- Wat is uw geslacht?
  - [Man]
  - [Vrouw]
- Hoeveel jaar werkt u in uw huidige functie voor deze gemeente?
  - [AANTAL]
- Hoeveel jaar werkt u in uw huidige functie voor een gemeente?
  - [AANTAL]
- Hoeveel jaar werkt u nu voor gemeenten?
  - [AANTAL]

HOOFDSECTIE II STRATEGIE

De volgende twaalf vragen gaan over de strategie kenmerken van uw gemeente.

Wilt u bij elke vraag het antwoord aanvinken dat het meest op uw organisatie van toepassing is? {1, Helemaal mee oneens} {2, Mee oneens} {3, Beetje mee oneens} {4, Noch mee oneens, noch mee eens} {5, Beetje mee eens} {6, Mee eens} {7, Helemaal mee eens}.

	Helemaal mee oneens --- Helemaal mee eens
Het zoeken naar nieuwe mogelijkheden is een belangrijk onderdeel van onze strategie	O O O O O O O
Wij besteden weinig aandacht aan nieuwe mogelijkheden voor de dienstverlening	O O O O O O O
Wij passen onze focus vaak aan naar nieuwe gebieden van dienstverlening	O O O O O O O
Wij hebben geen consequente reactie op druk van buiten de organisatie	O O O O O O O
Bij onze dienstverlening ligt de nadruk op efficiëntie	O O O O O O O
Wij veranderen onze diensten alleen onder druk van externe actoren	O O O O O O O
Wij hebben geen vaststaande prioriteiten in de dienstverlening	O O O O O O O
Wij proberen voorop te lopen met innovatieve vormen van dienstverlening	O O O O O O O
Wij streven naar stabiele prioriteiten in de dienstverlening	O O O O O O O
Wij herdefiniëren voortdurend de prioriteiten in onze dienstverlening	O O O O O O O
Onze organisatie verkent nieuwe mogelijkheden alleen onder druk van externe actoren	O O O O O O O
Wij richten ons op onze kernactiviteiten	O O O O O O O

HOOFDSECTIE III UITBESTEDEN EN VERZORGEN
De laatste vier vragen gaan over gemeentelijke samenwerking

Hoeveel procent van de dienstverlening van uw organisatie wordt door gemeentelijke samenwerking uitgevoerd? [procenten]

Wat is de belangrijkste constructie voor deze gemeentelijke samenwerking?
[centrum gemeente, netwerk constructie, shared services, anders…, nvt]

Hoeveel fte dienstverlening verzorgt uw organisatie voor andere gemeenten? [fte]

Wat is de belangrijkste constructie waarbinnen deze gemeentelijke samenwerking wordt uitgevoerd?
[centrum gemeente, netwerk constructie, shared services, anders…, nvt]

U bent aan het einde gekomen van deze vragenlijst. Wij danken u hartelijk voor het invullen van deze vragenlijst. Als u verder op de hoogte gehouden wilt worden van dit onderzoek vul dan in het onderstaande veld uw e-mailadres in. [E-MAILADRES]

AFSLUITENDE PAGINA
Bedankt voor uw medewerking! Klik op het volgende scherm op verzenden om uw antwoorden door te geven. Voor vragen en/of opmerkingen kunt u contact opnemen met

Mart Langereis
m.langereis@student.utwente.nl

Voor vragen en/of opmerkingen kunt u contact opnemen met Mart Langereis m.langereis@student.utwente.nl

CODEBOEK VARIABELEN

Variabele	Beschrijving	Waarden
Gemeente	Voor welke (deel)gemeente werkt u?	{Naam organisatie}
Functie	Wat is uw functie binnen de organisatie?	{Naam functie}
Leeftijd	Wat is uw leeftijd?	{Jaar}
Geslacht	Wat is uw geslacht?	{1,Man} {2,Vrouw}
werk1	Hoeveel jaar werkt u in uw huidige functie voor deze gemeente?	{Aantal jaar}
werk2	Hoeveel jaar werkt u in uw huidige functie voor een gemeente?	{Aantal jaar}
werk3	Hoeveel jaar werkt u nu voor gemeenten?	{Aantal jaar}
Vernieuwen1	Wij herdefiniëren continu onze prioriteiten in onze dienstverlening	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Vernieuwen2	Wij proberen voorop te lopen met innovatieve vormen van dienstverlening	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Vernieuwen3	Het zoeken naar nieuwe mogelijkheden is een belangrijk onderdeel van onze strategie	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Vernieuwen4	Wij passen onze focus vaak aan naar nieuwe gebieden van dienstverlening	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Verdedigen1	Wij streven naar stabiele prioriteiten in de dienstverlening	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens}

		{3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Verdedigen2	Bij onze dienstverlening ligt de nadruk op efficiëntie	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Verdedigen3	Wij richten ons op onze kernactiviteiten	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Reageren1	We hebben geen vaststaande prioriteiten in de dienstverlening	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Reageren2	Wij veranderen de voorziening van onze diensten alleen onder druk van externe actoren	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Reageren3	Wij besteden weinig aandacht aan nieuwe mogelijkheden voor de dienstverlening	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Reageren4	Onze organisatie verkent nieuwe mogelijkheden alleen onder druk van externe actoren	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}

Reageren5	Wij hebben geen consequente reactie op druk van buiten de organisatie	{1, Zeer oneens} {2, Oneens} {3, Beetje oneens} {4, Noch oneens, noch eens} {5, Beetje eens} {6, Eens} {7, Helemaal eens}
Samenwerking1	Hoeveel procent van de dienstverlening van uw organisatie wordt door gemeentelijke samenwerking uitgevoerd?	{procenten}
Samenwerking2	Wat is de belangrijkste constructie voor deze gemeentelijke samenwerking?	{centrum gemeente, netwerk constructie, shared services, anders…, nvt}
Externedienstverlening1	Hoeveel fte dienstverlening verzorgt uw organisatie voor andere gemeenten?	{fte}
Externedienstverlening2	Wat is de belangrijkste constructie waarbinnen deze gemeentelijke samenwerking wordt uitgevoerd?	{centrum gemeente, netwerk constructie, shared services, anders…, nvt}
Info	Wilt u verder op de hoogte gehouden worden van dit onderzoek?	{1, Nee} {2, Ja}