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Who are the 'citizens' in co-producing smart sustainable cities?

An intersectional analysis of the Borgerkraft citizens' jury in Trondheim

Master's thesis in Globalisation and Sustainable Development
Supervisor: Hilde Refstie

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Kunnskap for en bedre verden

Abstract

This thesis uses the citizen co-production initiative *Borgerkraft* in Trondheim as a case study to explore the function of citizen participation in smart sustainable city work. More specifically it looks at the use of a citizens' jury in the project. By interviewing municipal staff, researchers and a citizen involved in the *Borgerkraft* project and others who are engaged in Trondheim's smart sustainable city work, the thesis provides a detailed account of how a citizens' jury was utilized in the project to achieve greater inclusiveness of citizens and provide solutions to promote local sustainability efforts through a democratic forum. Through a near-random selection of citizens, the *Borgerkraft* jury created a 'different' participatory space that brought together citizens who were unlikely to cross their paths, including those who were not active in public. Being the first experiment of a citizens' jury in Norway, the overall experience of the project was recounted positively by research participants. Building on a relational understanding of power and identities based on intersectionality theory, however, the findings point to the problematic nature of how citizens were conceptualized under the project as individuals disconnected from collective spaces where political agencies are formed. While other participatory methods also have their own challenges in overcoming unequal political representations, the profile of citizens created through an uncritical use of categories in *Borgerkraft* reflected the lack of concern over including most politically marginalized groups within the specific context of the project. The use of a citizen participation method centered on democratic values was overshadowed by underlying assumptions concerning the roles of citizens that limited their ability to challenge fundamental premises in the project. The findings in the thesis underscores the relevance of analyzing citizen participation through an intersectional lens which keeps the focus on the process of reproducing social inequalities in participatory spaces by scrutinizing taken for granted assumptions. As citizens' juries are being planned for further use in Trondheim while also gaining interest across Norway, this thesis makes a timely contribution to analyzing how they work as a practice of citizen co-production.

Preface

This master's thesis is the original work by Leika Aruga and was written to fulfill the graduation requirements of the MSc in Globalisation and Sustainable Development at the Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU). The development of the thesis took place as part of the research project 'co-producing sustainable and smart cities – the role of knowledge production in fast policymaking' initiated by Hilde Refstie and Hilde Nymoene Rørtveit. Being involved in the research project provided me with a rare opportunity to work closely with experienced researchers and learn how to do research. It also opened many doors to get to know about the smart sustainable city work in Trondheim and the people involved.

I would like to extend my special thanks to my supervisor Hilde Refstie for her extraordinary support and guidance. The process of my research felt like an ongoing dialogue with you, and every time after speaking to you I felt inspired and motivated.

To my research participants, thank you for your contribution and willingness to share your insights with me, in some cases over several interviews. Without your participation, it was not possible to conduct this research.

The development of this thesis also benefited from valuable feedback from program peers and researchers at the Geography Department and beyond. Being part of the reading group on social cohesion has also been my inspiration.

Lastly, I thank my family here in Stjørdal for supporting me throughout the program. It has not been an easy journey starting out when my daughter was only 8 months old and writing this thesis while expecting another one. I owe a lot of child-rearing support to Anne-Karin and Kalle. And Alex, thank you for always being there for me. It meant a lot that you also found my research topics interesting. Being able to share our passion kept me going.

Leika Aruga

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List of Abbreviations

NSD	The Norwegian Centre for Research Data
NTNU	The Norwegian University of Science and Technology
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
USA	United States of America

1 Introduction

1.1 Scope and Rationale of the Study

Citizen co-production has in recent years gained popularity in urban planning and development broadly, and smart sustainable city initiatives often emphasize the importance of citizen engagement. Citizen co-production is defined in this thesis as a collaborative process primarily between local authorities and citizens that concern public policies and issues. In order to address urban sustainability problems, co-production offers a venue to seek strategic solutions that are negotiated upon intersecting forms of global and local knowledge as well as different priorities, interests and tensions (Perry & Atherton, 2017). In the European context, the momentum for citizen co-production also stems from counter-movements against the erosion of public spheres that are increasingly being privatized (Connelly et al., 2020). However, when it comes to the outcome of citizen co-production and how they make a difference in smart sustainable city initiatives, there is no straightforward answer (Culwick et al., 2019). While citizen co-production holds democratic promise, it does not necessarily lead to more legitimate and effective policy decisions and outcomes as power inequalities that shape local decision making are often unchallenged by the practice (Carrozza, 2015). It is therefore crucial to unpack how citizen co-production takes place, who it involves, and what effect co-production has on sustainability initiatives.

This thesis takes the form of a case study on democratic innovations (Borgerkraft) by Trondheim Municipality to analyze citizen co-production and questions who are the ‘citizens’ in these processes as suggested in the title. I approach this question with an intersectional lens, grounded in critical inquiry and praxis that ceaselessly strive to understand, explain and intervene against the social reproduction of power (Collins & Bilge, 2020; Cho et al., 2013). In the context of urban planning and development, an intersectional lens helps us question ‘whose knowledge counts’ and make visible how particular dynamics that create spaces of co-production may limit materialization of alternative urban possibilities (Broto & Alves, 2018). Applying intersectionality as an analytical strategy to understand how spaces of co-production work therefore brings attention not only to particular dynamics that construct citizens as co-producers but also the practice of co-production that delimits what can be produced. The

remaining of this chapter introduces the research objective and questions, background to the case as well as the outline of the thesis.

1.2 Research Objective and Questions

The thesis uses the Borgerkraft project—an experimentation of democratic innovations for digital and physical citizen participation in planning in Trondheim—as a case for discussing citizen co-production in smart sustainable cities work. More specifically, the thesis aims at scrutinizing power relations and contested interests at play in the Borgerkraft citizens' jury as a particular citizen co-production practice. It examines the underlying assumptions that constructs 'the citizen' and shows how issues are neglected that limit the imaginaries of smart sustainable cities with an understanding that there are multiple forms of urban living which are not necessarily part of dominant urban discourses.

Under the overarching question '*who are the 'citizens' in co-producing smart sustainable cities?*', the main research questions consist of the following:

1. What is the function of citizen participation in the Borgerkraft project?
2. Who participates, and whose interests and needs are being served through the citizen co-production?
3. How can intersectionality as an analytical strategy be used to situate and make visible power asymmetries in spaces of citizen co-production?

The first question examines the purpose of engaging citizens in the Borgerkraft project, how the project was implemented to meet that purpose, and the role of citizens in the project. Based on the understanding from the first question, the second question situates the Borgerkraft project in the broader smart sustainable city work carried out by Trondheim Municipality to consider whose interests and needs are being served through this specific practice of citizen co-production. In this process, how citizens are conceptualized in the practice is also explored in order to gain a better understanding of how "citizens" are constructed as part of the co-production practice. Lastly, the third question shifts the focus to the analytical approach taken in this thesis and reflects on how the use of intersectionality played a role in answering the other research questions.

1.3 Background to the Case

1.3.1 Co-producing Sustainable Solutions with Citizens

Co-production can be used in different ways—as a form of public-private partnership, as close collaboration between public administration and universities, or as will be the focus in this thesis, co-production primarily practiced between local governments and citizens referred to as ‘citizen co-production’. In the context of Western economies, co-production along with closely related concepts such as co-creation and co-design have gained popularity in urban planning and development since the 1970s (Sorrentino et al., 2018). Based on public administration theory taking a state-initiated approach, co-production has been typically used as strategies to gain legitimacy and increase effectiveness when addressing complex social problems. Examples are overcoming shortcomings in government service provision (e.g. cost-saving and resource mobilization) or creating (market) values through innovation. Today, the ways co-production is being used have extended to include processes of collective production of alternative urban forms built on diverse forms of knowledge (Perry & Atherton, 2017; Galuszka, 2019).

Particularly in the context of smart sustainable city development, citizen participation is promoted as an integral component of collaborations between local governments and universities, indicating the centrality of citizen knowledge in co-producing knowledge for urban sustainability (Trencher et al., 2014). Citizen co-production functions as a way of activating citizens to take on sustainability issues into their own hands (Lund, 2018). Although, critiques of smart sustainable cities read this as ‘responsibilization’ of citizens where citizens are made responsible to self-invest and self-provide under neoliberal urban governance regimes associated with a roll back of state roles in the interest of economic efficiency (Levenda, 2019). Therefore, an important question asked about citizen co-production is whether citizens can challenge the fundamental premises that shape smart sustainable city strategies and initiatives through their participation (May & Perry, 2017).

1.3.2 Citizen Co-production Practices in Trondheim

Citizen co-production has gained popularity across Norway’s urban planning practices in recent years. Trondheim has taken a leading role in this drive, and the municipality even has a website titled “the co-produced city” which features the use of democratic innovations including citizens’ juries among other initiatives (Trondheim Municipality, 2018). Other examples of citizen co-production taking place in Trondheim include Trondheim Living Lab (Korsnes,

2017), planning “charettes” used in Trondheim Municipality’s architecture and planning competition *Framtidsbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050* (Wensaas et al., 2020), and various citizen engagements under the project +CityxChange such as Innovation Labs and Climathons (Gall et al., 2020). In addition, citizen co-production has been promoted under the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program which will be discussed more in detail below.

Notably, in August 2019 the municipality of Trondheim has adopted a political strategy ‘The Co-produced Municipality Trondheim (Trondheim Municipality, 2019).¹ In the strategy, the role of citizens is clearly placed at the center of the effort for making Trondheim a co-produced municipality. It is explained that Trondheim Municipality as a democratic institution has a duty for engaging citizens to safeguard their values, interests and resources in the ongoing development of the city. The strategy distinguishes the role of citizens from ‘customers’ which has been a more common approach to co-production in public administration. This coincides with the idea behind ‘municipality 3.0’ which repositions the roles of both municipality and citizens as co-producers, where the citizens are no longer mere recipients of services but rather mobilized as resources to actively solve complex societal challenges (Guribye, 2018).

One of such challenges that has received particular attention in the use of citizen co-production in Trondheim and Norway is the localization of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In fact, the Norwegian government has made a decision in May 2019 that the SDGs shall provide the main direction for municipal planning (Ministry of Local Government and Modernisation, 2019). The municipality of Trondheim has formally internalized this national direction in June 2020 by adopting a proposal which, among other things, placed the importance of building a knowledge base on SDGs within the municipality’s management and competence development as well as through the work of citizen co-production (Trondheim Municipality, 2020b). Trondheim Municipality is also part of a national project on smart sustainable development through a collaboration between Norwegian municipalities and 16 UN organizations referred to as United for Smart Sustainable Cities (U4SSC). Trondheim Municipality plays a vital role in this network through the Center of Excellence on Sustainable Development Goals City Transitions which was established through an agreement with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe in August 2019 (UNECE, 2019).

¹ While the Norwegian title ‘*Den Samskapte Kommunene Trondheim*’ could be translated as ‘the Co-created Municipality Trondheim’ as the term *samskaping* directly translates as co-creation, the way *samskaping* is used in the context of the practice studied under this thesis more closely relates to the way co-production is used in English (see Kobro, 2018). Therefore, *samskaping* is translated as co-production in this thesis.

Smart city initiatives in Trondheim are positioned as part of the sustainable city development, and smartness is conceptualized as the link between technology, data, sustainable priorities and citizen involvement (Trondheim Municipality, 2019). The EU funded project +CityxChange is a prominent example where a citizen-centered approach is promoted to co-produce sustainability (Gohari et al., 2020). The project has developed the “Bold City Vision Framework”, with the subtitle “SDG City Transition Framework”, which strongly advocates the integration of new democratic tools into municipalities’ core operation and planning processes to the extent of routinely using deliberative mini-publics as part of annual cycles to address politically challenging SDGs-related issues (Tanum et al., 2020). In this context, the online platform Borgerkraft which translates as ‘citizen power’ in English was launched by Trondheim Municipality as a testbed for citizen co-production in the form of democratic innovations. Borgerkraft is a materialization of Trondheim’s political strategy on co-production and provides a platform for both digital and physical meetings for citizens to “share ideas and aspirations on how to make Trondheim a better place for all” (UNECE , 2020, p. 15). The platform is considered a pilot “to generate ideas for local projects that work toward the Sustainable Development Goals” and the inviting question to join the online platform poses: *would you like to help Trondheim become a more sustainable city?* (Trondheim Municipality, n.d.-b).

Among the different democratic innovations hosted under the online platform Borgerkraft, this thesis particularly focuses on the use of a citizens’ jury in a project also named Borgerkraft which aims at accelerating local sustainability efforts through collaborations between citizens and Trondheim Municipality. The project was intended to consist of two forms of democratic innovations—a citizens’ jury and a participatory budgeting exercise—although as explained in detail in the following chapters, the main focus of this thesis is on the use of a citizens’ jury referred to as the Borgerkraft jury in this particular project.²

In the political strategy ‘the Co-produced Municipality Trondheim’, the city council notes that issues around sustainability are something that the use of citizens’ juries can help mobilize solutions as well as resources. The strategy therefore indicates the possibility of systematically

² Citizens’ jury has been translated into Norwegian in different ways. *Innbyggerpanel* is used to indicate citizens’ juries in the political strategy on co-production while in other municipal documents *innbyggerpanel* refers to a citizen engagement method which do not use random sampling techniques that are central to citizens’ juries as described in the chapter on theoretical framework. Under the Borgerkraft project, citizens’ jury is referred to as *borgerpanel*. In addition, the term *borgerkraft* was initially used to describe the specific citizens’ jury initiative dealt in this thesis, however it also came to be used as the name of the overarching online platform for various initiatives of democratic innovations.

allocating funding for citizens' juries and citizen-managed local projects. Following the strategy, the first-ever citizens' jury in Norway was carried out by Trondheim Municipality in 2020. The municipality also intends to use citizens' juries as part of the upcoming planning process for the Social Section of the Municipal Plan 2020-2032 (Trondheim Municipality, 2020c).

The Borgerkraft project has a geographical focus on the suburban districts in the southern part of Trondheim consisting of Heimdal, Saupstad, Kolstad, Huseby, Romoslia and Flatåsen. The project builds on the learnings from Trondheim Municipality's years-long experience of citizen engagement, particularly from the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program which partially share a common geographical focus. The area lift program is considered as a model for citizen engagement for local development (Trondheim Municipality, 2019), and municipal staff who worked with the area lift program was also mobilized for the designing and implementation of the Borgerkraft project. For example, those who worked on the project Stein, Saks, Papir which addressed violence against children through an expert committee consisting of citizens were mobilized as facilitators in the Borgerkraft project. Due to this close connection between the area lift program and the Borgerkraft project, references to the area lift program are made in the discussions to follow in order to bring in perspectives from the citizen engagement efforts made by Trondheim Municipality over the years when considering the practice of citizen co-production in the Borgerkraft project.

1.4 Outline of the thesis

In the following, Chapter 2 provides a theoretical framework which informed the empirical work of this thesis. It consists of three sections: firstly, by further contextualizing citizen co-production as a democratic practice mirroring its use in the Borgerkraft project; secondly, critical perspectives on citizen participation more prominently addressed in the Global South context is brought into the discussion in order to highlight the power asymmetries present in participatory spaces which direct attention to not only how participation takes places but also who participates; and lastly, in order to analyze the Borgerkraft project based on the critical perspectives, intersectionality is presented as an analytical strategy to study the specific citizen co-production in question.

Chapter 3 clarifies the methodology of this thesis, explaining the choices made for shaping the research as a case study on the Borgerkraft project using qualitative methods including semi-

structured interviews. The chapter also describes how data was collected and analyzed, the ethical considerations made, and discuss the reliability and validity of the study.

Chapter 4 presents how empirical data was analyzed in four parts. Firstly, an in-depth account of the Borgerkraft project is provided in order to further contextualize the case to inform the subsequent analysis and discussions. In the following three parts, the use of citizens' jury in the project is analyzed for equality in terms of presence and voice among citizens and the outcome of the project, mirroring the issues presented in Chapter 2.

Chapter 5 discusses the findings presented in Chapter 4 in response to the research questions of this thesis: *what is the function of citizen participation in the Borgerkraft project?; whose interests and needs are being served through citizen co-production?; and how can intersectionality as an analytical strategy be used to situate and make visible power asymmetries in spaces of citizen co-production?*

Lastly, Chapter 6 provides a conclusion, summarizing the findings of this thesis and considering some implication this study could have on further research.

2 Theoretical Framework

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework that has informed the empirical work. Three key concepts of democratic innovations, participation, and intersectionality are being connected to provide a guiding framework for examining dynamic power relations present in co-production spaces. Relations that influence *who* the citizens are in co-producing smart sustainable cities, whose issues are addressed and whose interests are served.

2.1 Citizen Co-production as a Democratic Practice

Some scholars argue that co-production is a process in which normative understandings of the world is formed (Jasanoff, 2004), and that it can be used as a means to recognize and include the voices of citizens in what counts as knowledge and the formulation of future directions (May & Marvin, 2017). The process of knowledge co-production is therefore a political process where public problems are defined and coped with (Carrozza, 2015, p. 120). In this regard, the ideal of citizen co-production lies in its democratic values, to deliberate on processes of social transitions and address structural inequalities.

The idea behind the Borgerkraft project comes from practices of democratic innovations that propose new participatory spaces with emphasis on deliberation. Broadly speaking, deliberation could be defined as “mutual communication that involves weighing and reflecting on preferences, values, and interests regarding matters of common concern” (Bächtiger et al., 2018, p. 2). According to Smith (2009), democratic innovations refer to “institutions that have been specifically designed to increase and deepen citizen participation in the political decision-making process” (p.1). He categorizes a variety of practices of democratic innovations into four distinctive categories: popular assemblies, mini-publics, direct legislation and e-democracy.

The citizens’ jury model adopted in the Borgerkraft project belongs to the category of mini-publics characterized by the use of random sampling as a way of enhancing inclusiveness of citizens participating in deliberation processes of public matters (Smith, 2009). Initiatives which fall under the model of citizens’ jury are described differently in the literature of democratic innovations and deliberative democracy. Brown uses ‘citizen panel’ (2006), Escobar (2017) uses ‘citizen jury’, while Michels and Binnema (2018) as well as Smith (2009) use ‘citizens’ jury’. In an OECD (2020) report, the terms citizens’ jury and panel are used

interchangeably. This is also the case in reports and policy documents describing Borgerkraft, as well as among the interviewees for the thesis. In this thesis I will use ‘citizens’ jury’ to refer to panels that are put together based on randomized sampling such as in Borgerkraft.

While popular assemblies such as participatory budgeting are designed to guarantee the equal opportunity to participate, the random sampling technique employed in mini-publics are intended to guarantee an equal probability of being selected to participate (Smith, 2009). Citizens’ juries have been practiced since the 1970s, initially in the USA introduced by Ned Crosby (Smith, 2009). Practices of citizens’ juries differ case to case in terms of their design and scope, yet they tend to be used to produce results in a short period of time (Wakeford et al., 2008; OECD, 2020). Today, citizens’ juries have become one of the most prominently practiced models for deliberative processes among public authorities in a broad range of countries and been used to address policy issues such as urban planning, health, environment, infrastructure and others (OECD, 2020). In particular, mini-publics are often used to address controversial or politically sensitive issues (Smith, 2009).

Advocates of democratic innovations argue that particular selection methods of citizen jurors can prevent systematic exclusion of certain social groups from participation to ensure equality of presence, while deliberation in small groups and structured facilitation promotes equality of voice (Smith, 2009). These two major considerations made in citizens’ juries also serve as safeguards from being accused of bias or manipulation, which Smith and Wales (2000) cite as some of the most damaging criticisms that can be made about citizens’ juries. However, liberal democratic theory, from which democratic innovations originate, has been criticized for being built on an individualistic, universalistic and rationalistic framework, and therefore, unable to take into account of the ineradicable character of power (Mouffe, 1999). When individual citizenship rights are at the bedrock of democratic politics, it fails to recognize how individuals from oppressed groups cannot exercise those rights in the first place (Collins, 2017). This calls for scrutinizing the underlying premises made in the claims of how equality of presence and equality of voice are pursued in citizens’ juries as practices of participation.

2.2 Critical Perspectives on Participatory Approaches

Participation has been conceptualized in a number of ways but perhaps the most famous is the ladder of citizen participation introduced by Sherry Arnstein (1969). Her framework places participation into distinct forms labeled as non-participation, tokenism and citizen power. Others have also proposed typologies of participation which help to unpack different aspects of

participatory approaches in practice (e.g. Pretty, 1995; White, 1996), and more recently, those typologies have been adapted to examine citizen co-production in the context of smart sustainable cities (e.g. Cardullo & Kitchin, 2019; Gohari et al., 2020). Interestingly, *Borgerkraft* is translated into English as ‘citizen power’. What characterizes participation labeled as citizen power in Arnstein’s words is “the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future” (Arnstein, 1969, p. 216).

As Cornwall (2008) points out, however, frameworks to understand participation often lack attention to who is participating. Many scholars have raised concern over how participatory processes can exclude particular groups in the absence of deliberate effort to include them (e.g. Cornwall, 2008; Mohan, 2001). Such concern also applies to citizen co-production in community-initiated spaces where the issue of power and conflict is also present (Watson, 2014). The way co-production can reproduce existing power asymmetries is illustrated through a community-based waste collection scheme in Cape Town discussed by Miraftab (2004). As the waste collection scheme assumed communities as single entities with homogenous interests, it resulted in not only relying on existing societal racial, gender and class hierarchies but also perpetuated them. In line with gender roles that assign domestic responsibilities to women, for example, the waste collection scheme exploited poor women as unpaid and casual labor while framing it as empowerment.

Critical insights on participation coming from Southern discourses uncover tendencies to simplify highly complicated social relations by attributing social power and control to institutions at macro and central levels while placing communities at the opposite end (Kothari, 2001). Such an understanding of static power relations presumes ‘the community’ as a homogeneous group that shares common vision and purpose, rendering differences and inequalities within a community invisible. Moreover, the danger of creating an ‘illusion of inclusion’ is that the outcome of participatory processes can be “treated as if it represents what ‘the people’ really want, but also that it gains a moral authority that becomes hard to challenge or question” (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2008, p. 181).

In the context of citizen co-production used in smart city projects, Cardullo & Kitchin (2019) and others argue that citizens are mobilized under a form of neoliberal citizenship that is based on individual autonomy instead of civil, social and political rights. As the focus is given to assets and competences to provide solutions to urban problems, consideration over

representation, inclusiveness or empowerment has been sidelined (Gohari et al., 2020; Lund, 2018). Building on a relational understanding of power, Gaventa & Cornwall (2008) brings attention to the way participatory spaces are formed by discourses, influencing who participates and the possibilities of what could be done in those spaces. As Butzlaff (2020) has bluntly put, unless power asymmetries are questioned and the idea of ‘citizens’ as autonomous individuals with free will is abandoned, democratic aspects of citizen co-production is unlikely to be realized. This is why it is relevant to examine who participates in the *Borgerkraft* project and question how representation in the citizens’ jury is conceptualized in that practice.

In the following section, I turn to the scholarship on intersectionality to explore how intersectionality can function as a critical framework for analysis that highlights representation and power inequalities in the practices of citizens’ juries.

2.3 Intersectionality

Building on the critiques of participatory approaches, some of the urgent questions concerning the use of citizens’ juries in citizen co-production call attention to how the juries deal with power asymmetries and whether they actually enable materialization of alternative urban forms. From early works of black feminists, intersectionality mainly developed as a theoretical framework that responds to the limitations of privileging one system of oppression over another. Intersectionality instead addresses the tension between the fluidity and multiplicity of individual identities and group politics (Valentine, 2007). At the core of intersectionality scholarship is the drive to understand, explain and intervene against the social reproduction of power (Cho et al., 2013). Today, intersectionality refers to a diverse set of practices, interpretations and methodologies and has been conceptualized in many different ways (Collins, 2015). For the purpose of this thesis, I use intersectionality as an analytical strategy to scrutinize the power relations in citizen co-production with an eye towards strengthening its democratic values.

Intersectionality is underpinned by several principles as summarized by Collins (2017). It recognizes that systems of oppression such as racism, sexism and class exploitation are interconnected and mutually construct one another, and social inequalities are configured within intersecting oppressions. At the same time, social problems reflect how social actors are situated within the power relations of particular historical and social contexts, and therefore, there are distinctive standpoints on social phenomena. Translating these principles into an analytical strategy to study citizen co-production requires attention to how power relations

unfold within *and* outside of participatory spaces. Collins (2017) cautions against siding with state-centric power-evasive research frameworks that disguise issues of domination as background variables, reducing them from political projects to technical problems that could be solved by the state. She also emphasizes the significance of the collective as a source of political action and a site where individuals locate themselves “to make sense of and organize all aspects of social structure, including their political responses to their situations” (Collins, 2017, p. 28). Following this logic, assuming individual citizens as the basic unit of analysis neglects intersecting power relations that routinely exclude subordinated populations. Here, power is conceptualized as a multi-dimensional phenomenon that takes into account not only place and context-specific interpersonal-inequalities, but also macro-level, historically constituted forms of domination. With this in mind, the claims of equality of presence and equality of voice that support citizens’ juries are discussed in the following.

2.3.1 Equality of presence

In order to achieve equality of presence, citizens’ juries place central importance on how citizens are recruited into the process. Random sampling techniques are embraced to guarantee “each member of the (political) community” with an equal chance to be selected (Michels & Binnema, 2018, p. 236). In this way, it is distinguished from other participatory mechanisms that engage individuals as stakeholders or representatives of organized groups. It has been well documented that participatory methods which rely on self-selection often generate bias towards citizens that are better educated and have higher incomes (Smith, 2009), and therefore, random sampling is employed to give voice to “people that are often neglected” (Michels & Binnema, 2018, p. 236). However, as relying on pure random selection is likely to lead to exclusion of citizens from numerically small social groups, stratified sampling or quotas are used to ensure their inclusion and to recruit a body of citizens with diverse social perspectives (Smith, 2009). The inherent challenge of this method is that the power to decide what categories to include in selection criteria rests with the initiator of citizens’ juries and have been practiced rather arbitrarily. For example, British Columbia’s Citizens’ Assemblies considered geographical districts, gender and age for selecting citizens, yet the omission of ethnicity resulted in unsuccessful recruitment of citizens from Aboriginal communities (Smith, 2009). Therefore, there is a risk of leaving out “important differences which have not been selected for” (Parkinson, 2006, p. 76 in Smith, 2009, p. 81).

The critical limitations in the way categories are used to ensure inclusiveness in the selection of citizens becomes substantiated through an intersectional analysis. For example,

Wojciechowska (2019) demonstrates how categories used in stratified sampling or quotas for citizens' juries are considered in isolation from one another, and therefore, neglect intersecting forms of marginalization from political participation. In addition, people who do not neatly fit into normalized categorization may be left out (e.g. people who identify with non-binary gender). Broto and Alves (2018) also note the risk of uncritically employing locally defined categories as the basis of people's participation, and its potential consequence in missing out vulnerabilities experienced by people who were not integrated into the structure of local governance in the first place. On the other hand, escaping categorization as a whole is not a feasible solution or perhaps even impossible. McCall (2005) points out that even if one tries to abandon the use of categories, new relations of power/knowledge will continue to be subjects of new systems of classification. The use of categories is therefore complex. Categories can be strategically used for political purposes to address inequalities, or in other cases, to serve institutional convenience (Refstie et al., 2010). As a way of critically engaging with social divisions and categorical boundaries that are used to shape 'equality of presence' in citizens' juries, an intersectionality approach directs attention to how categories are constructed because "in specific situations and in relation to specific people there are some social divisions that are more important than others in constructing specific positionings" (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 203). Therefore, it becomes critical to examine political marginalization that takes place across the social power axes or systems of oppressions in the specific context in question.

Another related issue concerns the construct of the political community. In any practice of citizens' juries, a boundary is drawn by the initiators to delimit who counts as a citizen from which random sampling takes place (Goodin, 2007 in Smith, 2009). When census data or voting lists are used to form the basis for selection, that will inevitably exclude unregistered, homeless or informal migrants (Wojciechowska, 2019).

Apart from the use of categories and the construct of sampling-base, another issue that draws attention from an intersectional inquiry is the way random selection of citizens relies on citizens' voluntary participation. Under what conditions and incentives are citizens mobilized? While citizens are under no obligation to participate, Smith (2009) claims that "mini-publics offer a powerful way of motivating 'ordinary' citizens to participate in the political process" (p. 110). He argues that invitation to participate in a rare opportunity, a modest honorarium and the seriousness of the political endeavor motivate participation of citizens who typically do not participate in open consultation processes and other forms of political activity. Nevertheless, Jacquet (2017) points out that even with the sampling techniques used in citizens' juries, the

selection of citizens “follows the unequal distribution pattern of political engagement”, citing the experience of Belgian’s mini-publics at national and local levels where overrepresentation of “citizens who are politically interested, civically active, and have higher political trust” was observed despite the use of quota and specific targeting of groups (p. 642; see also Michels & Binnema, 2018). Jacquet brings attention to the fact that the majority of citizens in diverse practices of mini-publics refuse to participate and examines the reasons behind non-participation. In essence, he shows that the main reasons for refusal stemmed from how citizens perceived their own roles, abilities and capabilities in political participation as well as the prospect of influence made possible by the outcome of participation. As Wojciechowska (2019) observes, structural constraints may well play a role in shaping reasons for refusal. An intersectional inquiry will help illuminate such constraints embedded in historical and social contexts.

2.3.2 Equality of voice

As Smith (2009) rightly notes, equality of presence does not directly translate into equality of voice. The process of deliberation requires attention to not only how people are brought into the space but also how different forms of knowledge are shared and the power dynamics of knowledge co-production (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2008). For example, only including one or two representatives from minority social groups may not lead to equality of voice unless “a critical mass or threshold number from minority social groups are included” (Smith, 2009, p. 84). Nevertheless, the small size of citizens’ juries that typically range between 12-25 people makes it difficult to secure a critical mass of minority groups. Furthermore, in the case of British Columbia’s Citizens’ Assembly where there was gender parity, the dynamic of the Assembly discouraged women to advocate for their issues (Lang, 2007). In fact, few of the citizens felt that “they were there to act as representative of any social group to which they belonged” while they struggled to advocate for the interests of their own groups (Lang, 2007, p. 54). Through this observation, Lang (2007) stresses the importance of the process of deliberation for citizens to recognize their individual experiences as part of a collective experience and be able to advocate on behalf of social group interests. Therefore, she concludes that “the assumption that a randomly selected group will be representative of the views of the general public can’t be sustained just by looking at the demographics of the group” (p. 55). Her findings resonate with how the theory and praxis of intersectionality focus on analyzing processes of specific positionings and identities that “are constructed and interrelate and affect each other in

particular locations and contexts” rather than conceptualizing identities as something fixed and static (Yuval-Davis, 2006, p. 200).

In mini-publics, diverse perspectives, beliefs and values brought into the process of deliberation is seen as an asset to enhance reflected judgement (Smith, 2009). Therefore, a number of considerations are made in citizens’ juries to embrace inclusiveness and diversity, including on how the agenda or the mandate of the jury is set, how information and knowledge are made available to jurors, and how facilitation is conducted. Equality of voice in citizens’ juries imply equal opportunity to influence deliberation and the final output (Smith, 2009). Deliberative democrats are careful to use the word ‘opportunity’ here and not to mean equality in terms of actual influence one can make, as the premise of a good deliberation entails changing one’s opinion in favor of good arguments (Bächtiger et al., 2018). Deliberation as a basis for decision-making means that convincing ideas and arguments have the power to influence the final outcome, on the basis that people are open to others’ ideas and perspectives (Michels & Binnema, 2018). For ideas and arguments to be convincing, public reasons must be provided in support of the common good (Escobar, 2017). However, there is a possibility that the very definition of the common good that guides deliberation becomes dominated by the already privileged, marginalizing the already disadvantaged (Smith, 2009, p. 98).

Typically, the stage-setting decisions for deliberation are made by local authorities and other types of organizations that initiate and finance the juries without any involvement of citizens. This creates a risk where conditions for deliberation become framed by the interests of the initiators, limiting what and how citizens can deliberate (Smith & Wales, 2000). Following this, it is observed that agendas of citizens’ juries often concern ‘safe’ issues rather than contentious issues to avoid conflict, despite deliberative forums being promoted for its suitability to tackle controversial issues (Smith, 2009, p. 23). On the other hand, when the agenda is too open and abstract, providing more room for jurors to set the direction of deliberation, the result could become superficial and weigh less political significance (Michels & Binnema, 2018). Therefore, the appropriateness of agenda setting, both in terms of its process and content, needs to be examined on a case-by-case basis.

Another condition to enhance equality of voice among jurors is that they are given the same “balanced and factual information” as their knowledgebase for deliberation, in addition to taking diverse perspectives into consideration (Michels & Binnema, 2018, p. 236). Therefore, deliberation in the citizens’ jury model is preceded by a learning phase for the jurors to acquire

new knowledge provided by experts such as academic researchers, public officials, activists and stakeholders on the topics at hand (Escobar, 2017). The learning phase facilitates the transformation of “raw preferences” of jurors consisting of “narrow private interests and pre-existing knowledge and prejudices” into informed and reflective understanding of the issues (Smith, 2009, p. 24). The way citizens are assumed to be in need of education in order to reach a considered judgement arguably reflects a top-down approach to participatory spaces. In contrast, intersectionality theory draws attention to knowledge that emerges from marginalized social locations and lived experiences that may not sit well within normalized knowledge frameworks (May, 2014). As identifying what information is important and who to provide that information is most often based on the understanding of the initiators, the same concern about initiators’ bias in agenda setting also applies here. Information provided by ‘experts’ may define the problem and possible solutions in a way that filters out citizens’ knowledge that does not fall under the scope. Although, when participants are not given expert knowledge, it could result in developing unrealistic or overlapping proposals with policies already in place, as in the case of the mini-public implemented in Belgium (Michels & Binnema, 2018). Therefore, careful consideration is also here needed on a case-by-case basis to assess how information is made available for jurors and how citizens’ knowledge plays a role during deliberation.

In citizens’ juries, the role of facilitators is considered vital in order to ensure equal contribution by jurors, that jurors act with mutual respect and reach the goal of a given task (Harris, 2019). In particular, the independence of facilitation is considered as a way of ensuring that deliberations are ‘free and fair’ (Smith, 2009, p. 95). Facilitators are therefore expected to have the skills to avoid certain voices to dominate the discussion and encourage marginal voices to be heard. Although, reliance on facilitators to realize equality of voice among jurors could result in emphasizing the roles of professional staff and making a top-down dynamic in the democratic forum (Wojciechowska, 2019). Therefore, it is not ideal for public authorities to take on the facilitation role which could compromise the independence of the process. Instead, rotating facilitation among citizens is promoted as a good practice (Smith, 2009; Harris, 2019). In some cases, methods and techniques used in facilitation to ensure fairness could result in keeping marginal voices in the margin because when everyone’s voices are counted as equal, the majority dominates (Davies et al., 2006). As a countermeasure, Wojciechowska (2019) therefore advocates for making the members of the disempowered groups to take facilitation roles.

2.3.3 Outcome

One of the underlying premises of citizens' juries and other representative deliberative processes is that they can lead to better public decisions (OECD, 2020, p. 28). Although in many instances, outputs of citizens' juries come in the form of recommendations rather than a decision that is guaranteed to be implemented by the sponsoring body (Smith & Wales, 2000). While there are precedents where recommendations produced by the Citizens' Assemblies in British Columbia and Ontario were followed by public referendums on electoral reforms, they are treated as exceptional cases. In general, there is no certainty in whether and how recommendations made by citizens' juries affect broader political decision-making processes (Smith, 2009).

The lack of transparency magnifies the concern over tokenism where decision-makers cherry pick recommendations that conform with their political interests (Harris, 2019). At the same time, the advisory nature of recommendations makes outputs of citizens' juries one of many inputs for decision-making bodies to take into consideration, among others coming from political parties, experts and interest groups (Hendriks, 2005 in Smith, 2009). In this respect, the claim on the absence of elite conflict and special interests in citizens' juries does not hold in terms of their outcomes (see Michels & Binnema, 2018). Therefore, it is important that citizens' juries can be scrutinized for their terms of deliberation and political consequences of the output, not only by the jurors but also by the wider public (Smith, 2009).

Lastly, publicity is required for ensuring legitimacy and trustworthiness of the outputs of citizens' juries and also to hold citizens' juries accountable to the broader public (Young, 2001). Although there is a theoretical dilemma about to what extent publicity should be realized in citizens' juries. On one hand, publicity of citizens' juries is considered to have a positive effect on the way jurors deliberate as it makes jurors act in the interest of the public over self (Smith, 2009). On the other hand, publicity of the deliberation process is thought of as a hinderance for free and open deliberation among citizens as it creates pressure for keeping one's opinion unchanged (Michels & Binnema, 2018). In fact, ensuring publicity and accountability is seen as one of the weaker traits of mini-publics including citizens' juries (Smith, 2009).

In the following analysis and discussion chapters of this thesis, the theoretical framework presented in this chapter provides a basis for inquiry. In Chapter 4, the Borgerkraft project is analyzed for its framing—situating the project in practices of citizen co-production promoted by Trondheim Municipality in the context of smart sustainable city work, examining how

equality of presence and equality of voice is approached in the project and how they influenced the outcome of the project. The discussion in Chapter 5 reengages with the concerns raised about citizen co-production in this chapter by examining the findings from the Borgerkraft project and returning to the research questions of this thesis.

3 Methodology

In this chapter the methodology used for this thesis is presented with justifications for taking a case study approach using qualitative research methods. In the following sections, an account is provided for how the case was selected, how data was collected and analyzed and what ethical considerations were made during the research. Reflecting on the decisions made and the circumstances of how the research took place, reliability and validity of the study is considered at the end.

3.1 Choice of research methods and design

This project used qualitative methods and a case study approach. The choice of the citizens' jury in the Borgerkraft project initiated by Trondheim Municipality as a case was made in order to produce situated knowledge about a particular citizen co-production practice. While there is no standard methodology for research taking an intersectionality approach, the need to adapt research methods to the specific context under study has been commonly emphasized (Kaijser & Kronsell, 2013; Christensen & Jensen, 2012; Hopkins, 2018). Case study is a methodology that enables research to 'explore in-depth nuances of the phenomenon and the contextual influences on and explanations of that phenomenon' (Baxter, 2016, p. 130). In particular, case studies that employ qualitative research methods have been identified to be particularly helpful for intersectional analysis to focus on the complexities of social life and to recognize its diversity and heterogeneity in research (McCall, 2005). As the research questions of this thesis are primarily concerned with power relations in a citizen co-production practice, qualitative research methods were used to explain the social structures under scrutiny as well as perceptions of people involved in the process. The specific methods used were a combination of oral and textual methods: semi-structured interviews as a way of gathering primary data, while secondary data and grey literature were also collected and analyzed. The steps taken to collect and analyze different data are further explained after providing an account on how the case was selected.

3.2 Case selection

My master's thesis proposal submitted in the end of 2019 originally intended to be a case study of how citizens participate during the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development

Goals in Yokohama City, Japan. The reason for proposing this case stemmed from my interest in studying power relations in participatory spaces and understanding how different imageries of a sustainable society are formed and negotiated during the process of translating global goals into local actions. I chose Yokohama City due to its demographic diversity and influence being a model city for SDGs Future City promoted by the Japanese government. As the corona pandemic made travel impossible, I redesigned my study to build on an internship I was conducting at the Department of Geography as part of my degree at NTNU. In my internship in the autumn 2020, I was involved in the research project ‘co-producing sustainable and smart cities – the role of knowledge production in fast policymaking’ which has been initiated by Hilde Refstie and Hilde Nymo Rørtveit. As a research assistant to the project, I learned about how smart sustainable city initiatives are promoted through various co-production practices here in Trondheim. As part of my internship, I conducted a literature review, interviewed researchers and municipality staff, and observed at relevant events. Among the different co-production practices in Trondheim which I came across during the internship, the Borgerkraft project stood out as an initiative that promoted democratic values and empowerment of citizens in the context of smart sustainable city development. Its use of citizens’ jury was therefore chosen as the case for this thesis. As described more in detailed under Chapter 4 on analysis, the Borgerkraft project consists of two different democratic innovations, one being a citizens’ jury and the other a participatory budgeting exercise. As the second part of the Borgerkraft project with participatory budgeting has not been implemented till date (May 2021), the use of a citizens’ jury in the project became the central focus of this thesis.

3.3 Data collection

In order to collect information about the Borgerkraft project in general, I started by going through the websites of Trondheim Municipality including the website entitled Borgerkraft. As described in Chapter 1, the Borgerkraft website functions as a platform for different democratic innovations among which the Borgerkraft project (citizens’ jury and participatory budgeting) is included. While a brief description of the Borgerkraft project was available on this platform in the end of 2020, the website seems to undergo frequent content change and the description of the Borgerkraft project is no longer available as of May 2021. Online information regarding the Borgerkraft project was generally difficult to obtain as most information reflected the description of the project at the planning stage as opposed to what had actually been implemented. Partial information about the project was scattered across different websites such as on ‘Smart City Trondheim’ (Trondheim Municipality, n.d.-a) and ‘the Co-created city’

(Trondheim Municipality, 2018), in blogposts or announcements for upcoming information meetings about the project.³ For this reason, I had to rely on interviews in order to provide a description of the project itself as well as two draft reports that I received by municipal staff interviewed. One report provided an overview of the Borgerkraft jury in the Borgerkraft project including the process and recommendations which came out of the jury. The other report was an experience guide which provides a reflection of the Borgerkraft jury from the perspective of Trondheim Municipality. As both reports were still in drafts and had to be endorsed by the municipal council before becoming publicly accessible, I was asked not to make references to the contents of the reports in my research. Therefore, I used the reports to inform my questions to the project manager and the NTNU researcher involved in the project but not as direct sources for the analysis of this research.

Apart from the documents related to the Borgerkraft project, the political strategy ‘the Co-produced Municipality Trondheim’ was an important source of data for analysis as it was mentioned in a number of interviews. Project documents of other citizen co-production initiatives in Trondheim were also used as a source of data for analyzing the context for citizen co-production in Trondheim. The projects included Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program, the smart city project +CityxChange, and the municipality-led urban planning project ‘Framtidsbilder Trondheim sentrum 2050’.

3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

In order to collect empirical data, nine semi-structured interviews were conducted through the period of January to May 2021. In addition, four interviews which I conducted during my internship in autumn 2020 have been used for analysis and included in the description of research participants provided in Table 1. This thesis was registered with NSD as a research project to seek approval for collecting personal data, and a permission was granted in December 2020. Interview guides (see Appendix 1-3) were used as a way to maintain focus on the topics that were relevant to my research questions, while leaving flexibility to follow the natural flow of the conversation and also adjust the questions to suit the background of interviewees. The interviews were conducted online using Microsoft Teams as the research took place during the covid-19 pandemic. Apart from one interview, video cameras were used and that enabled making eye contacts and some observations about the interviewees’ behavior.⁴ In some

³ See, for example: <https://trondheim2030.no/2020/06/23/trondheim-tester-borgerpanel/>; and, <https://www.hogreina.no/nytt-og-nyttig/Borgerkraft-22082019/>

⁴ The reason for not using the video camera in one interview was due to bad internet connection.

interviews, interviewees shared relevant website links as we spoke using the comment function on Teams. I also got to learn the recruitment process of the Borgerkraft jury in detail as my interviewee guided me through an excel file using the screen sharing function on Teams.

Initially, the main target for interviews were citizens who joined the Borgerkraft jury to take account of their personal experiences. In addition, I planned to interview individuals from Trondheim Municipality and NTNU who were part of the designing and implementation of the Borgerkraft project as well as other municipal staff and researchers who were knowledgeable about citizen co-production practices in Trondheim. As a starting point, I contacted the municipal staff and researchers who I came to know through the research project which I assisted on as an intern in Autumn 2020. I relied on snowball sampling technique as a way of reaching research participants that were directly or indirectly involved in the specific case under study. The description of the research participants is provided in Table 1. As some of them were interviewed more than once, date of interview is included when citing interview transcripts in the thesis.

Table 1: Description of research participants⁵

	Affiliation	Background
1	Trondheim Municipality	Citizen engagement, involved in the Borgerkraft project
2	Trondheim Municipality	Citizen engagement, partially involved in the Borgerkraft project
3	Trondheim Municipality	Urban planning, involved in the Borgerkraft project and the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program
4	Trondheim Municipality	Urban planning, involved in the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program
5	Trondheim Municipality	Smart City, partially involved in the Borgerkraft project
6	Trondheim Municipality / NTNU	Smart City
7	NTNU	Democratic innovations, involved in the Borgerkraft project
8	NTNU	Citizen engagement in smart city projects in Trondheim
9	NTNU	Gender and diversity studies, insight on intersectionality

⁵ Research participants 1, 4, 6 and 10 were interviewed in autumn 2020 while research participant 1 was also interviewed during the timeframe of this thesis in 2021. To maintain anonymity, the interviewees are grouped by background rather than their position in their organization.

10	Nord University	Land use planning
11	So Central	Involved in the Borgerkraft project
12	Member of the Borgerkraft jury	Middle aged woman, involved in the Borgerkraft project

As Table 1 shows, I only managed to interview one out of 16 members of the Borgerkraft jury. When I interviewed the project manager of Borgerkraft in February 2021, it became clear that the only person who has contact information about the citizens was the NTNU researcher involved in the project. It was explained that due to personal data collected in the process of recruiting jury members, the Borgerkraft project was registered as a research project with NSD which limited the handling of citizens' personal data with the NTNU researcher. Therefore, even the project manager at Trondheim Municipality did not have the possibility to contact citizens without going through the researcher. Immediately after learning about this situation, I contacted the NTNU researcher and asked for support in arranging interviews with the jury members. The response I got was that contacting jury members for my research purpose had to be checked with NSD first, even when interview requests are sent out through the NTNU researcher on my behalf. I followed up with the NTNU researcher on a regular basis, but it was only on 30 April 2021, shortly before the submission deadline of this thesis, that I received the message that NSD had confirmed to the NTNU researcher that it was okay to contact jury members through them. While the remaining time was limited, I still sent out interview requests for the jury members through the researcher to see if anyone would agree to participate in my research. One person contacted me for taking the interview, and ultimately that became the only interview I managed to do with the Borgerkraft jury members before finalizing the thesis. The main emphasis of this thesis was therefore adjusted from my initial intention to examine the participatory space from an intersectional citizen perspective to examining the setup, implementation and outcome of the Borgerkraft project, but keeping the intersectional lens.

All interviews were recorded with prior consent using a voice recorder device. While conducting interviews, I took notes to keep track of the conversation and formulate questions in response to what was shared by research participants. In addition, I noted down observations made during the interviews, although it was not easy to observe body language on a laptop screen.

3.4 Data analysis

After the interviews were conducted, the audio recordings were manually transcribed by typing into separate word files per interview. All files were then imported to NVivo to prepare for coding. While descriptive codes are superficial and captures themes or patterns that appear in the data typically telling about “who, what, where, when and how”, analytic codes provide insights of the process or context of phrases or actions (Cope, 2016, pp. 378-9). I started by creating descriptive codes that explained the process of how the Borgerkraft project was carried out, including themes concerning the recruitment and deliberation processes of the Borgerkraft jury. In addition, analytic codes were developed based on the theoretical framework in Chapter 2. As Cope (2016) describes, coding was a back-and-forth process, and some codes were added, deleted or moved under different parent codes while I repeatedly went through the interview transcripts. Eventually, all codes were organized under the four headings of framing, recruitment, deliberation and outcome. Using NVivo made it easy to have a holistic overview of the references made in different interviews at once and also to go in and out of each interview transcript to revisit the context of the conversation.

In Chapter 4 on analysis where I present findings from the data I collected, I made a conscious choice to present oral accounts given by research participants where relevant instead of replacing them entirely or partly with my own words. This decision was made in order to present the choice of wordings made by research participants and nuances they convey about their perceptions. Nevertheless, when transcript materials are presented to readers, they must be introduced to provide the context and interpretation by the researcher (Dunn, 2016). Whenever citations were made from interview transcripts, I therefore make sure I explain what they demonstrate.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Dowling (2016) alerts that regardless of the choice of specific research method, qualitative research being a social process entails influencing the society and its people. Using interviews as my research methods raised certain ethical concerns as discussed in the followings.

The first concern deals with research participants’ privacy and keeping their personal information confidential. When requesting for interviews, I shared the information note which explained the rights of the research participants and how their personal information will be protected. Before conducting the interviews, I obtained written consent from research participants to take part in an interview. I also made sure to verbally explain the purpose of my

research, reasons for interviewing and the rights of research participants at the beginning of each interview before turning on the recorder. In order to maintain anonymity of research participants, I did not associate information such as positions held by research participants with specific quotes cited in this thesis. Another consideration made during my writing was to communicate what research participants said as accurately as possible. This meant that I provide sufficient context of the conversation where necessary for the selectively cited quotes. When appropriate, I also inserted complementary words in brackets in the quotes to clarify what was expressed by interviewees in the broader context of the conversation.

The intention of carrying out the research for the thesis was to identify constructive ways in which current practices of citizen co-production could improve. Anchoring the analysis on intersectionality provided a pathway to frame the research as a critical inquiry, not simply criticizing the theory and practice of citizen co-production, but also suggesting ways forward. While writing my thesis, I felt accountable to the research participants who shared their insights and experience on a voluntary basis and through a relationship built on trust. Fulfilling my responsibility as a researcher therefore entails reflecting on my own research practice and how my positionality shaped the research (Collins, 2019). As Rose (1997) cautions, exercising critical reflexivity is not an easy task. In this respect, it was particularly helpful to have regular conversations with my supervisor to discuss each step of my research—from planning, collecting data, analyzing data to writing. As recommended by Dowling (2016) I also kept a research diary which tracked my observations, questions, and reflections to bring into the conversations with my supervisor. This broadened my ability to be reflexive of my own work as well as its ethical implications.

3.6 Reliability and validity of the study

The research for the thesis was focused on the Borgerkraft project as an example of citizen co-production in smart sustainable city strategies. In order to provide a credible account of the project, I interviewed people who were at the core of designing and implementing the project. While I was not able to interview more than one of the members who made up the Borgerkraft jury in the project, the interviews with the designers and implementers helped me scrutinize how the Borgerkraft project was set up, what function citizen participation had in the project, and through that discuss whose interests and needs it served. If I were able to interview more of the jury members, it would have provided a richer account of the varied experiences from the perspective of citizens that could have been considered together with the perspectives of the

designers and implementers of the project. Nevertheless, I argue that the difficulty I faced in reaching out to the jury members itself provides some insight into the closedness of the project and how difficult it is to trace how decisions are being made and by whom in such projects. This experience thus became an integral part of the research analysis.

I would like to note that even among the people who were directly involved in the Borgerkraft project whom I interviewed, there were some divergent information and inconsistencies in the way certain aspects of the project were described to me. For example, the roles played by organizing members of the project were described differently: while the researcher involved in the project made a conscious decision not to facilitate any deliberation by the jury, others explained that the researcher took part in facilitation. It is important to recognize that people being interviewed for research are speaking from their own perspectives, and therefore, what is accounted for in this thesis represents not a universal truth but an account of the multiple versions of reality (Crang & Cook, 2007). In order to present my research in a logical manner in which readers could understand how the knowledge was produced, every part of this thesis was therefore written with care to demonstrate the source of information and perspectives.

4 Analysis

This chapter presents the findings from analyzing the data collected through interviews, documents and website contents mainly issued or owned by Trondheim Municipality. Firstly, an account of the Borgerkraft project is made to further contextualize the case.⁶ Followingly, analysis concerning the use of a citizens' jury in the Borgerkraft project is presented in three sections reflecting the theoretical framework for this thesis: equality of presence; equality of voice; and outcome. Empirical data concerning the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program is also brought into the analysis where relevant as Trondheim Municipality's experience from the area lift program was an important inspiration and basis from which to develop the Borgerkraft project. At the same time, there are clear differences between the citizen participation methods used in Borgerkraft and the area lift program, something that is also discussed in the analysis.

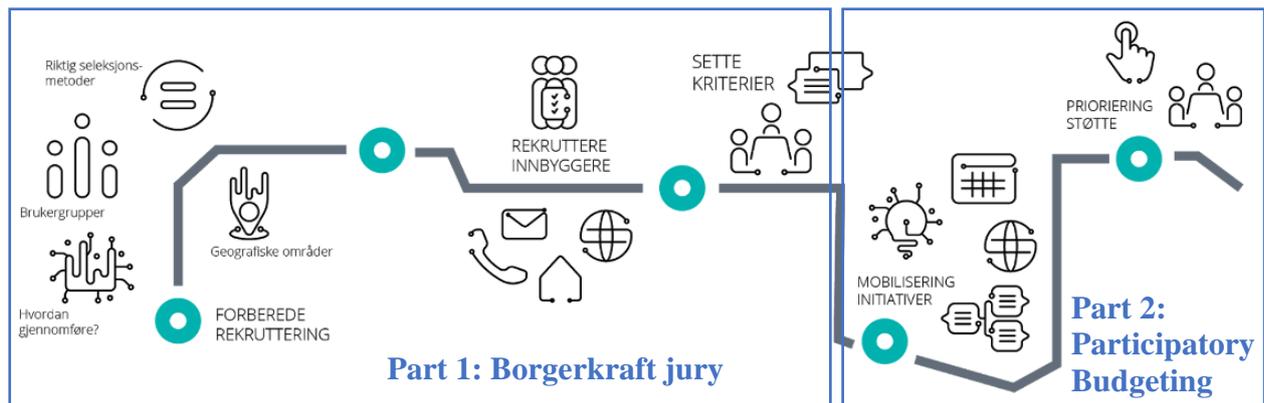
4.1 Description of the Borgerkraft Project

This section provides an overview of the Borgerkraft project based on the information gathered from those who were directly involved in designing and implementing the initiative supplemented by the limited literature available on the project. As mentioned previously, Borgerkraft is a specific initiative of democratic innovations with a geographical focus on the southern districts of Trondheim, or 'Trondheim South' as described in the project, consisting of Heimdal, Saupstad, Kolstad, Huseby, Romoslia and Flatåsen. The geographical focus of the project is associated with the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program which covered two among the six districts targeted under Borgerkraft in order to make use of the local knowledge acquired by Trondheim Municipality over the years.

The Borgerkraft project was initially designed as a stepwise process with a citizens' jury followed by a participatory budgeting process as illustrated in the diagram below.

⁶ As mentioned in Chapter 1, Borgerkraft is also used as the name for the online platform on citizen engagement in planning and governance launched by Trondheim Municipality covering a whole number of democratic innovation initiatives. Whenever references are made to the online platform Borgerkraft, it is made explicit in the text. Otherwise, Borgerkraft refers to the initiative studied in this thesis, often as 'the Borgerkraft project'.

Figure 1: Diagram of the Borgerkraft Project



Source: Diagram adapted from Smartby Trondheim (Trondheim Municipality, n.d.-a)

Figure 1 outlines the five steps involved in the Borgerkraft project. The first three steps describe the set-up and running of the citizens' jury and are the primary focus of this thesis. It begins with designing the process for recruiting citizens, followed by the recruitment of citizens as jury members and ends with the deliberation by the jury on how the second part of the project would be run. The fourth and fifth steps of the diagram consist of a participatory budgeting process that starts with mobilizing local initiatives that will contribute towards sustainable urban development of the area. The final step is to vote and decide which of the mobilized initiatives should receive funding through the municipality. The geographical focus of the Borgerkraft project was made on the six districts as mentioned above in order to b

As of May 2021, the implementation of the participatory budgeting process has not taken place apart from some information meetings being organized by Trondheim Municipality to inform residents in the area about the project. Moreover, while the citizens' jury deliberated on how to operationalize the participatory budgeting process, it was not possible to access enough information about the substance of their deliberation which could have shed light on how the participatory budgeting was planned to be implemented. Therefore, the primary focus of analysis in this thesis is on the use of the citizens' jury.

4.1.1 Framing of the Borgerkraft Project

What has driven Trondheim Municipality to experiment with the use of democratic innovations such as the Borgerkraft project? Several interviewed staff at the municipality stressed the importance of the political strategy on citizen co-production adopted by the city council as the guiding framework for the Borgerkraft jury as well as other democratic innovations implemented by Trondheim Municipality (Interviews 1, 4 and 7). In the political strategy, which

is called ‘the Co-produced Municipality Trondheim’, the aim of citizen co-production is described as safeguarding the values, interests and resources of citizens in the ongoing development of the city (p. 2). It also enlists three desired effects of citizen co-production: ensuring legitimacy of decision-making processes; safeguarding representation; and mobilizing citizens as resources. In particular, democratic innovations that take deliberative approaches, including citizens’ juries, are recognized in the strategy for their likelihood to meet all three desired effects.

The strategy describes how citizen co-production is understood as a duty of the municipality to ensure social and economic sustainability and to fulfil its role as a democratic institution. This duty, underpinned by moral, philosophical and practical reasoning, is argued in the strategy to go beyond the legally required involvement of citizens on matters that are stipulated under the Planning and Building Act, the Public Administration Act and the Municipality Act which have often resulted in only a small number of people who knows about the system get their voices heard. As the quote below illustrates:

“the demands or the criteria for the minimal participation in the planning law is quite small that it’s often a very small number of people that make their voices heard. If you don’t know of this process and you don’t know what to look for, then you won’t be engaged before the digging starts, like the big machines come on your neighbor property and they start digging and you wonder what is going on [...] you go to the municipality and they say ‘sorry, that’s already decided like four years ago, you should have made your voice heard then because then was the participation process and everything’. So, they fulfill the demands of the law, but whether or not it’s fair to call it participation, it’s a mix.” (Interview 10, researcher, 5 October 2020)

In the ‘the Co-produced Municipality Trondheim’ strategy, it is explained that the goal of democratic innovation is “for the process to both provide better decisions / solutions and make the actors wiser. Here, the dialogue is a goal in itself” (p. 6). In line with the strategy, the Borgerkraft jury was promoted as an experiment for better citizen engagement and testing out methods of democratic innovations (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). When asked about the purpose of the Borgerkraft project, research participants cited testing of new methods for citizen engagement as one of the main reasons for the initiative. Through the Borgerkraft jury, Trondheim Municipality was expecting to see “*how they can mobilize their citizens in new ways*” (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). In particular, finding

out how citizens' juries improve inclusiveness in participatory methods was one of the reasons for carrying out the project (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021).

The Borgerkraft jury was designed and implemented by Trondheim Municipality in partnership with NTNU, specifically through a PhD project on deliberative mini-publics, and with the support of So Central, an Oslo-based privately owned joint stock company established in 2012. According to the website of So Central, "all profits are used for further development" and their goals is "to develop and test new solutions to important and complex societal challenges, such as sustainable urban development, inclusion and the environment" (So Central, 2019). They therefore represent an emerging group of actors that are commonly placed under the larger umbrella of 'social entrepreneurship' (Bansal et al., 2019). In an interview, the So Central staff recounted how the collaboration between them, Trondheim Municipality and NTNU emerged in the process of looking for a way to "*design a good project or experiment that could give [Trondheim Municipality] key learnings*" for citizen mobilization, and testing a citizens' jury was chosen as similar democratic innovations have been "*conducted all over the world but not in Norway*" (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). Therefore, the experimentation of the Borgerkraft jury could be explained as a way of extracting learnings about methods for citizen mobilization.

The reason for mobilizing citizens in the first place was related to the broader framework of smart sustainable city work. Finding out "*what can happen when you include people into sustainability*" was described as an important part of the experimentation (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). The mandate of the Borgerkraft jury was three-fold: firstly, to deliberate on what sustainability means locally to citizens in 'Trondheim South' consisting of Saupstad, Kolstad, Huseby, Heimdal, Flatåsen and Romolslia; secondly, to give ideas on how to mobilize local resources to contribute towards sustainable development; and thirdly, to advise the municipality on how they can better support local initiatives.

When addressing sustainable development of the city, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are often used as a guiding framework and the SDGs logos are used in various websites and publications of Trondheim Municipality whenever a topic touches upon sustainability (see, for example, Trondheim Municipality, 2020a). The centrality of the SDGs in Trondheim Municipality's efforts on sustainability and citizen engagement was expressed by one of the municipal staff:

“I think the Sustainable Development Goals are kind of a framework for everything that Trondheim Municipality is going to do moving forward. [...] That means that when it comes to citizen engagement, we’ve also been using the Sustainable Development Goals to frame any potential projects.” (Interview 2, municipal staff, 18 January 2021)

The link between citizen engagement and SDGs is also made in ‘the Co-produced Municipality Trondheim’ strategy as a way of engaging people ‘where they are’ because SDGs “have gradually also become meaning-creating symbols with which more and more individuals have a personal relationship” (p. 4). At the same time, tensions can also be identified in terms of deciding how much citizen interests and knowledge should count in sustainability work as expressed by a municipal staff interviewed:

“the experts of the city have said "if we are going to meet this climate crisis, we have some serious decisions to make in the next 10-20 years" and I think the average person probably doesn't actually know how serious those decisions are. So instead of just asking people what they care about, the city has decided to change the way that energy is being produced, the way we collect waste, the way we use transport. [On the other hand,] the average person just wants to keep having a nice life. [...] that means we don't get to engage people on what they care about. We actually have to engage them about serious changes to their lifestyles and to energy, and to all these other things that they might not want to talk about but they're super important to talk about.” (Interview 2, municipal staff, 18 January 2021)

While highlighting the very real dilemmas sustainability discussions entail, the quote above represents a more top-down approach where citizens are given a passive role to adopt their ways of living in line with what is sustainable in the eyes of ‘experts’. Similar observations were made by Gohari et al. (2020) regarding citizen co-production practices in the smart city project +CityxChange implemented in Trondheim where citizens are envisioned as learners who provide solutions or feedback that conform with the social and political norms set by the project. In this light, the following quote appears to encourage active participation of citizens while also limiting the grounds for their contribution within the framework of the SDGs:

“In order to keep a speed, the municipality can’t lead or control everything. We need to know the role we have in some of it, and then we need to create a space for all the others—either that’s innovation partners or research groups or active citizens. [...]

then we can support the society reach the [Sustainable Development] Goals.”
(Interview 1, municipal staff, 12 October 2020)

The question is whether citizens have the possibility to act in their own interests which may not respond to predetermined project boundaries. In the ‘the Co-produced Municipality Trondheim’ strategy, the link between democracy, citizen involvement and resource mobilization is emphasized. It promotes a deliberative approach to mobilize citizens as resources and underlines the “important links between deliberative democracy and what is often referred to as municipality 3.0 or co-producing municipalities” (p. 6). The concept of ‘Municipality 3.0’ emphasizes citizens’ active roles as co-producers to take on responsibilities for their own communities, as that is considered the most effective use of resources under a liberalist understanding (Guribye, 2018). The responsibilities of citizens under Municipality 3.0, as one of the interviewed municipal staff put it, extend to “*the responsibility that we have to have a sustainable society*” (Interview 6, 23 October 2020).

4.1.2 Learning from the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program

From the interviews it became clear that the experience Trondheim Municipality had on citizen engagement in the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program was important when developing the Borgerkraft project (Interviews 2, 7 and 11). The area lift program was considered as a foundation for citizen engagement efforts made by the municipality that had reached “*some kind of maturity in citizen involvement.*” (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). Similarly, the area lift program is also recognized as a model for involving citizens in local development in ‘the Co-produced Municipality Trondheim’ strategy (p.1). Not surprisingly, the Borgerkraft project was therefore decided to build on the experience of the area lift program and also cover some of the same geographical area.

The Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program was a long-term intervention which took place from 2013 to 2020. Area lifts have been implemented as part of Norway’s national social program to improve the attractiveness of selected urban areas, and citizen participation and social inclusion are considered central to the initiatives (Akin et al., 2019). Saupstad and Kolstad are some of the largest suburbs in Trondheim built in the 1960s and are considered to be socially disadvantaged due to, for example, a high unemployment rate and high number of households living below the poverty line in comparison with other areas of Trondheim (Baer et al., 2020). In addition, Saupstad has the highest immigrant density in Trondheim with around 30 percent of the population being either immigrants themselves or having parents who migrated from

another country (Aranya et al., 2017). From the side of the municipality, the districts Saupstad and Kolstad have been characterized as having unattractive residential areas with declining living conditions, making the area an object for intervention (Rørtveit, 2019). Therefore, the area lift program was developed aimed at improving inclusiveness of people with different ethnic backgrounds (Trondheim Municipality, 2013).

Among the learnings from the area lift program, Trondheim Municipality highlights the importance attached to the place and how the connection to the place in development work could be facilitated through citizen engagement (Trondheim Municipality, 2019). In the area lift program, “*citizen engagement was considered as a way of mobilizing local resources to develop their own neighborhood*” (Interview 3, municipal staff, 29 January 2021), and there was an emphasis on long-term commitment to relationship-building in order to successfully mobilize citizens. This emphasis came from the learning of one of the first activities for citizen engagement tried out in the area lift program called *nærmiljøutvalg*, or ‘local environment committee’ in English. The committee was established with the help of a volunteer center in Saupstad which initially handpicked its members with the intention to elect members in the future. The task of the committee was to award locally initiated projects with municipality funding by evaluating their applications. In this regard, the initiative had some similarities to the Borgerkraft project, although the members of the committee were not randomly selected. As explained by the municipal staff below, the initiative was discontinued after the first round of funding because the committee members did not see any added value created by their roles.

“I asked [the committee] how they see the future of this [committee] and we found that since they were not representing anyone, and they had no power to do anything, and after this they had no money either, they didn't see any purpose of having this type of nærmiljøutvalg.” (Interview 3, municipal staff, 29 January 2021)

Building on these insights provided by the committee members, a shift in focus was made to rather actively mobilize existing networks and organizations in the area lift program. In particular, elected board members of the housing associations (or corporations) played a central role in mobilizing the local communities as Saupstad and Kolstad are “*quite a special area in Trondheim*” in the sense that “*the whole area contains of apartment buildings and they're organized in housing corporations so that we can reach out to all the citizens through the housing corporations*” (Interview 3, municipal staff, 29 January 2021). Apart from the housing

associations, volunteer groups, sports organizations and school-based communities also formed an important basis for outreach and driving citizen engagement in the area lift program.

While the Borgerkraft project was supposedly inspired by, and built on the area lift program, it represents an entirely different mode of citizen engagement. The area lift program concluded with the need to work with representatives of existing participatory spaces by building long-term relationships. In contrast, the Borgerkraft jury features a short-term engagement of randomly selected citizens whose identities were sealed from the public. According to the interviewed municipal staff, the reason for keeping the identities of the jury members anonymous was due to the recruitment method used which required handling of personal data, although it was also intended to keep the pressure on the jury members to a minimum:

“we wanted it to be low key for [the citizens], so they are not registered in some kind of public—they are not. They are just brought in for this case.” (Interview 1, 11 February 2021)

Despite the organizer’s intention to make citizens’ participation easier, one of the jury members who was interviewed did not see any need for keeping their identities anonymous: *“I thought it was a bit strange and thought why?”* (Interview 12, 10 May 2021).

The geographical location of the meetings also influenced the perception on how the initiative was attached to people’s place of residence. The interviewed Borgerkraft jury member perceived the location of the meetings at the city center as a disconnect from the actual area the Borgerkraft jury was supposed to be representing:

“I think if we were going to have this kind of citizen panel [jury], it should be located in the actual area. I spent some time being confused and I think some other people were too. We were located in the city center where the people organizing it have their offices. It didn’t feel very local. But if this panel [jury] can be settled in each district of the town, it’s very very valuable.” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021)

The way meetings were conducted in the Borgerkraft project stands in stark contrast to how the citizen engagement in the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program took place in spaces organized by citizens such as through housing associations. As explained by a municipal staff:

“They also invited us for the meetings for the people living in their [housing] corporation and there could be hundreds of people coming to a meeting, and then they

invited us in there so we can have direct contact with the citizens.” (Interview 3, municipal staff, 29 January 2021)

In terms of mobilizing existing networks under the Borgerkraft project, this was considered more relevant for the second part of the project on participatory budgeting, and for that purpose, the organizers of the project “*went out and had information meetings in each district*” where “*invited leaders of sports teams or other kind of organizations that could mobilize local resources*” were invited (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). A question could be raised though about how the disconnect between the first and second phase of the project will influence the sense of ownership held by the different groups who are mobilized for the participatory budgeting alone.

4.1.3 Recruitment

In early 2020, Trondheim Municipality sent out 800 invitation letters signed by the municipal director to residents of Saupstad, Kolstad, Huseby, Heimdal, Flatåsen and Romolslia. The names and addresses were randomly selected through a lottery using the database of Posten Norge AS, a postal and logistics group. To process data and send out invitation, Sentio Research Norway AS, a research company based in Trondheim was hired by NTNU. Out of 800 residents in the aforementioned six districts, 82 responded positively to the invitation and provided information about their gender, age, and level of education among other things through a questionnaire enclosed with the invitation letter. Using the self-reported background information, the pool of respondents was further stratified in accordance with the roughly estimated demographic representation. The NTNU researcher who oversaw the recruitment process explained the difficulty in obtaining precise demographic information of the six districts in an interview. Therefore, the gender ratio was set at 50-50 so that there are 8 men and 8 women among the 16 jury members. For age, the minimum age was set at 18 and age distribution was designed to mirror the profile of Trondheim as a whole. District representation was estimated through looking at smaller sample areas within those districts. The statistics concerning age distribution and population of sample areas were taken from Statistics Norway.

Although information regarding level of education was collected amongst respondents, it was not used in the process of stratification. Therefore, based on the three categories of gender, age and district, the profile of the 16 jury members was generated as shown in Table 2. Accordingly, 16 among the 82 who volunteered to join the Borgerkraft jury and matched the profile were selected.

Table 2: Profile of the Borgerkraft jury

	Gender	Age	District
1	Male	35-64	Romoslia
2	Female	35-64	Flatåsen
3	Female	35-64	Flatåsen
4	Male	35-64	Huseby
5	Male	18-34	Flatåsen
6	Female	65+	Saupstad/Kolstad
7	Female	65+	Kolstad/Heimdal
8	Male	35-64	Saupstad/Kolstad
9	Female	35-64	Kolstad/Heimdal
10	Male	35-64	Romoslia
11	Male	18-34	Flatåsen
12	Male	18-34	Kolstad/Heimdal
13	Female	18-34	Saupstad/Kolstad
14	Male	18-34	Kolstad/Heimdal
15	Female	18-34	Flatåsen
16	Female	65+	Saupstad/Kolstad

Source: based on the information provided by the NTNU researcher involved in the Borgerkraft project

4.1.4 Deliberation

The Borgerkraft jury was summoned by Trondheim Municipality in four occasions over the period of February to June 2020. Initially, three gatherings were scheduled, however due to the covid-19 pandemic, the third gathering originally scheduled in April 2020 had to be rearranged into online gatherings. While each physical gathering lasted for four hours on working day evenings, online gatherings were made into two-hour long sessions where jury members were split into smaller groups. Due to conflicts in availability, one of the jury members was not able to join the online gatherings as a group and instead met with one of the municipality staff separately online.

The process of deliberation followed what is common in citizens' juries, as explained by the NTNU researcher involved in the Borgerkraft project: *“First you have the getting-to-know-you phase, then you have the information stage, a deliberation phase, and a decision phase. We just*

followed this roughly to find out how it will be.” (Interview 7, researcher, 3 May 2021). The following provides an overview of the process which took place.

Gathering 1: Presentations were delivered by researchers and municipal staff on sustainability and its environmental, economic and social aspects. Followingly, the Borgerkraft jury reflected on what sustainability meant for them in the areas where they live. Further analysis on the roles of presenters who are referred to as ‘experts’ in democratic innovations follows in section 4.3 that discusses Equality of Voice.

Gathering 2: The Borgerkraft jury discussed what types of projects are important for the municipality and citizens to collaborate on. The jury was provided with information “*about how the municipality gave project funding within the [thematic] area*” and started to prioritize the kind of issues which they thought should receive support from the municipality (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021).

Gatherings 3 & 4: The Borgerkraft jury continued to discuss the process of collaboration between Trondheim Municipality and citizens in the six districts to answer questions like; what are the roles of the municipality and citizens?; and “*what kind of support should the municipality give in terms of sustainable initiatives in their own areas [represented by jury members]?*” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021).

Each discussion was summarized by the municipal staff and shared back to the jury members for their feedback. I requested access to copies of documentations of the discussions, but the only written materials I managed to obtain were draft reports which provide an overview of the process and an experience guide (as explained in Chapter 3). The draft reports were shared with me by the project manager on the condition that I do not cite their contents. Therefore, there is no publicly available documentation of the substance of discussions as of May 2021 and information available to researchers like myself is limited.

Facilitation of the group discussions was conducted by a team consisting of three municipal staff and one So Central staff. Among the municipal staff, one was in charge of the Borgerkraft project while two others were brought into the project from the Department of Children and Family Services who were previously involved in facilitating an ‘expert committee’ which resembled a citizens’ jury in the project Stein, Saks, Papir (stone, scissors and paper) dealing

with violence against children.⁷ The roles played by facilitators during deliberation is discussed in the section 4.4 on Equality of Voice.

4.1.5 Recommendations

Deliberation by the Borgerkraft jury resulted in a set of recommendations to Trondheim Municipality on the kinds of projects that could receive support from the municipality, eligibility for receiving support, and the types of support provided. In terms of the kind of projects, the jury recommended that: 1) projects that contribute to better, more sustainable and diverse neighborhoods; 2) projects that are identity-building and that create belonging; and, 3) projects that contribute to social inclusion should be supported by the municipality (Næss, 2020). More substantive information about what was discussed by the jury is expected to be made public through a report being prepared by the municipal staff as mentioned in Chapter 3 discussing data collection (3.3). As of May 2021, the report is pending finalization awaiting jury members to provide a final round of feedback. Subsequently, the report will be submitted to the municipal council for their endorsement. Until then, the report will not be made public. Therefore, my analysis concerning the recommendations and outcomes focuses on the process rather than their substance.

4.2 Equality of Presence

This section explores how the Borgerkraft jury approached equality of presence during the recruitment stage. Mirroring the issues discussed under the theoretical framework in Chapter 2, particular focus is brought to how the use of random sampling technique influenced the inclusiveness of the jury, how categories were used to make the jury representational of ‘citizens’, and the reasons for citizens to (not) participate in the jury.

4.2.1 Inclusiveness

Ensuring inclusiveness of citizens was cited as one of the main reasons for using the random sampling technique to recruit the Borgerkraft jury members. Organizers of the Borgerkraft project raised concerns over participatory methods which “*open up another path for resourceful people [who are] highly educated and have a lot of time*” to influence public decisions and emphasized how the random sampling technique used in citizens’ juries “*is a good way of including people that usually do not participate*” (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February

⁷ The expert committee used in the project Stein, Saks, Papir did not follow the model of citizens’ juries in the sense that residents were recruited through advertisements on social media and newspapers, and not through a random selection method.

2021). It was also pointed out that *“there's a lack of talk about who is actually participating”* when evaluating participation methods in general, and while *“there is a lot of talk about citizens' roles, [...] it doesn't really help anything if it's only the same people that is participating no matter what”* (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021).

Ensuring inclusiveness was a concern in the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program as well, and different participatory spaces were explored in order to reach all citizens in the area. Nevertheless, one of the municipal staff expressed that despite such efforts *“the people who are active and engaging in society [were participating in] different platforms so there could be the same people active in the housing cooperation, active in the football club”* because *“this is a small community within a community”* (Interview 3, municipal staff, 29 January 2021). Building on this experience, testing the recruitment method itself was an important aspect of the Borgerkraft jury. As one of the research participants expressed, the questions at stake concerned *“What do we see if we do a random selection, what kind of people are signing up for that? What kind of group will you get? Will it be the same people that always sign up for these processes that also say yes to the invitation from random selection?”* (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021).

In terms of the result of the recruitment process, organizers of the Borgerkraft project expressed that *“even though it was just 16 people, from what I can tell it was quite broad in terms of background. [...] it was a lot of variety of different people.”* (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). Another municipal staff stated how the use of random sampling technique enabled them *“to reach older people, working people, different background, different genders”* and that *“It actually felt like the jury was a representational process.”* (Interview 2, municipal staff, 18 January 2021). In particular, it was explained that many of the Citizen jury members had never joined *“any kind of [public] involvement process”* before (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). One of the jury members who I interviewed also expressed that she participated in the Borgerkraft jury despite her low engagement in public activities during her current life cycle:

“I used to be more [active in public] when my daughters lived at home and when they were part of the local community, then I was participating very much more. Now when it's only me and my husband I'm more private. I spend a lot of more time at work, enjoying being able to finish things at work. I'm not so active out in the community anymore.” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021)

She also found the Borgerkraft jury consisting of people with diverse backgrounds, mirroring the perspectives of the organizers:

“For me it was very interesting to be in a group with people who I would normally, maybe never even have a conversation with—people with very different life, different age, different stage in life, different political view. [...] I remember especially one evening I was at a table together with a young man, very shy and so different, and he said 'I don't really know why I am here because I just stay inside, I don't take part in the community.' I thought 'oh, but it's very interesting that he is here' and of course there are many like him in my neighbourhood too, but I don't know them.” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021)

From the accounts provided by research participants, the use of random sampling technique to recruit the Borgerkraft jury members appears to have resulted in greater inclusiveness than other participatory spaces. Although this claim cannot be substantiated without gaining further knowledge about the remaining jury members, the experience of one of the members underscores how she was joined by people with different backgrounds.

Lastly, the small size of the Borgerkraft jury was cited as a positive factor to take inclusive measures as the organizers *“can be more personal with the people that want to participate”* and to accommodate personal needs for participation (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). The quote below provides examples of what could be done to *“make sure everybody is included”*:

“For example, we said that if you are a single mom, we can make sure that you have a babysitter. If you are disabled, we will arrange taxi to pick you up. You will get that paid by the municipality. (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021)

The small size of the jury, however, could also become a challenge when trying to secure a broad representation of citizens as discussed in the following section.

4.2.2 Representation

An important aspect of the recruitment process was the use of categories to achieve a proportional representation. It was pointed out by the researcher who designed the recruitment process that representation pursued in citizens' juries is not a statistical one but rather reflects the idea *“that a person who is 18 can look into the panel [jury] and see 'ok, someone kind of like me is present in the panel [jury]’”* (Interview 7, researcher, 3 May 2021). As mentioned

earlier, the recruitment process did not purely rely on a random selection but utilized categories of gender, age and place of residence for making a final selection of 16 jury members from among the 82 people who positively responded to the invitation to join the jury. Without the use of categories, there were “*very big chances that you get a skewed sample*” given the small size of the jury, according to the researcher facilitating the process (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). The use of categories was considered as a way of securing representation of specific groups in the jury, but the markers were limited to gender, age cohort and geographic location. The set of markers could, however, have been widened, as reflected upon by the researcher below.

“We didn't do that in Borgerkraft, but you can include—for example you are making a strategy for urban planning. Then you can think: who are the hardest hit by a strategy like that? Who does it matter the most for? Maybe one thing you can think about there is people with disabilities. It's important in urban planning that there's accessibility for wheelchair. Those perspectives are more important or really important to have in those strategies so maybe you have categories where those perspectives get in. So you can make sure that through those stratified samples you get maybe people that are not usually participating.” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021)

The reason for using the three specific categories in the Borgerkraft project for selecting jury members was also discussed in interviews. It was explained that because it was the first time to implement a citizens' jury in Trondheim, “*those categories that are very common to use in these forums*” were used as a way of “*playing [it] safe*” (Interview 7, researcher, 3 May 2021). When designing the recruitment process, a Canadian organization MASS LBP which is experienced with running deliberative mini-publics was consulted, including on the use of categories through the NTNU researcher involved in the Borgerkraft project. At the same time, while the categories used in the Borgerkraft project followed what are common in similar democratic innovations, the importance for taking in the specific context of where the initiative takes place was also emphasized:

“in my sense [the use of categories] should be very much discussed beforehand. It needs to be thought about, for example are there some people that we have to have in no matter what?” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021)

In this regard, ethnicity could have been considered as one of the recruitment criteria for the Borgerkraft jury, given the geographical overlap between the area lift program and the

Borgerkraft project. Women from multi-cultural backgrounds were identified as a missing group in different participatory spaces in the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program despite “*a lot of people originally from other countries living*” in that area (Interview 3, municipal staff, 29 January 2021). As described in section 4.1.2, specific measures were therefore taken to engage that group in the area lift program (Ibid). In contrary, ethnicity was not considered in discussions concerning representation of the Borgerkraft jury. Despite this, there were according to the organizers a “*variety*” in ethnicity in the jury in terms of the outcome of recruitment (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021).

Information about people’s level of education was also collected during the recruitment of the Borgerkraft jury, but no stratification took place based on that information. I asked in my interviews whether it was possible to include non-binary gender as a category which was pointed out by Wojciechowska (2019), as discussed in Chapter 2, as they represent a neglected group in citizens’ juries. The researcher who designed the recruitment process explained that it was possible to include education, gender non-binary or income among the categories used, but there was also a concern that “*the more categories you add, the more complicated [the recruitment process] will become*” and “*it will almost be impossible to find those people [that match the profile] in such a small lottery [as in the case of the Borgerkraft project]*” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021).

In comparison, the citizens’ jury used in Oslo, which built on the experience of the Borgerkraft project included education and house ownership along with age and gender as the categories used to stratify the pool of respondents in the recruitment process of 20 jury members. In an interview, the So Central staff involved in both projects explained that “*it’s important especially when it’s issues that are important to everyone that you should bring in income, education, and in Norway whether owning your house or not is a big indicator as well*” (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021).

To conclude, in the Borgerkraft project, testing the commonly used recruitment method for citizens’ juries was based on precedents in other countries and formed the basis for constructing the representation of the Borgerkraft jury in Trondheim. Moreover, the power to decide what type of representation was important for the Borgerkraft jury, or in other words, consideration over who should not be left out from the jury rested with the organizers of the project.

4.2.3 Reasons for (non-)participation

The last issue to address under Equality of Presence concerns what motivated people to participate in the Borgerkraft jury. As discussed in Chapter 2, the vast majority of people invited to deliberative mini-publics choose to not participate. In the Borgerkraft project, out of 800 people who received the invitation letter from the municipality, only 82 responded positively. In Oslo, 3,000 people received a text message requesting to participate and 267 answered that they were interested (So Central, n.d.). This means that only around 10 percent of the recipients showed interest for participation in both cases. The voluntary aspect of the recruitment was acknowledged by the researcher involved in the Borgerkraft project as a factor for not being able to achieve equality of presence among all affected citizens:

“there are some people that you will never ever get to participate no matter what you do. You can try to... but they just won't. I mean they are not interested.” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021)

Considering the small proportion of people who showed interest in joining the Borgerkraft jury, what motivated people to participate becomes an important factor to examine. The researcher involved in the Borgerkraft project explained in the quote below about a survey which found the use of random sampling for recruitment itself as an important motivation for people to participate in the Borgerkraft jury:

“What we see is that it's something about getting personal invite that you have won a lottery that makes it an incentive to say yes. In the short survey we did for Borgerkraft, the two top things that made them want to participate was that they were curious what it was and that they found themselves lucky that they were invited.” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021)

The jury member who I interviewed also explained that what made her join was mainly curiosity:

“I was curious because I didn't know anything about [the Borgerkraft jury] and it seemed interesting. So I thought why not.” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021)

In addition, payments given to jury members motivated people with low income to participate according to the perspective of the researcher:

“in Borgerkraft [the jury members] got money from participating. They got paid for their time and that means also that there was an incentive for also lower income people

[to participate]. Maybe this was even more important for them because they got another money, I mean it wasn't that much, but it was a little bit, and it could help a lot.”
(Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021)

While the recruitment method used for the Borgerkraft jury was presented as in favor for securing a broader representation of the general population compared to other participatory methods, there is a need to further scrutinize whether there were certain groups that have been excluded from the project. The categories used to form the profile of the Borgerkraft jury were not a result of careful consideration of a local context but rather followed a common method used in citizens' juries implemented in other countries. There was no consideration made for intersecting forms of marginalization, such as women from multi-cultural backgrounds as identified in the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program. The concern discussed in Chapter 2 over how organizers of citizens' juries hold power to decide who ought to be included in the jury and the risk of leaving out marginalized groups as a result (see Smith, 2009) also applies to the Borgerkraft project, particularly as the design of recruitment was not subject to any public scrutiny.

4.3 Equality of Voice

The analysis of Equality of Voice in the Borgerkraft jury focuses on how the agenda was set, how knowledge production took into account different forms of knowledge, considerations made for facilitation and perception on the role of citizens during deliberation.

4.3.1 Agenda

Citizens' juries in general entails concerns over setting the agenda in the interest of organizers as well as leaving it too open which could result in little political significance as discussed in Chapter 2 and emphasized by Smith and Wales (2000) as well as Michels and Binnema (2018). In the Borgerkraft project, the agenda was mainly described as set by the organizers while one of them expressed that the agenda was “*open*” and they “*started with just questions*” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). Retrospectively, however, the researcher involved in the project reflected that they “*could have been much better giving [directions] from the start and explaining that better*” as the “*mandate and topic that [citizens' juries] address needs to be very clear. It can't be very open.*” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). One of the jury members expressed her struggles trying to “*get an orientation of where they were going*”:

“It actually took me one or two meetings before I knew what way this is taking. I didn't understand what they wanted from me. [...] What we were participating in was a kind of pilot project, an experiment. So they had to introduce to us what this citizen panel [jury] is, and then we were going to think of an actual project in our local area, in our neighbourhood.” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021)

Research participants also discussed what kind of agenda that is suitable for citizens' juries. For example, *“a value-driven question that [jurors] really have to weigh things for and against something”* would be *“really good”* (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). In this respect, the topic addressed by the Borgerkraft jury was good in the sense *“that they had to weigh different kind of, like what is most important in sustainability for them and stuff like that”* although at the same time *“that topic is really big, like it's super broad and they need the time to actually sit down and dive into”* (Ibid). The interviewed jury member also expressed that the issues discussed in the Borgerkraft jury were *“practical things, not very touchy things”* (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021), while it was emphasized that citizens' juries are *“often used in complex or controversial issues”* (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021).

4.3.2 Citizen knowledge vs expert knowledge

What were considered important factors when it comes to knowledge production in the Borgerkraft jury? Literature on democratic innovation, as discussed in Chapter 2, described how expert knowledge brought into the process by academic researchers, public officials and others creates a learning phase so that jury members can reach a considered judgement (Escobar, 2017). In the Borgerkraft project, the description of the project provided on Trondheim Municipality's website explains how the jury will gain access to *“experts who know a lot about the topic to be discussed”* so that jury members will be *“in the best possible position to discuss on equal terms”* (Trondheim Municipality, n.d.-a). Knowledge provided to the jury was also portrayed in an interview as a way *“to have an actual, relevant discussion”* because *“there's no point for [the municipality] to bring a lot of people to the table to discuss something if we know something else and we are not saying that out loud”* (Interview 1, municipal staff, 12 October 2020). Another aspect of the knowledge provision was that it enables jury members to *“change position”* (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021) about a topic because they are *“supposed to learn something before [they] reflect on it. It's more of a knowledge sharing, reflection, prioritization process.”* (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021).

Accordingly, this is what makes the Borgerkraft jury *“different from other involvement processes”* (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021).

From the organizers’ perspectives, information provided to the Borgerkraft jury was received as new knowledge. For example, the first gathering of the jury which aimed at reflecting on what sustainability meant locally to the jury members started off by a set of presentations delivered by the NTNU researchers and municipal staff. The reaction of the jury members is recounted by the So Central staff as below:

“When we had a discussion and reflection after [the presentations on sustainability], for a lot of the participants this information was new. They didn't know this. For some of them, they hadn't been particularly interested in the topic of sustainability or the climate goals or anything. I remember specifically, I think she was around 50, she said “my daughter is very interested in this and for the first time I could discuss these issues with her” which was “wow”.” (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021)

Similar recollection on the reactions from the jury members was given in another interview as below, indicating that some of the information provided through presentations were new knowledge to them:

“Some of [the jury members] said that after the first gathering they got a broader understanding of what sustainability was. At least that was one of the comments I remember because they thought sustainability was more about environment.” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021)

As indicated by the organizers of the Borgerkraft project, expert knowledge provided to the jury was considered to form a critical basis for deliberation. This brings questions about the risks of predefining the problem at stake in ways that could rig the deliberation towards the interests of the organizers. In the Borgerkraft project, So Central was responsible for preparing an information package and presentations were delivered by NTNU researchers and municipal staff. In interviews, So Central’s external role was emphasized as *“it would be different if the municipality was the one that were designing the themes for the information pack. That should be something someone external is doing.”* (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). While So Central is hired by Trondheim Municipality for their service, it was emphasized that *“organizations like So Central have the process very central”* and *“knows the values you should put centrally”* in citizens’ juries (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). The externality of So Central’s role is also discussed in the following section on facilitation.

One of the important considerations when providing expert knowledge was that “*a balanced information [should be] given to the participants so they can weigh the arguments for and against issues*” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). Although this did not happen in the Borgerkraft project. Instead, it was considered sufficient to present “*internationally based*” knowledge “*that we know there's enough research behind*” as providing “*diverse set of experts to give both sides*” of an issue was something that “*they do in bigger citizens' assembly*” (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). It was also explained that jury members were able to request more information after listening to the presentations as it was considered “*an important part to be able to ask for knowledge*” (Ibid).

Apart from the knowledge provided by experts, how did knowledge of citizens play a role in the deliberation process? The researcher involved in the Borgerkraft project explained that citizens' juries use “*resources that we don't really use enough, that is different kind of perspectives of people. People have perspectives and life experiences that are really important in solving issues that are complicated*” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). In the context of smart sustainable cities, citizen knowledge is valued as a way of bringing in ‘insights about local environment, context, and place’ in order to produce ‘creative and cost-effective solutions’ (Gohari et al., 2020, p. 2). In the Borgerkraft project, “*a lot of [the jury members] were making use of what they have heard and making it context specific*” in discussions and reflections, according to the perspective of the organizer (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). What was expected of jury members was to “*think about their own lives*” and reflect “*from their own perspective [on] what's important*” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). The jury member who was interviewed shared her realization about how “*some people are very creative and that is the power of a group like [the jury]*” and expressed that she never thought about her neighbours as “*human resources*” and a source of power (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021).

What seems to be a challenge in the Borgerkraft project in terms of knowledge production was how expert and citizen knowledge came together. While the researcher involved in the project expressed how citizens' juries use citizen knowledge “*in a really good sense that it merges the expertise together with perspectives of people of different backgrounds*” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021), one of the jury members expressed her struggle in bridging the different forms of knowledge as explained in the quote:

“[The presenters] were speaking a lot about the overbuilding of how you define sustainability in all different matters. In the first meeting I had no idea that we will in the last meeting be so concrete—someone was speaking about how to make a strawberry farm outside where they were living. [...] I missed something when they were presenting the building and suddenly they went to the details and I got lost in between.” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021)

She also expressed the difficulty she faced discussing hypothetical projects with people who were not from her neighbourhood. This point is explored further in the following section 4.3.4 concerning the role of citizens.

4.3.3 Facilitation

From the interviews, the role of facilitators was highlighted as an important factor to ensure equality of voice among the jury members. In the Borgerkraft project, staff from Trondheim Municipality and So Central facilitated discussions of the jury (see 4.1.4 Deliberation). In this regard, public authorities acting as facilitators was raised as a concern in Chapter 2 for its implication on the independence of deliberation and creating a top-down dynamic controlled by facilitators (Smith, 2009; Wojciechowska, 2019).

When considerations made about facilitation in the Borgerkraft jury were discussed with research participants, it was explained that there were guidelines in place requiring *“at least two people that are highly competent in facilitating these processes”* join as facilitators (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). Also, having facilitators from the Department of Children and Family Services helped to *“get the conversation going”* and was *“very good because for the second gathering, the topics were kind of broad, so we really needed good moderators”* (Ibid). The role of facilitators was explained as *“to make sure that everyone spoke, everyone was giving their reflections and taking part in the discussions”* (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). The jury member whom I interviewed shared her impression that facilitators *“were just keeping the discussion going, asking the questions”* and the discussions were *“very well organized”* (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021).

Apart from the competence of facilitators, the importance of having external facilitators was also emphasized by the So Central staff as in the quote below:

“there's a discussion always like in these kinds of processes: can the municipality do it themselves or should they have an external body doing it? I think when it comes to the

information, the knowledge part and the facilitation part, you should have someone externally do it.” (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021)

While the emphasis for having external facilitators contradicts with the fact that municipal staff played a major role in facilitation in the Borgerkraft jury, they justified their involvement by referring to how the positions they held within the municipality did not belong to a specific department holding stakes in the outcome of the jury (Interview 7, researcher, 3 May 2021). Similarly, So Central was considered external as they were hired for the purpose of facilitation. Another factor which determined whether municipal staff could facilitate concerned the sensitivity of issues being addressed by the jury. In the case of Borgerkraft, it was explained that *“there weren’t any sensitive issues that was discussed. It was more like ‘what do you think is important in sustainability issues?’”* (Ibid).

Apart from the role of facilitators, other considerations were made to ensure equality of voice among the jury members. Having discussions in small groups before bringing together the jury as one group was one of the measures taken, and the reason was explained as below:

“if you have a lot of people then someone would talk a lot and the rest would be quiet. So to break them down in smaller groups is kind of like... because you want everyone to say their opinions, so then we had six or seven people.” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021)

In the same interview, the municipal staff explained that without such measures some people were less vocal during discussions because *“it was topics that they didn’t know much about so some people will listen a lot, and maybe think a lot”* and that *“people are afraid to be dumb”*. Therefore, the facilitators needed *“to prepare the table for them to say something or ask direct questions that are easier for them to answer”* (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021).

In addition, some people were not as fluent in Norwegian as others and the facilitators *“needed to spend extra time on couple of people to help with language”* (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). This was another measure taken by the facilitators to ensure inclusion during deliberation.

4.3.4 Perceptions on the role of citizens during deliberation

Recalling the discussion in Chapter 2 on theoretical framework, it cannot be expected that people recruited for their specific backgrounds necessarily represent standpoints of those specific social groups during the course of deliberation as highlighted by Lang (2007). This

leads to questioning whose voices were the citizens bringing to the table of deliberation? The perspective of the municipal staff was that citizens joined the jury as individuals, and they were only expected to come with their personal experiences and insights, as explained in the quote below:

“the only thing we asked was to come as yourself and you only represent yourself, and it’s your experiences and your reflections that we want. You don’t need to know anything about this topic. You only need to come here and share your experiences. So that’s kind of the basis.” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021)

In comparison, one of the jury members expressed that she joined the jury as “*a representative living in the south side of the town*” as that was “*what stood in the [invitation] letter*” and explained that the fact that all members of the jury were “*coming from that part of town—that was what connected [the Borgerkraft jury]*” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021). Participation in the Borgerkraft jury shed a new light on the jury member to identify herself as part of her local neighbourhood:

“To me, it was a bit awakening: ‘yes, I am part of a neighbourhood. I am part of a local area.’ I wasn’t really thinking so closely about that.” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021)

Although she also problematized the lack of identity that brought together the six districts which consists ‘Trondheim South’—which is a geographical area defined under the Borgerkraft project:

“There isn’t any connection between Flatåsen and Heimdal. If we were going to meet as a group representing the south part of town, we would have to represent smaller groups from where we actually live.” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021)

Even when the expectation for jury members was to come with their own experience and no more, the way one of the jury members perceived her role was as a representative of her neighbourhood. One of the organizers of the Borgerkraft project also observed that jury members were discussing issues “*with their neighbours or their friends [...] because they get engaged so they are talking to others*” (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). The researcher involved in the Borgerkraft project explained that the process of deliberation could be designed differently to enable feedback from outside citizens’ juries to inform deliberation, although that could cause “*the problem that people with resource and time and who are really interested in*

the topic will then influence the jury members” and “you don't want the jury to be purely represented, like a jury member could be purely representing one organization or one opinion” (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). The explicit concern over whether citizens consider themselves as representatives of a particular organization or an opinion could be explained by the underlying assumption in citizens’ juries that citizens mobilized as individuals are more likely to be open to others’ perspectives and think more about the collective good (Escobar, 2017).

The importance of citizens to not represent organizations or networks also shaped the way the local environment committee (*nærmiljøutvalg*) was established as part of the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program. The volunteer center in charge of the project “*didn't want any representatives from the local organizations because [...] they were so strong that they're gonna only talk about local costs for themselves and not seeing the community as a whole*” and therefore it was decided that the committee will only consist of “*local citizens that freely.. that's not attached to any other organization*” (Interview 3, municipal staff, 29 January 2021). Although, as described in section 4.1.2, the learning from running the local environment committee was that it was more meaningful to engage citizens through organized groups such as the housing associations where a large number of residents belong to. Nevertheless, the shift in strategy also resulted in the same people representing different organizations in different participatory spaces. Therefore, the municipal staff involved in the area lift program had to ask them “*what kind of hat do you have on today?*” (Ibid). While the Borgerkraft jury member interviewed also saw the value in bringing in the housing associations for what the Borgerkraft jury was tasked with, she also observed that “*some people there are very active*”, indicating the possibility of only certain individuals’ voices being heard (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021). In contrast, the experience of being in the Borgerkraft jury was recounted by the jury member as being in a group with diverse opinions:

“normally we live in a kind of Facebook world where we connect with the people we share opinions with. But if you are put into a group like [the Borgerkraft jury], you just have to come to an agreement or you just have to sit and listen to persons that you don't share opinions with, and it's nice.” (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021)

Another quote below illustrates how one member of the jury brought a different perspective from the rest of the group in a discussion about public meeting places:

“he didn’t say much, but one thing he was really focused on was in the living areas, the housing areas around, we focus so much on the meeting places for youth but the only thing he could come up with regarding meeting places for young adults, or adults that didn’t have kids, that was the gym. Nothing else. [...] It was an important phrase I would say because he was representing someone else when all the others spoke about youth.”

(Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021)

From the accounts provided by research participants and putting them in perspective with the experiences from the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program, there seems to be a difference made to the inclusiveness and diversity in the participatory space of the Borgerkraft jury. Although, rather than finding their voice as individuals, jury members appear to identify themselves through their experience of belonging, whether to the participatory space of the jury or other collective spaces found in their personal lives to understand who they represent.

To conclude on the Equality of Voice in the Borgerkraft jury, a number of factors have to be taken into consideration. Learning was portrayed as an integral element to the deliberation process where expert knowledge on an issue was presented to the jury in order to enrich the discussion and reflection and create a level playing field for jury members by having equal access to knowledge. However, while citizen knowledge was expected to contribute to the knowledge production process, the merging between expert knowledge and citizen knowledge was challenging. Not all jury members followed the jumps between the more abstract and the concrete, and it is difficult to judge whether the citizens had full space to challenge the frames for discussions as the space was set up by the municipal and So Central staff, who to a large degree started out by ‘educating’ the citizens on sustainability issues. In addition, facilitators were expected to ensure inclusiveness and fairness of deliberation, making them an important player in the initiative. While their role as facilitators was to broaden the space for equality of voice, it also set the premises for discussion. There was also some confusion regarding jury member’s role as representatives and how that role was perceived by the different actors. For example, while jury members were not expected to represent anyone other than themselves, the interviewed jury member formed her identity as a representative of her neighbourhood through participating in the Borgerkraft jury. The way identities are formed in specific locations while being indivisible from collective experiences resonates with how identities are conceptualized under an intersectional understanding (Collins, 2017). These issues are further discussed in Chapter 5.

4.4 Outcome

Discussions in Chapter 2 pointed to the uncertainty of how outputs of citizens' juries translate into broader political outcomes (Smith, 2009), and the fate of recommendations produced by citizens' juries are often left in the hands of the organizers (Harris, 2019). As mentioned earlier (see section 4.1.5), analyzing the substance of the recommendations is constrained due to limited availability of materials. In the following, therefore, how the recommendations were formed in the Borgerkraft project and their political implications are discussed. From the interviews, the governance structure of the municipality emerged as an important aspect in terms of realizing the output of the Borgerkraft jury or citizen co-production in general. Lastly, how the Borgerkraft project come to have a ripple effect leading to further citizens' jury initiatives in Norway is also discussed.

4.4.1 Recommendations

The immediate output of the deliberation was a set of recommendations produced by the Borgerkraft jury on the criteria for Trondheim Municipality to fund citizen initiatives that contribute to local sustainability. As the recommendations are not made public as of May 2021, the analysis of the recommendations mainly focuses on the process rather than the specific contents that formed the recommendations.

After each round of discussions, inputs by the jury were summarized by municipal staff and shared with jury members for their review and feedback. At the very end of the deliberation, all inputs from different sessions were put together in a final report under the ownership of Trondheim Municipality. The municipal staff explained that several steps were taken to ensure that every jury member could “*add their comments*” and the final output reflected “*something that people agreed on*” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). It was emphasized that taking these steps for the jury to review the recommendations was not only about having the jury's agreement on the content but more importantly “*it's about recognition*” and that “*when we are writing stuff on the report, they need to recognize the stuff that's there*” (Ibid). It is understandable that having the jury's full recognition is important for the legitimacy of the initiative, particularly when the report is being issued by the municipality. In another interview it was pointed out that “*people trust the outcome of other people making decisions*” in deliberative processes and that gives credibility to the democratic institution (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021).

From the accounts given by research participants, and by not being able to interview more than one member of the Borgerkraft jury, it was difficult to analyze whether there was a pressure to reach a consensus and any implication on how plurality of perspectives was taken into account in the process forming the recommendations. For the jury member I interviewed, she expressed that *“there wasn't any conclusion”* and she wasn't sure *“what came out of the process”* (Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021).

4.4.2 Political implications

While the Borgerkraft project was initiated with the intention to actually fund projects that meet the criteria for locally initiated projects that contribute to sustainable development set by the citizens' jury, the plan has changed due to lack of resources. Therefore, the municipal staff explained that *“what came out of [the Borgerkraft jury] is basically the recommendations from the citizen panel [jury] that we are trying to incorporate in how we work. So we'll see how that goes forward”* (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). While the recommendations produced by the jury was praised by the same municipal staff as *“really important foundation for us to discuss how we can change the way we are supporting citizen initiatives”*, how exactly the recommendations will be taken forward by Trondheim Municipality was not clear from the interviews.

When the mandate of the jury is to produce recommendations, instead of engaging in direct decision making, there is a risk that those recommendations will not translate into concrete action. This risk was acknowledged in the interview with So Central staff who also stressed the importance for such risk to be properly communicated (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). One of the municipal staff pointed out that *“anytime you do something with the public and you cannot deliver, you lose their trust”* (Interview 2, municipal staff, 18 January 2021). Similarly, another municipal staff stressed the importance of inviting people to *“relevant discussions, so that we don't have a participatory meeting that's just for show”* and that there's no point in engaging citizens *“if they can't do anything about the issue anyway because we have some goals that we are going to meet anyway”* (Interview 1, municipal staff, 12 October 2020). Therefore, explaining to participants what the municipality can do and cannot do was an important element to have *“real participation”* (Ibid).

In the Borgerkraft project, however, the jury member expressed that what she *“participated in was a bit theoretical”* and while *“a lot of ideas came on the table”* she wasn't sure how those ideas will be useful to the municipality and felt that her engagement *“ended a bit quickly”*

(Interview 12, jury member, 10 May 2021). From what could be learned from research participants, the political significance of the recommendations produced by the Borgerkraft jury is thus ambiguous, although there might be more publicly available information about the outcome of the Borgerkraft project coming in the latter part of 2021.

4.4.3 Governance

The outcome of the Borgerkraft jury, or citizen co-production in general, is also affected by the governance structure of the municipality. The main challenge is observed when translating the recommendations into implementation, particularly when the recommendations do not fall within the mandate of one specific department. The quote below explains how the challenges are inherent to municipal structures in Norway:

“This is one of the key questions whether it is a citizens' jury, co-production or co-creation process is that we don't have a system within the municipalities that is built for those kinds of processes. What normally happens across methods is that when you get the results from those processes you don't have anywhere to put them because you don't have a system nor structure. I think Trondheim wanted to explore how they could see the changes, what kind of changes would they need to do this more systematically?”
(Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021)

As the quote points out, the challenge with the governance structure is not only a concern for the use of citizens' juries as it was also experienced in the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program. The below quote by a municipal staff emphasizes the need for a systemic change to accommodate a way of working through citizen co-production based on the learnings from the area lift program.

“There's something that the municipality needs to do or the state or the regional government needs to do. Some of the challenges in the start was that we didn't have a system for the municipality to take in all this wishes from the people. [...] Putting all these citizen engagements into the system is very important if we are very serious about taking in what they're actually saying and asking for. So it's important not to just go ask people if you don't mean anything about it.” (Interview 3, municipal staff, 29 January 2021)

The issue of how to implement the outputs from the Borgerkraft jury as well as other citizen co-production processes remains an ongoing challenge for Trondheim Municipality. One of the municipal staff described that *“how to handle the insight from citizen participation and*

collaborative processes” is “*an important discussion [...] that we are still yet to solve*” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). Aware of this challenge, the interviewed So Central staff explained that those who designed the citizens’ jury initiative in Oslo “*have been working a lot with whose gonna receive the recommendations from the jury*” from the beginning in order to avoid ambiguity on how the recommendations will be taken forward (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021).

4.4.4 Knowledge transfer

Beyond the recommendations as the immediate output of the process, the experience of the Borgerkraft jury has as mentioned been shared with another citizens’ jury initiative in a neighborhood in Oslo through So Central, focused on water management. In addition, Trondheim Municipality is preparing for another citizens’ jury as part of the development of the Social Section of the Municipal Plan 2020-2032, with some modifications to how the Borgerkraft jury was designed. For the upcoming use of a citizens’ jury, it is expected to have half of the jury randomly selected and the other half to be mobilized as representatives or stakeholders. One of the reasons for having a different set up for the citizens’ jury between the Borgerkraft project and the Municipal Plan was explained as the difference in the scale of the projects: Borgerkraft being “*a local project*” while the development of the Municipal Plan requires engagement of “*different representatives from interest groups and different actors*” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). Therefore, instead of having separate participatory spaces, the municipality will test a model that will bring together citizens and other representatives in the same panel (Ibid).

Other municipalities have also shown interest in using citizens’ juries in their citizen engagement work. Trondheim Municipality’s experience of the Borgerkraft project has been shared through Norway’s smart city network ‘*Smartbyene*’ where the municipal staff of the Borgerkraft project heads the working group on citizen involvement. As a result, Stavanger Municipality is planning to use a citizens’ jury as part of their youth engagement efforts (Interview 7, researcher, 27 January 2021). The researcher involved in the Borgerkraft project was also contacted by the leader of the labour party in Tromsø interested in democratic innovations. From these accounts, it can be said that the Borgerkraft project is an influential project shaping the direction of citizen co-production not only in Trondheim but also in other municipalities across Norway. Therefore, it is crucial to deeply examine how citizen participation functioned in the Borgerkraft project as I do in this thesis and make more information available about the project.

5 Discussion

Through the pervious chapter which analyzed how the Borgerkraft project was shaped and implemented and discussed against the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2, a detailed account of the project particularly from the perspective of organizers along with limited yet valuable insight from one of the participating citizens was provided. Building on the findings, this chapter directly addresses the research questions of this thesis: *what is the function of citizen participation in the Borgerkraft project?; whose interests and needs are being served through citizen co-production?; and how can intersectionality as an analytical strategy be used to situate and make visible power asymmetries in spaces of citizen co-production?*

5.1 The function of citizen participation in the Borgerkraft project

As the analysis in Chapter 4 illustrates, it is important to unpack the role of citizen participation in projects such as Borgerkraft as well as how it takes place. The Borgerkraft jury specifically sought to create a representative deliberative space where citizens are given a central role in advising the municipality. The representativeness of citizens was pursued through the use of lottery to provide equal probability of citizens to be selected for the task, while the use of stratified sampling technique ensured balanced representation in terms of age, gender and district representations. The recruitment stage mirrors Trondheim Municipality's understanding on who has the right to participate, or in other words, who is included as a citizen in the Borgerkraft jury. Three issues affected the representation in the jury. One was how the lottery was based on registered addresses, which might exclude certain groups. The other was how nearly 90 percent of the recipients did not respond to the invitation, pointing to self-selection being the main basis for the composition for the jury. Lastly, the use of three specific categories for sortition and not others, as well as lack of consideration of how different categories intersects influenced the equality of presence in the jury. These factors matter, especially when democratic innovations are promoted as a way of enhancing inclusion that justifies the creation of participatory spaces separated from formalized democratic processes (Wojciechowska, 2019).

Overcoming unequal participation and empowering citizens in decision-making processes are at the heart of the challenges that democratic innovations commit to address (Smith, 2009). As discussed in earlier chapters, equality in citizens' juries pursued in terms of presence and voice

of citizens is meant to be generated through careful designs of recruitment and deliberation processes. An important question is therefore whether the recruitment method used for the Borgerkraft jury was successful in overcoming unequal participation. The answer was yes from the perspectives of the organizers as well as one of the jury members. Research participants shared observations about how people who do not normally participate in public gatherings were present. The jury was portrayed as diverse in terms of age, gender and district representation, in addition to level of education and ethnicity which were not controlled against. However, it is not possible to tell whether the most politically marginalized groups were included in the jury from this description of diversity alone, or whether representation in terms of education, socioeconomic status and ethnicity was fully achieved. As discussed in Chapter 4 on analysis, women of multi-cultural backgrounds were identified as a missing group from the various participatory spaces created under the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program and resulted in taking a specific intervention targeting that group to include their voice. Given the geographical overlap between the area lift program and the Borgerkraft project, it is relevant to ask why such groups, or the criteria of ethnic diversity, were not proactively included during the recruitment stage. While the jury was still considered as being ethnically diverse, it is not clear whether this was pure luck or could be taken care of automatically through the random selection technique.

Literature on deliberative democracy and democratic innovations recognize that equality of presence does not equate to equality of voice. Therefore, careful considerations are needed in terms of agenda setting, presentation of expert knowledge and facilitation. Smith (2009) explains that citizens are empowered in the process of deliberation in two ways: firstly, by being separated from any political influence, including by media and personal networks; and secondly, through democratizing expertise by placing citizens in a position to evaluate evidence presented by 'experts'. In the analysis of the Borgerkraft jury, it became clear that the team put together by Trondheim Municipality to design it had overall control of the process of deliberation, while citizens were able to work with the 'open questions' as described by the municipal staff and had the possibility to request for new knowledge and ask questions to experts. When the fairness of the process is dependent on 'careful scrutiny' (Michels & Binnema, 2018, pp. 235-236), it is particularly problematic that the Borgerkraft jury was closed from the public to the extent that even a researcher like myself was met with difficulty accessing information about the process. The anonymity of the jury members brings another question about the accountability and legitimacy of the initiative, while the political significance of the

project remains vague. The challenges found in the governance structure of municipalities also adds to the uncertainty concerning the outcome of citizen participation.

When asked about how a number of decisions were made concerning the design and implementation of the Borgerkraft project, the experimental nature of the project was repeatedly emphasized by the organizers. Instead of critically examining the local context to address inequalities in terms of political inclusion, for example, the profile of the Borgerkraft jury was created based on commonly used categories in other precedents of citizens' juries to achieve a balanced representation. The purpose of engaging citizens in the project was also framed at large by being a test for the specific citizen engagement method, and it influenced the ability of the jury member to position herself within the participatory space and find the political meaning of her participation. Therefore, not only the design and implementation influenced the way citizen participation functioned in the Borgerkraft project, but also the purpose and the framing of the project impacted how citizens participated.

5.2 Whose interests and needs are being served through citizen co-production?

In smart sustainable city projects, citizen participation has generally been promoted as a way of gaining democratic legitimacy. However, as shown by Gohari et al. (2020) this typically translates to the kind of legitimacy that removes the nature of political struggles from citizen participation. Looking at citizen co-production practices in Norway, Smørdal et al. (2016) predict that the dominance of certain stakeholder interests in co-production processes will deepen while further distancing peripheral voices. To answer whose interests and needs are being served in citizen co-production therefore requires close scrutiny of the power dynamics present in participatory spaces.

In this context, it is relevant to examine how 'citizens' are conceptualized in processes of citizen co-production. One of the appeals made about citizens' juries is that they enable jurors to "think not as isolated, anonymous individuals, but as citizens, working together via dialogue and consensus for the "common good" of society" (Stewart et al., 1996, p. 10 in Smith & Wales, 2000, p. 59). As deliberation entails provision of public reasons to support one's viewpoint (Escobar, 2017), going through this process creates "better citizens" who are capable of making better political decisions (Michels & Binnema, 2018, p. 235). According to Escobar (2017), it is a particular type of citizens that are expected to take part in deliberation who are "engaged in sense-making, problem-solving and considered judgement" (p. 428). Young (2001) directly

confronts this conception of citizens as idealized and unrealistic by taking the standpoint of an ‘activist’:

“Exhorting citizens to engage in respectful argument with others they disagree with is a fine recommendation for the ideal world that the deliberative democrat theorizes, says the activist, where everyone is included and the political equal of one another. This is not the real world of politics, however, where powerful elites representing structurally dominant social segments have significant influence over political processes and decisions.” (pp. 676-7)

The criticism made by Young raises a question about the political consequence of the Borgerkraft project. Were the citizens able to make any meaningful influence in a political sense? The mandate of the Borgerkraft jury was linked to Trondheim Municipality’s intention to stimulate local initiatives which will contribute towards sustainable development. As expressed by one of the organizers of the Borgerkraft project, sustainable development was approached as an agreed upon topic that “*researchers and most of the public sector know what direction we’re going in*” so the challenge was a matter of how to “*involve all the citizens in also walking in that same direction*” (Interview 11, So Central staff, 4 February 2021). By narrowing down the scope of what could be addressed by the jury to project-based interventions initiated by citizens, it arguably filtered out other stakeholders including those from the private sector regarding their roles and responsibilities in sustainable development. There is thus a danger that structural issues that hinder sustainable development and impact neighborhoods as well as the city as a whole remain unaddressed.

This brings the discussion back to whether citizens are brought into the space as rational individuals detached from their political agencies formed through experiences of belonging or not. The municipality staff noted that they only expected the Borgerkraft jury members “*to come as yourself and you only represent yourself, and it’s your experiences and your reflections that we want*” (Interview 1, municipal staff, 11 February 2021). From a relational understanding based on intersectionality, political agencies among citizens are simultaneously individual and collective, as one can only understand oneself located in the collective, and the collective that one belongs to can only be identified through personal experiences (Collins & Bilge, 2020). This understanding of citizens is distinguished from a binary and oppositional relational understanding observed in much political (and Western) scholarship and political practice. It points to the problems of idealizing the deliberative spaces in Citizens’ juries as being free of

influence from other collective spaces where citizens make sense of their identities and political agencies. When the Borgerkraft jury consisted of randomly selected individuals who are sealed from the public, who were they capable of representing? Answering this question requires further research taking into account the varied experiences of the jury members.

The drive to mobilize citizens as resources stems from the overall culture towards increasing productivity under a neoliberal economic paradigm. As was the case in the Borgerkraft project, citizens' juries are one-off initiatives where citizens are randomly brought together to take on a specific task during a limited period of time. The emphasis made on the ad-hoc use of citizen engagement in the political strategy combined with mobilization of citizens as resources promoted under 'municipality 3.0' then contradicts with the normative understanding of co-production that demands long-term citizen engagement as the basis for citizen empowerment and addressing structural inequalities (Rosen & Painter, 2019). The question of whose interests and needs are served ultimately impacts the possibility of whether alternative urban imaginaries prevail through citizen co-production in smart sustainable cities. From the insight obtained about the Borgerkraft project in Trondheim through this study, it is anticipated that questions regarding structural causes of unsustainability that touches upon interests of the private sector and industries were left outside the mandate of the jury. Instead, the interests and needs of citizens were framed by what could be solved through mobilizing local resources, including by activating citizens. In addition, the spaces of participation and the framing of citizen participation in those spaces were to a large degree controlled by the municipality itself. As such, the Borgerkraft jury cannot be seen to constitute an antidote to the de-politicized nature of citizen co-production promoted under smart sustainable cities (Cardullo & Kitchin, 2018; Gohari et al., 2020; Lund, 2018).

5.3 Intersectionality as an analytical strategy

The last topic for discussion concerns the potential of using intersectionality as an analytical strategy to situate and make visible power asymmetries in spaces of citizen co-production. Intersectionality is often narrowly understood as a concept bringing attention to the intersections of identities such as those that fall within the axes of gender, race and class. There is no mistake that the contribution made by intersectionality scholars and activists in dismantling the essentialist understanding of identities itself has been significant in recognizing the unique marginalized standpoints which were previously (and in many cases continue to be) excluded from single-cause-driven political struggles. However, there is so much more that

intersectionality can offer as an analytical strategy, as a way of foregrounding research in critical inquiry (Collins, 2019).

Deliberative democrats precisely recognize that deliberative spaces require constant ‘critical scrutiny’ as they are well aware that the values promoted by deliberative democracy are ideals and not reality (Bächtiger et al., 2018; Curato & Böker, 2016). However, what is often observed in citizen co-production and participatory practices in general is that the ideals that promote those practices such as inclusion and citizen empowerment are left without sufficient scrutiny. The need for critical reflection on the use of citizen engagement was also expressed in one of the interviews:

“What I often see, and we've done ourselves as well, in the decision phase of starting [participatory processes] is that we don't ask ourselves why we are doing this, what we want to get out of it and what is the best way of going about it. Because we often fall in love with the methods and we just like really want to do this method, maybe it's not the right method, maybe it's not the right theme.. It's like, we just have to ask ourselves in the beginning why do we want to involve people and what is the best way of involving them. Why? [...] We should give more time to reflect on it. [...] We're very into participation now so we just wanna do it on everything.” (Interview 11, 4 February 2021)

This is where research that builds on intersectionality to analyze participatory spaces can contribute to provide much-needed critical insights as it questions not only ‘who participates’, but also provides tools for critically interrogating what participation is for. According to Cho et al. (2013), intersectional analysis is about adopting an ‘intersectional way of thinking’ (p. 795). This means to question knowledge and ways of knowing about the social world by paying attention to the dynamics across mutually influencing systems of powers such as capitalism, sexism, neoliberalism, colonialism and racism (Collins, 2019). Intersectionality thus recasts social reality as multidimensional (May, 2014). Therefore, the nature of intersectional analysis attends to the never static complexity of the social world (Collins, 2019).

Unfortunately, there is no ready-made theory or methodology of intersectionality to guide the analytic work in research. In this thesis, intersectionality was reflected through the strategic choice taken to simultaneously examine the framing of co-production, equality of presence, equality of voice and outcome in order to understand the different power dynamics at work in the particular Borgerkraft project. In order to answer the question ‘who are the citizens in co-

producing smart sustainable cities?’, the intersectional lens provided a scrutinization of the discursive practice of citizen co-production in a particular culture of smart sustainable cities. It also helped in interrogating the underlying assumptions in democratic innovations and the perceptions among those who were involved in the Borgerkraft project. While it was only possible to take account of one of the Borgerkraft jury members’ perspective in this thesis despite of my original intention to make citizens’ perspectives central to the research, using intersectionality as an analytical strategy provided a way to approach complex power relations present in citizen participation through a relational understanding.

6 Conclusion

Through examining the use of citizen participation in the Borgerkraft project in Trondheim, this thesis has discussed who participates in citizen co-production and whose interests and needs are served as a result. As one of the research participants pointed out along with scholars such as Cornwall (2008), research on citizen participation often focuses on the different types of participation without questioning ‘who’ is participating. Using intersectionality as an analytical strategy helped to examine how citizens were conceptualized through analyzing the purpose of the initiative, the recruitment of citizens, and the setting of stage for their participation. It also helped unpack perceptions of both organizers of the project and participating citizens regarding the roles played by citizens in the project. As such, answering the question in the title of the thesis of ‘*who are the ‘citizens’ in co-producing smart sustainable cities?*’ was not only about finding out who participated, it was also about analyzing how they were involved, what was expected of them, and what enabled and limited what could be achieved through their participation. Given the restrictions on information about, and possibilities for contacting the participating citizens themselves, only one interview was secured with the jury members. The empirical material in the thesis is therefore based mainly on how the jury was set up, the profiles it was targeting, and how the space for deliberation was described by the actors involved in setting them up. More interviews with jury members would have made it possible to explore how they experienced joining the jury and formed identities and political agencies in that process, as was the original intention of this thesis and the reason for taking an intersectional approach. Nevertheless, analyzing the process of citizen participation with an ‘intersectional way of thinking’ (Cho et al., 2013; Collins, 2019) helped scrutinizing the framing, process and outcome of the citizens’ jury in Borgerkraft in order to understand what citizen participation did in the broader context of Trondheim’s smart sustainable city work.

Citizens’ juries as a democratic innovation have been promoted to overcome unequal participation by ensuring equal probability among citizens to be selected in a jury and reaching a considered judgement through deliberation on controversial or politically sensitive issues (Smith, 2009). The accounts provided by research participants pointed to the diversity of the Borgerkraft jury in terms of citizens’ backgrounds where people who normally do not participate in public consultations and similar participatory spaces were present. One of the jury

members positively recounted how she enjoyed being among people from outside her likeminded bubble and expressed her interest in joining another citizens' jury in the future. This alleged inclusiveness of the Borgerkraft jury contrasts with some of the citizen co-production practices implemented under the Saupstad-Kolstad area lift program where publicly active citizens were more represented in different participatory spaces. Nevertheless, a close examination of the recruitment process of the Borgerkraft jury reveals its self-selective nature and the limitation to who can receive an invitation in the first place. The overall design of the jury was fully controlled by the organizers of the initiative consisting of municipal and So Central staff and a NTNU researcher, leaving them the power to decide what background variants are important to be considered during the recruitment and how citizens should deliberate on what matters. It also reflected the premise of deliberative democratic processes that citizens who are not representing any organized groups are more open to change their 'raw' opinions in favor of convincing arguments with the help of expert knowledge and skilled facilitation which creates an equal platform for deliberation. This is problematic in the sense that citizens' standpoints are made into ill-informed preferences that could be transformed through professional guidance, reflecting a top-down approach to citizen participation. As discussed by Smith (2009) and other scholars, these observations are not unique to the Borgerkraft jury. Still, the closedness of the initiative made it particularly problematic since it foreclosed the possibility to challenge the top-down process from the outside. Organizers of Borgerkraft emphasized the experimental nature of the initiative to justify a number of decisions made in the course of designing and implementing the project, such as choosing a practical mandate for the jury, keeping the jury members anonymous, not bringing in controversial expert knowledge or handing facilitation in-house. The purpose of the initiative itself was also about testing the citizen participation method. It is therefore hard to critically scrutinize the outcome against its purpose. Even so, the way citizens were brought into the Borgerkraft project pointed to an instrumental understanding of citizen co-production rather than a political and normative one.

For further research, an important question is whether the proposed mixed jury for the upcoming development of the Social Section of the Municipal Plan 2020-2032 that brings citizens and other stakeholders together will take a more radical approach and situate the deliberation space in interest politics that addresses more conflictual aspects of sustainability. The dual recruitment process and composition of the jury might make the power asymmetries among panel members even more visible assuming that some stakeholders who have been

purposefully sampled may have more political experience and resources to pursue their interests (Smith, 2009). Examining the power asymmetries will also benefit from being able to take into account the varied experiences of citizens in co-production practices, which this thesis was not capable of doing. For that purpose, taking an intersectional analysis will contribute to scrutinize the power asymmetries not through a binary understanding of stakeholder vs. citizens but a dynamic and relational understanding of power which recognize fluid constructions of people's identities and political agencies.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview guide (municipal staff)

Appendix 2: Interview guide (researchers)

Appendix 3: Interview guide (citizens engaged in co-production projects)

