

Exploring Continuous Active Participation in Learning Communities:

Understanding Barriers and Facilitating Factors

Master Thesis

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Abstract

Adult learning is an essential part of everyday life and the lifelong process of transforming life experience into knowledge and skills. The aim of this research is to examine the barriers and facilitating factors of continuous active participation in Learning Communities. Continuous participation results in continuous knowledge sharing. This will be examined by a comparative case study after which a single-case-study will be performed. Study one, the comparative case study will explore the concepts ‘motivation to continuously actively participate’, ‘Learning Community’, ‘barriers’ and ‘facilitating factors’. The collected data was recorded, transcribed and coded. In study two, a single-case-study, a Learning Community about leadership was set up, for students of Radboud University. 18 participants signed up to join in the Learning Community. Interviews were conducted before the first Learning Community and after the second. These moments were selected to be able to experience the developments in the Learning Community. Study one reveals that *individual emotional benefits, individual intellectual benefits, community-related considerations* and *normative considerations* are often experienced by the participations as reason for motivation. Barriers like *online meetings* and facilitating factors like *format – intervision, mutual support, face-to-face meetings* and *planning the meetings well in advance* were mentioned in all cases. However, the facilitating factors and barriers are not consistent for each type of motivation. Study two revealed even more and confirmed other facilitating factors and barriers. Examples of mentioned facilitating factors are the *importance of physical attendance, interesting subject, multiple perspectives, active role, small groups, mutual support* and *recognition of the issue*. Examples of given barriers are *online meetings, absence due to personal reasons / other appointments, preparation time, unpleasant atmosphere and uninteresting subject*. From this study can be concluded that continuous active participation in a Learning Community is motivated by *individual emotional benefits, individual intellectual benefits, community-related considerations, normative considerations*. The facilitating factors and barriers are not consistent for each type of motivation. Overall can be concluded that the facilitating factors stimulate continuous active participation in a Learning Community. And by avoiding barriers, the participant’s motivation to actively participate will not decrease. This research provides practical implications to strengthen the participant’s motivation to continuously participate in the Learning Community. Future research should focus on whether or not the barriers and facilitating factors can be appointed to a specific form of motivation.

Key words: Learning Community – continuous active participation – qualitative research

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Introduction

Adult learning is an essential part of everyday life and the lifelong process of transforming life experience into knowledge and skills (Illeris, 2010; Abedini et al., 2021). By developing (new) knowledge and skills, people can grow professionally, enhance sustainable careers and use their new knowledge and skills to enlarge the company's innovative capacity and competitive position (Crook et al., 2011; Lopez-Cabrales et al., 2009). Learning is most effective when the new knowledge and skills can be put to practice directly (Emanuel et al., 2022). Adult learning can be done through formal (training and development) learning programs offered by the employer (Emanuel et al., 2022). However, these formal learning programs are not always effective, due to their generic character (Noe et al., 2014). According to Noe et al. (2014) this causes these programs to inadequately align with the daily needs of employees. A promising and more effective alternative are informal programs, for instance Learning Communities (Noe et al., 2014).

These Learning Communities align with the learning needs of employees and are thus supposed to have more learning achievements than the formal programs (Noe et al., 2014). An explorative research of Knol and Velzing (2019) confirms that Learning Communities can be important in acquiring, sharing and using knowledge and skills. Learning Communities are 'communities in which employees and experts from different organizations co-actively learn and innovate' (Emanuel et al., 2022, p.290) thereby having a conceptual overlap with a Community of Practice (Carter & Adkins, 2017). A Community of Practice is defined as a group of people who share a common interest, multiple problems, passion for a subject and a concern in deepening their awareness and expertise in that given field by regularly engaging with the community (Wenger et al., 2002). Both communities share their foundation about situated learning; the learning process is self-initiated, informal and proactive (Emanuel et al., 2022). A difference is that within a Learning Community, participants are from different organizations (inter-organizational), whereas participants from a Community of Practice are from the same organization (intra-organizational) (Emanuel et al., 2020). Though, according to Borzillo et al. (2011) a Community of Practice can both be intra-organizational and inter-organizational. This shows that the literature is contradictory about the fact whether or not participants are from the same organization.

Active participation is an important success factor for learning (Emanuel et al., 2022). A primary condition for active learning (asking questions, offering help and sharing insights and knowledge) within the Learning Community is a positive learning climate (Bell and Kozlowski, 2010). However, this is only a primary condition. Hashim and Tan (2015) state that continuous participation is what results in continuous knowledge sharing. This aligns with the idea that high participation includes knowledge sharing (Teigland and Wasko, 2004). According to An et al. (2023) continuous participation is defined as willing and planning to continue the meetings despite other things, and willingness to recommend the Learning Community to others.

There are different ideas for cultivating virtual Learning Communities. Ardichvili (2008) researched motivators and barriers of learning and knowledge sharing. The three main motivators are organizational culture, trust and supporting tools and technology (Ardichvili, 2008). Besides that, the three major motivational factors for sharing knowledge are personal benefits, community-related considerations and normative considerations (Ardichvili, 2008). For a Learning Community to be truly vibrant, there should be an active participation of members in various knowledge-exchange activities (Ardichvili, 2008, p.543). Examples of these activities are: Posting questions on online community boards, conversations in live chats, participating in video conferencing discussion sessions, providing answers and feedback in discussion forums (Ardichvili, 2008). A barrier to knowledge sharing is fear of criticism; employees might withhold knowledge because of this fear (Ardichvili et al., 2003).

However, the research by Ardichvili et al. (2003) and Ardichvili (2008) were both done in virtual Communities of Practice. Hence, whether or not these motivators and barriers also apply to a face-to-face Learning Community remains to be seen. To contribute to the research by Ardichvili et al. (2003) and Ardichvili (2008), it is important to examine the barriers and facilitating factors to continuously active participate in a face-to-face Learning Community. According to Gibson and Manuel (2003) and Ellis et al. (2004), trust is fundamental for sharing knowledge, and is mainly developed by face-to-face interactions (Gannon-Leary & Fontainha, 2007). Therefore, it is scientifically relevant and important to examine the following research question:

What are barriers and facilitating factors that motivate continuous active participation in a Learning Community?

This research will contribute to the literature of Ardichvili et al. (2003), Ardichvili (2008), Gibson and Manuel (2003) and Ellis et al. (2004) by providing a list of barriers and facilitating factors that motivate continuous active participation in a Learning Community. If this research is replicated to other designs of Learning Communities, the lists can then be compared to each other. That will give more scientific clarity about the differences between the designs of Learning Communities, as there are currently still some disagreements (Borzillo et al., 2011; Emanuel et al., 2022). Next to that, much research about Learning Communities, as that of Stoll et al., (2006), is situated in educational context. This research will broaden the scope of the literature on Learning Communities by researching Learning Communities in another context. Besides, Stoll et al. (2006) state that though they have found effective guidelines and principles for a good Professional Learning Community, it is still unsure whether these also apply for continuous learning. By focusing on continuous active participation, this study contributes to the existing literature.

For organizations to remain competitive and retain their workforce, employees have to continuously develop (De Boer, 2022; HRpraktijk, 2022). By answering the research question, the organizations can increase the degree of participation of their Learning Community, and thus create better learning possibilities. Moreover, insights into the barriers and facilitating factors on community level are also created. By showing how a community can maximize the participation and consequently

get most out of it as a community. Additionally, organizations that do not facilitate Learning Communities yet, are familiarized with both the barriers and facilitating factors for participants' motivation to continuous active participation. This can be of importance when implementing a learning community.

To research the barriers and facilitating factors for continuous active participation in a Learning Community a qualitative design is utilized. A comparative case study and a single-case-study are performed. These studies are complementary to each other as the interviews from the comparative case study were conducted one year ago. The single-case-study focuses on the present times and covers the Learning Community from beginning to end. The three cases in the comparative case study regard organizations based in the transport and logistics industry, who participate in a Learning Community. Within the single-case-study, a Learning Community will be set up with students from the Radboud University. Participants will be interviewed twice and observations of the Learning Community will be made and analyzed.

Theoretical framework

In this theoretical framework, the important concepts from the research question will be described with the help of current literature. The concept of Learning Communities and motivation will be explained, and also insights on examples of barriers and facilitating factors of Learning Communities will be given.

Learning Communities

There are different designs of Learning Communities. All the communities share their foundation in situated learning, in which the communities state that learning is most effective when the just learned knowledge and skills can directly be put to practice (Emanuel et al., 2022). Besides, within Learning Communities the learning process is self-initiated, informal and proactive (Emanuel et al., 2022). As stated before, a Learning Community has conceptual overlap with a Community of Practice (Wenger, 1998). Other forms are for example Professional Learning Communities (Fullan, 2005) and Virtual Communities (Allen et al., 2003). Within all these communities, individuals bring their own problems and challenges in, which they have experienced in their daily (working) life (Emanuel et al., 2022). However, a difference is that Learning Communities focus on learning, working and innovating together, whereas other communities often focus only on one of two of these three outcomes (Emanuel et al., 2022). For the purpose of this research, Learning Communities will be examined.

Having a shared interest is an important criterion for a Learning Community (Chen et al., 2009; Gannon-Leary & Fontainha, 2007). Moreover, critical incidents are shared, which is an issue which the participant encountered (Flanagan, 1954). Then, the other participants share their knowledge and perspectives on that issue, multiple perspectives are heard and by that, the participants can learn from and with one another. In addition, Emanuel et al. (2022) state that interaction and active participation are critical success factors for learning. This aligns with the fact that increased participation results in the most impressive and comprehensive learning (Eteläpelto et al., 2005). Yen (2009) states that commitment mediates continuous participation in an online community by strengthening the participant's feelings of association and bonding with other participants. According to Hargadon and Bechky (2006) searching help leads to positive learning effects when in turn one helps others too, by sharing expertise and providing constructive feedback.

Motivation

Motivation is defined as an inner process that drives a person to certain behavior, gives direction to that behavior and ensures the maintenance of this behavior (Woolfolk et al., 2008). Ardichvili (2008) states that motivation to continuously actively participate in a Learning Community is constructed based on personal benefits, community related considerations and normative considerations. Each component has different indicators. The specification of motivation can be found

in table 1. Moreover, according to Hall (2001), participants may be motivated to share their knowledge with others because they believe doing so will positively benefit them. Another perspective on motivation is from Hew and Hara (2007), who state that there are six types of motivators for sharing knowledge in online environments. The types are, reciprocity, personal gain, altruism, commitment to the group, ease of technology use and external goals (Hew & Hara, 2007). However, in this paper, the definition of motivation by Ardichvili (2008) will be used.

Concepts	Definition
Motivation	<p>Personal Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Status and career advancement, enhancement of professional reputation - Emotional benefits (boosting of self-esteem; being able to contribute; being useful) - Intellectual benefits (developing expertise; expanding one’s perspective; finding new challenges) - Material gain (community participation linked to compensation and benefits) <p>Community-Related Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sharing as means of establishing ties with others - Sharing as means of building a stronger community and strengthening one’s embeddedness in community structure - Sharing as a means of protecting against external threats <p>Normative Considerations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shared values and vision - Conformity, following leader’s example Reciprocity <p>(Ardichvili, 2008).</p>
Continuous participation	<p>Participation within the Learning Community throughout the intended and planned meetings, as of the starting point till the end</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - I am willing to continue the meetings - I have a plan to continue the meetings regardless - I will recommend the Learning Community to people around me <p>(An et al., 2023).</p>

Table 1. Indicators for measurement

Personal benefits can be specified as career advancement, emotional benefits, intellectual benefits and material gain. These benefits are all personal, individual benefits as reasons for motivation. According to Chiu et al. (2006, p.1876) personal benefit is defined as “knowledge contributor’s judgment of likely consequences that his or her knowledge sharing behavior will produce to him or herself”. Community-related considerations is when something is done in interest of the group, the community. Chiu et al. (2006, p.1876) refers to community-related considerations as “a knowledge contributor’s judgment of likely consequences that his or her knowledge sharing behavior will produce to a community”. Last but not least, normative considerations are about the shared norms values and vision in the group (Ardichvili, 2008; Levin et al., 2002). Stated is that participants who have common values and a shared vision are expected to share knowledge (Alavi et al., 2006; Chiu et al., 2006). Some normative considerations are more manifest than others, others can be more latent.

It is important to study the motivation to participate, as Salehan et al. (2017) argues that motivations are crucial predictors of one's behavior and performance.

Barriers and facilitating factors of participation in Learning Communities

In the literature, examples of participants' experiences of barriers and facilitating factors of learning communities are examined. These are used as active participation in a learning community is associated with knowledge sharing and thus learning. Examples of current known barriers of Learning Communities will be described. These were the factors that participants mentioned they disliked about the learning community and therefore influence their motivation whether they would continuously actively participate or not. A barrier is the fact that Learning Communities are inter-organizational (Emanuel et al., 2022). Thus, participants might work within the same industry and region and therefore might be each other's competitors (Emanuel et al., 2022). Consequently, participants might be more likely to withhold information from others (Park & Russo, 1996), which can decrease the likeliness to share knowledge and participate in discussions. This can have a negative influence on the learning effect. Besides, another barrier is that participants might barely know each other or not at all, which will need some time and therefore it may take a while before participants adopt a vulnerable position (Emanuel et al., 2022). That said, the fact that participants come from different organizations enhances the challenge that they do not have, per definition, a shared domain, which makes it more difficult to fully understand each other to create effective knowledge sharing (Lane & Lubatkin, 1998). Thus, possible competition, not knowing each other and not having a shared domain can cause a delay in forming a learning climate in which knowledge and experiences can be shared without misconceptions in a safe and trustful environment (Emanuel et al., 2022). Another barrier of a Learning Community is the fact that the learning happens physically outside the own organization. This can make it more difficult to transfer the learned knowledge and skills in the Learning Community to useful and applicable knowledge and skills within the own organization (Goldstein & Ford, 2002). As the experiences from other participants occur in another context, it might be difficult to just simply copy and paste that approach and assume it will work out the same.

In addition to examples of barriers, insights in examples of facilitating factors of Learning Communities will be given. These were the factors that participants mentioned they liked about the learning community and therefore influence their motivation to continuous active participation. A facilitating factor is the positive learning climate. A positive learning climate consists of giving constructive feedback, being able to learn from and trust one another (Emanuel et al., 2022). A safe atmosphere is key in a positive learning climate, which can also be seen as psychological safety (Edmondson, 1999). Earlier research showed that a positive learning climate positively correlates with the extent to which individuals share knowledge and experiences (Lau et al., 2014; Noe et al., 2014). Moreover, according to Andrews and Schwarz (2002) developing membership and trust within a group is stimulated by identifying group members with prior knowledge of one another. Building trust

in the group, is according to Gannon-Leary and Fontainha (2007), mostly developed by face-to-face interactions. Moreover, psychological safety is another important factor for building trust (Emanuel et al., 2022). Another important facilitating factor of Learning Communities is that it is utmost essential that the participant's organization stimulates the participant for active participation (Moeke et al., 2021). Not only the role of the participants' organization is a facilitating factor for the transferability of the gained knowledge and skills, but also the participants' personal needs and wants. Diverse individual characteristics, like for example conscientiousness, cognitive skills, self-efficacy and the motivation to learn, can predict the transferability of acquired knowledge and skills (Blume et al., 2010). In addition, Ardichvili et al. (2003) state that the intention to share knowledge often resulted from the organization's culture, where encouragement was given for mutual supportive relationships between colleagues.

Method

In this method section, it is explained what type of research has been conducted, how the data has been collected and analyzed, and lastly the quality of this qualitative research is described. Qualitative research was conducted as this research question has a descriptive nature. Two studies were performed: a comparative case study, which was of an explorative nature. In this comparative study, the core concepts were discovered. The explorative nature was important as the concept Learning Community is rather new and as research is done to possible facilitating factors and barriers, about which little is known yet (Swedberg, 2020). The core concepts discovered were ‘motivation to continuously actively participate’, ‘Learning Community’, ‘barriers’ and ‘facilitating factors’. Meaning, concrete and contextual information was gained. That was a perfect starting point for study two: the single-case-study, which focused more in-depth on the core components of study one. Moreover, as the comparative case study regarded ‘earlier collected data’ it was useful to complement it with ‘new collected data’. Both types of data collection and analysis complemented each other (Bleijenberg, 2016), as first a broad scope of information was gained with the help of the comparative case study, and that relevant knowledge was used setting up the single-case-study.

Study One – Comparative case study

Research design – comparative case study

The research question was examined using qualitative research: a comparative case study. This meant that data from previously conducted interviews were (privately) shared and were used to formulate an answer to the research question. This comparative case study analyzed the patterns, similarities and differences across multiple cases, which all concerned Learning Communities. A comparative case study can have two purposes: they could either yield contrasting results for expected reasons or produce similar results across the studies (Yin, 2003). This way, clarity on the value of the findings can be provided (Eisenhardt, 1991).

Data collection

The interviews were conducted in 2022 by a post-doctoral researcher of the LEADER-project (Radboud University Nijmegen, 2022). The organizations who participated were contacted and interviews were conducted. During the interviews two speakers were present. All interviews lasted around 60 – 90 minutes each, which were recorded with consent from the interviewee. From the recorded data transcripts were made. In general, three cases were used, in which the project leader, facilitator and three participants were interviewed for one case. All the participants spoke Dutch and were employed in the Dutch logistics / transport sector. Two cases regarded HR-managers and the other case regarded supply chain managers. All participants participated voluntary to the Learning Community. These data were revealed by one of the thesis supervisors and were used for analysis.

Analyzing data

The first step of the analysis of the interviews was the coding process. As this is an inductive research, the coding process was also conducted correspondingly. However, as the guidelines of Learning Communities and motivation were already known, that was the starting point for coding. The interviews were coded independently online, with the help of Atlas.ti. From there themes were identified to create additional knowledge. Text fragments were linked to open codes. These open codes were again linked to axial codes. These axial codes were grouped and linked to the selective codes, which are umbrella codes and thus the main themes discussed in the interview (Mortelmans, 2013). However, that did not mean that all discussed (main) themes were equally important for the research question. The codes from the different interviews in one case were compared and contrasted to each other, this was done once for each case. Afterward, the cases were compared and contrasted to the other cases.

Quality of the data

When looking at the quality of the data, there are important topics to discuss. First, credibility refers to the extent to which the research accurately portrays the authentic perspectives and experiences of the participants, commonly referred to as the "truth value" of the study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The credibility of this study was increased as after the comparative case study the single-case-study took place and thus triangulation was applied. In addition, dependability refers to the stability of the data over a period of time and over the conditions of the study (Polit & Beck, 2014). The dependability in this research, was strengthened by adding the data from the single-case-study to the comparative case study. Moreover, confirmability refers to the neutrality or the extent to which findings are consistent and could be repeated by another researcher (Polit & Beck, 2014). In this study, the confirmability was increased because with coding method (Mortelmans, 2013) the starting point was zero, and thus everything was considered.

Regarding the research ethics, participants' permission was asked before recording the interview. The records were made to ensure no doubts could be raised about what is said or not. As the current researches used these already conducted interviews, a confidentiality agreement was signed regarding how to correctly work with the data. Moreover, Atlas.ti was used for organizing the coding process. References from the interviewee and in the literature review are written down according to the APA standards. This decreased the change on plagiarism.

Study Two – Single-case-study

Research design – Single-case-study

Next to this desk research, field research was carried out: a single-case-study, in which a Learning Community was set up. As only one specific group is examined, a single-case-study is the best choice (Yin, 2003). A Learning Community was organized for students of the Radboud University. Before the start of the first meeting, interviews were conducted with participants which examined their current experience with leadership, and also uncovered their motivation to participate, ambitions and expectations of the Learning Community. A similar type of interview was conducted after the second meeting of the Learning Community, in order to keep track of how participants experienced it, what they had learned and how their motivation was influenced (Appendix one). Moreover, observations were conducted of the actual Learning Community. Besides that, internal documents were used for the analysis of this research. These were messages sent on the LinkedIn-group or on WhatsApp, or the posters which were made during the first Learning Community.

Data collection

The single-case-study was performed with students from Radboud University, for whom an intervention was constructed. When the students of Radboud University participated, they got access to a free Learning Community about leadership. 18 participants signed up to participate in the Leadership Learning Community. The selected three interviewees from the 18 participants had different characteristics in terms of age, gender and education. An overview of the respondents' characteristics is given in table 2. The data were collected in multiple ways; first of all, by interviews which were conducted at two moments in time, observations were held and internal documents (like the posters, LinkedIn group, WhatsApp group) were analyzed.

	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3
<i>Age</i>	22	25	23
<i>Gender</i>	Male	Male	Female
<i>Education</i>	Master Strategic Human Resource Leadership	Master Political Science	Master Political Science
<i>Attendance meeting</i>	1x physical	2x physical	2x physical

Table 2. Overview of the respondents from study two

Analyzing data

The single-case-study was conducted with the help of interviews, observations and internal documents if necessary. Within the semi-structured interview, questions about for example

participants' motivation before and after a few meetings was measured. The interviews were conducted and recorded, after which they were transcribed. The transcripts of the pre-measurement (before meeting one) and post-measurement (after meeting two), were analyzed with the help of coding. This way, differences between pre- and post- Learning Community could be examined. The comparison between pre- and post- Learning Community was done by looking at the facilitating factors and barrier in the pre-measurement and these 'interventions' were compared to the post-measurement. Moreover, the observations were coded as well, however, they were used as extra evidence to strengthen the conclusion. The same goes for the internal documents, when something strengthened the earlier findings, it was used as proof.

Quality of the data

The quality criteria of the data will be discussed together with the research ethics. To start with, transferability refers to the extent in which the results can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents (Bitsch, 2005). Looking at the transferability in this study, it can be concluded that the single-case-study strengthened this, because real interventions were used instead of an artificial laboratory setting (Gigerenzer, 1984). However, on the other side, the sample was rather small, which decreased the transferability. The credibility was strengthened by the fact that the single-case-study was performed after an extensive literature review and the comparative case study, which were used as the basis. However, the credibility decreased because there was no randomization in single-case-study, which made it harder to ensure all confounding variables were ruled out. Similar to study one, the confirmability was increased because with coding method (Mortelmans, 2013) everything was considered, no predetermined topics were focused on.

Looking at the research ethics, the Learning Community was promoted on the Radboud University website and through messages in multiple WhatsApp groups. As after the first deadline for submission only eight participants subscribed, the subscription period was extended. In total, 18 participants subscribed for the Learning Community, however the presence rate differed. Moreover, permission was asked from the participants whether they agreed that the data found could be used for research. Also, permission was asked from the interviewees if the interview could be recorded. The interviews were coded with the help of Atlas.ti. References were written down according to the APA standards, which decreased the change on plagiarism.

Results Study One

The results of the comparative case study will be presented first, followed by a conclusion. Afterward the results and conclusion of study two; the single-case-study will be presented.

Study One – Comparative case study

Three cases will be described in order, focusing specifically on motivation to continuously participate in the Learning Community. Within motivation - personal benefits: individual career advancements and individual material gains are not considered, as these were not mentioned by any of the participants. The reasons which are mentioned for motivation are individual emotional benefits, individual intellectual benefits, community-related benefits and normative considerations (Appendix two). All three cases are focused on the (transport &) logistics industry. Afterwards, the cases' reasons for motivation to continuously participate will be compared and contrasted with each other.

Case A

Case A represents a company in the transport & logistics industry, where research is done into HR-managers. Within this case, three participants and two Learning Community representatives are interviewed.

Some facts about Case A:

- Number of people in Learning Community: +-6-10, small group
- Online / offline meetings: online
- Format: plenary sessions and intervision sessions
- Duration of the meeting: 1 hour

Participants

All participants are aware of the added value of *individual intellectual benefits* within a Learning Community. The fact that one can brainstorm with peers about certain challenges or issues one faces, is highly appreciated, as there are not always colleagues with whom things can be discussed. Intellectual benefits are stimulated by the *format* of the Learning Community (in this case, intervision sessions instead of the general sessions). However, to get the most out of the intervision session, it is of importance that the session takes place *face-to-face* instead of online. As in online sessions people tend to wait nicely till the previous person has ended what he/she wanted to say, which decreases the value of the discussion. Though, this is not reflected in the reasons to participate. In addition, the *subject* of the Learning Community can limit the motivation when it does not match the personal interest. Participants can come up with subjects to discuss themselves, however, not everyone will have the same subject in mind thus therefore there might be differences in interest. *Individual emotional benefits* are only felt by one participant. These benefits are expressed in helping

others in the Learning Community boosts your self-esteem and creates a feeling of satisfaction. Stated by participant-2 is that it "is always nice for your own development to also be able to tell that you are actually quite well on your way or that you have a good take on something. So yeah, then you look at yourself and get satisfaction from your work" (Appendix three). Moreover, *community-related considerations* are felt by all participants. These are related to participating to the Learning Community open-minded and being open to learning from others but also to help others learn (*mutual support*). Lastly, *normative considerations* are noticed by two participants. These relate to the community-related considerations in this case, helping others when you are already familiar with the topic. This means, that the power of normative considerations is in the ability to both learn from others and teach to others. However, as all the participants of the Learning Community can give their input for a subject of a Learning Community, in the end it should fulfil everybody's needs. Normative considerations can overlap the community-related considerations, as these might correspond in some cases. Normative considerations can be more manifest or latent, that differs per case. In this case, the participants did mention normative considerations, however as they overlap the community-related considerations, one can conclude that the normative considerations are more latent. Important to notice is that when normative considerations are not mentioned in the interviews, that does not per definition mean that there are no normative considerations. When these are more latent, it can also be that the participant did not mention them.

In addition, the degree of physical presence can be increased by *planning the Learning Community meetings well in advance*, as the participant mentions that then other appointments can be planned around it. Planned well in advance is defined differently among the participants, among which once every third week, or planned in advance for 3, 6 or even 12 months were mentioned. The intention to attend regularly might be positively influenced by the idea of recognition of others and knowing the value of one's input (*mutual support*). Moreover, having *face-to-face meetings* once in a while (or at least the first meeting) instead of only online meetings would contribute to the motivation to participate. In addition, due to the *hustle and bustle of work*, time of the participants is limited. Therefore, choices have to be made about where to spend the time, which is seen as a barrier for motivation. In this case, a participant chose to elect another appointment over the Learning Community, the question remains why. Thus, planning the Learning Communities well in advance, mutual support and face-to-face meetings facilitate the motivation of the participants. However, having online meetings only and the hustle and bustle of work limits the motivation.

Learning Community representatives

Both Learning Community representatives are aware of the individual emotional benefits. Hearing the struggle or solution from a peer will boost your motivation and engagement, one does not feel alone anymore (*mutual support*). The emotional benefits are stimulated by the fact that during the

interview sessions the people *show vulnerability and open themselves up*. This is illustrated by Learning Community representative-2: "but such an interview session allowed people to be very vulnerable" (Appendix three). Additionally, in *face-to-face situations* one can bond better with the other members and be more vulnerable than in online meetings. In addition, individual intellectual benefits are also gained, as people learn new knowledge / applications from the peers in the Learning Community. The intellectual benefits are stimulated by the *format* of the Learning Community, in this case the interview sessions, as there is more space for an in-depth dialogue. Besides that, *community-related considerations* also affect motivation according to the facilitator, as people were *willing to share their issues and or experiences*. Only one LC representative sees *normative considerations* as part of the motivation to participate. It is mentioned that information which is shared is colored by the person's ideas and values, therefore it is good to know what the person's ideas and values are (which is a manifest factor). Thus, what people say is from their point of view, in order to understand it completely, it is helpful to understand their standpoint and values. Hence, understanding one's point of view and their perspective, is a 'normative consideration' - motivation to participate in the Learning Community.

Case B

Case B also displays a company in the transport & logistics industry, where research is done into HR-managers. Within this case, three participants and two Learning Community representatives are interviewed.

Some facts about Case B:

- Number of people in Learning Community: <15, small group
- Online / offline meetings: online
- Format: interview session
- Duration of the meeting: 1 hour

Individual emotional benefits, individual intellectual benefits, community-related benefits and normative considerations are felt by all participants and Learning Community representatives as reasons for motivation to continuously participate.

Participants

To start with *individual emotional benefits*: talking about your work-related challenges with like-minded people boosts your self-esteem that you are on the right path. And that one can make it their own and implement it not only for yourself but also for colleagues. The emotional benefits can also be strengthened by the fact that within the Learning Community group there is a positive vibe and attitude, which enhances the *mutual support* in the group. However, connecting with other people is more difficult when the Learning Community is online, thus an *online environment* limits the

emotional benefits motivation. In addition, *individual intellectual benefits* are reached because one can brainstorm with another about a recognizable challenge and that leads to valuable information and new ideas which couldn't be found elsewhere. *Mutual support* within the group supports the intellectual benefits, it is important to reach the depth and not cover the surface only. Moreover, the intellectual benefits are increased by stimulating participants to specify a subject which they would like to have discussed in a meeting, which will also stimulate adopting an *active role*. It can also be stimulated by the *format* of the Learning Community, as the participant would like to have an in-depth dialogue with a certain group, thus an intervision session. As then a dialogue can be created where different ideas and thoughts can be shared which are informative and educational for all members. Moreover, as stated is that there is a difference in interaction while having the meetings online or face-to-face, one can conclude that *face-to-face meetings* increase the *intellectual benefits*. Besides that, *community-related considerations* regard the fact that anyone can learn with and from each other, while being in an intervision session (*format*) or in a dialogue about a statement. And *normative considerations* are in this case about to give-and-take (latent factor). Many things have been learned and helped to create advantages, and also own experiences and knowledge have been shared. However, a barrier here is that often companies are willing to take knowledge from the Learning Community, yet, are still *reluctant to share their knowledge and experiences*.

According to the participants, there are only a few people who are (almost) regularly *present at the Learning Community*. Not everyone is able to attend to all meetings. The participant mentions that when the *meetings are planned well in advance*, one can take that into account while planning other meetings. When the meetings are planned shortly beforehand, there is a bigger chance of having a changing group. In every meeting new people can attend, which can decrease the *mutual support* and openness of the participants. However, currently stated is also that the participants who participate are all very *open*.

Learning Community representatives

To start with, *individual emotional benefits* are seen in the exchange of information. To keep balance in the amount of information one takes and gives. In this exchange of information, *individual intellectual benefits* are achieved too, because participants will create or gain new insights which they weren't familiar with yet. This can be stimulated when all the participants come *fully prepared* to the meetings. Moreover, the *format* of the Learning Community can stimulate the intellectual benefits. When discussions are triggered in *smaller groups*, participants will be able to get the most out of it. In addition, a variety of experiences in the group can enhance the intellectual benefits too. However, it is then important that the *meetings are face-to-face*, as the participants are then better able to go in-depth. Moreover, non-verbal communication has added value in those discussions. Therefore, online meetings will limit the intellectual knowledge. Moreover, *community-related considerations* are depicted in the fact that the Learning Community concerns organizations from the same industry,

which already creates a bond between the group. In addition, these organizations share the same parts concerning care and challenges. The bond is also enlarged by the *mutual support* which exists in the group, which in turn creates an environment in which the participants feel free to say what they want. Besides, *normative considerations* regard the principle of a Learning Community that while participating, one has to be able to both share and receive knowledge / experiences and not only soak in all the information (latent factor). It is about learning together, from and with one another. This is stimulated by the *format* of an online meeting by splitting the group in an online meeting in multiple smaller groups, so an environment is created where everybody can say what he wants, as that is often not possible in an online environment with a large group. Here, importance is laid to the benefits of having *face-to-face meetings*, as experienced is that a small reliable group kept joining the online meetings which was due to the fact that they have met each other multiple times in real-life.

Stated is that *having a common goal* to work to and a bond within the group people are less likely to cancel on the meetings. Moreover, the Learning Community's meetings should continue, *the meeting should be planned* before the next, however only one at the time.

Case C

Case C also displays a company in the logistics industry, where research is done into supply chain managers (in close collaboration with students). Within this case, three participants and two Learning Community representatives are interviewed.

Some facts about Case C:

- Number of people in Learning Community: growing bigger from 15
- Online / offline meetings: online
- Format: kick-off / workshop session
- Duration of the meeting: 1 / 1,5 hour

Participants

Individual emotional benefits are seen by two participants. Stated is that during the Learning Community one learns continuously, not only content related but also on a personal level. A meeting in an *online environment* like Teams, limits the emotional benefits, as muting oneself and interference factors decreases the enthusiasm and added value of the discussion. In addition to limiting the emotional benefits, the intellectual benefits will because of that reason also be limited by an online environment. *Individual intellectual benefits* are felt by all participants and relate to intrinsic motivation. This stimulates the fact that he would love to learn from and share knowledge with each other, in order to optimize the organization with the things learned during the Learning Community. Intellectual benefits can be stimulated by the *mutual support* within the group, as the group becomes more familiar with one another, it becomes more professional and the participants seek for a more in-depth exchange, then another energy will be released which will be beneficial. Likewise, felt is that

within the group, participant dare to talk openly about the subjects, which enhances the *mutual support* and thus the *emotional and intellectual benefits*. In addition, the connection in the group is better done *face-to-face*, as experienced is that bonding within an online environment is often more difficult, especially when there is a large group present. Additionally, all participants mention that *community-related considerations* are awakened because the power of the Learning Community is that when one develops something with which one can help others as well, it will benefit oneself too. Therefore, it is important that all participants engage and *take an active part* in the community. In addition, *normative considerations* are only seen by one participant (latent factor), and would be strengthened when the *format* changed a bit, having follow-up sessions and/or in-depth sessions.

One participant mentions that regarding *participating the Learning Community* it is important to keep a balance within their work in order to keep it pleasant. That is the main reason the participant reserves time for this kind of work-related things. Another participant mentions that new participants come in gradually, whom bring in an additional perspective, which differs from the operation only picture. However, because of the rescheduling and cancelling of the meetings, it is harder to be present. Preference is expressed in *planning the meetings* well in advance for the longer term.

Learning Community representatives

To start with, *individual emotional benefits* are felt by one Learning Community representative as participants get familiar to more ways and get more in-depth knowledge. By that participant become more conscious and goal-oriented in their way of learning. However, the emotional benefits are limited by meetings in an *online environment*. Furthermore, *individual intellectual benefits* are felt by both as noticed is that participants only participate if the subject is more important than the delusion-of-the-day. It is important that knowledge is gained in hindsight to solve the delusion-of-the-day, only then the participants will be able to prioritize the meetings. The *format* also determines what can be learned, the current idea is to create a workshop for all developed tools. However, meeting in an online environment limits the intellectual benefits, as having a discussion online is more difficult than *face-to-face*. Moreover, *community-related considerations* are strengthened because the community feels a joint responsibility to make sure the community succeeds in what they are doing (*mutual support*). As agreements are made together about the commitment and efforts of the participants, one is more likely to adopt an *active role* and meet that agreement.

Comparison between cases A, B and C

To sum up shortly, within case A, all the five interviewees see *community-related considerations* and *individual intellectual benefits* for motivation. However, only three interviewees see *normative considerations*. In addition, *individual emotional benefits* are also seen only by three interviewees as a reason for motivation. One Learning Community representative of case A

(facilitator) described all the reasons for motivation, however, the participants did not mention all these reasons for motivation. Within case B, it is remarkable that all interviewees (thus three participants, and two Learning Community representatives) see all four reasons for motivation; thus *individual emotional benefits*, *individual intellectual benefits*, *community-related considerations*, and *normative considerations*. Within case C, *individual emotional benefits* are seen by three interviewees. Moreover, *individual intellectual benefits* and *community-related considerations* are seen by all the interviewees. Lastly, *normative considerations* are only seen by one interviewee.

In short, *individual emotional benefits* are seen by all the interviewees from one case and only three interviewees from the other two cases. Moreover, *individual intellectual benefits* are seen by all the interviewees in all cases. In addition, *community-related considerations* are seen by all the interviewees in all cases. Besides, *normative considerations* are only seen by all interviewees in one case, in the other cases it is only seen by three and one interviewee. The normative considerations are mostly latent factors. This means that normative considerations are overall depicted in latent factors. Table 3 presents an overview of all barriers and facilitating factors per type of motivation for all cases.

	Case A				Case B				Case C			
	Facilitating factors Part.	Limiting factors Part.	Facilitating factors LC-rep.	Limiting factors LC-rep.	Facilitating factors Part.	Limiting factors Part.	Facilitating factors LC-rep.	Limiting factors LC-rep.	Facilitating factors Part.	Limiting factors Part.	Facilitating factors LC-rep.	Limiting factors LC-rep.
Individual emotional benefits			Mutual support Face-to-face meetings		Mutual support	Online meetings			Mutual support	Online meetings		Online meetings
Individual intellectual benefits	Format - interview Interesting subject Mutual support Face-to- face meetings	Format - plenary Uninteresti ng subject Online meetings			Format - interview Face-to- face meetings Active role Mutual support Specify a subject		Variety of experiences in group Active role Format Face-to- face meetings	Online meetings	Mutual support Face-to- face meetings	Online meetings	Format Face-to- face meetings	Online meetings
Community-related considerations	Format - interview				Format - interview	Reluctant to share information	Mutual support		Active role		Active role Mutual support	
Normative considerations							Format Face-to- face meetings		Format			
Degree of presence	Planning the meetings well in advance Face-to- face meetings Mutual support	Hustle and bustle of work		Hustle and bustle of work Online meetings	Planning the meetings well in advance	Lower mutual support due to changing group	Planning the meetings well in advance Having a common goal		Planning the meeting well in advance New participants			

Table 3. Comparison overview study one Case A, B and C

However, the question remains what makes it that in Case B, all interviewees see all reasons for motivation. The interviewees within case B feel *mutual support*, which increases the ability for participants to open up. This might support the fact that *individual emotional benefits* are a reason of motivation for the Learning Community. In Case A and C, less is mentioned about the *mutual support* and speaking openly in-depth, which might be a cause for the fact that not all people feel *individual emotional benefits*. *Individual intellectual benefits* are felt by all participants thus it is clear that participating in a Learning Community enhances to one's knowledge. It is mentioned in Case B that engagement and commitment are higher when there is a *common goal*. Here in Case B, the common goal refers to organizational goals. This conclusion can be broadened to the Learning Community in general, as all participants see the *community-related considerations*. Which is illustrated with helping others, being able to brainstorm together about challenges; thus, learn from and with one another. The normative considerations differ, which means that there is no(t always) shared vision and values, or at least, this cannot be derived from the interviews. Thereby, it is not a given norm or value that participants are able and willing to share important information or experiences from their company.

Based on table 3, no relation can be found between the facilitating factors and barriers from the participants and the Learning Community representatives, per reason for motivation to participate. There are a number of facilitating factors and barriers which align both the participant's and Learning Community representative's perspective. However, they often do not precisely match the specific type of motivation. Generally, participants do mention that their *interest in the subject* which will be discussed can differ (both facilitating factor and barrier). As different subjects are discussed every meeting, however this is not seen by the Learning Community representatives. Moreover, the representatives see two other facilitating factors for motivation to participate, which are: *having a common goal* and *difference in years of working-experience within one group*. Overall there are also some similarities between the participants and representatives. For example, for motivation the participants and representatives agree that important facilitator factors are the *format*, *mutual support*, *face-to-face meetings*, *planning the meetings well in advance* and an *active role*. The *hustle and bustle of work* is seen as a barrier by both the participants as well as the representatives.

Altogether, in case A can be seen that *mutual support* and *face-to-face meetings* are facilitating factors for motivation for both the participants and the Learning Community representatives. *Online meetings* and the '*hustle and bustle of work*' are both barriers for the participants and the Learning Community representatives. The *format* of the Learning Community, *subject* and *planning the meetings well in advanced* are also mentioned by the participants, however not by the Learning Community representatives. This can be seen in table 3.

In case B, there is somewhat more alignment in facilitating factors and barriers for motivation from the participants and Learning Community representatives. However, again not in the same specification of motivation. The *format* of the Learning Community is stated as facilitating factor by both, just as *mutual support*, *face-to-face meetings*, *planning the meetings well in advance* and having

an *active role*. However, a corresponding barrier is *online meetings*. Other barriers mentioned by the participant are not mentioned by the LC representatives. This is presented in table 3.

Overall, the participants and Learning Community representatives of case C align most with one another about facilitating factors and barriers for motivation. Both see the *format, mutual support, face-to-face meetings*, and having an *active role* as facilitating factor for motivation. Moreover, *online meetings* are by both the participants and the Learning Community representatives seen as a barrier. This can be seen in table 3.

To conclude with, in all cases the *format, mutual support, face-to-face meetings* and *planning the meetings well in advance* are mentioned as facilitating factors for motivation to participate. In addition, *online meetings* are mentioned as barrier for the motivation to participate in all cases.

Conclusion Study One

This conclusion will give an answer based on study one, to the research question: “*What are barriers and facilitating factors that motivate continuous active participation in a Learning Community?*” Continuous active participation in a Learning Community is motivated by *individual emotional benefits, individual intellectual benefits, community-related considerations, normative considerations*. No relation between the types of motivation and barriers / facilitating factors is found. Which means that the facilitating factors and barriers are not consistent for each type of motivation. Therefore, in the table 4, a general list of barriers and facilitating factors for motivation is presented.

	Facilitating factors	Barriers
1.	Format – intervision	Format - plenary
2.	Interesting subject	Uninteresting subject
3.	Mutual support	Hustle and bustle of work
4.	Face-to-face meetings	Online meetings
5.	Planning the meetings well in advance	Reluctant to share information
6.	Active role	Lower mutual support
7.	Variety of experiences in group	
8.	Having a common goal	

Table 4. Overview of all facilitating factors and barriers from study one

Results Study Two

Study Two – Single-case-study

After study one, a Learning Community about leadership with students of the Radboud University in Nijmegen was set up. With the participants interviews are conducted and the Learning Communities' meetings are observed. The results of the single-case-study will be presented here, which are the interviews before the start of the Learning Community and after meeting two as well as the observations during each of the meetings of the Learning Community, together with internal documents. The interviews are conducted with three of the participants from the Learning Community, however, the observations are focusing on all participants.

Interviews before meeting one

Investigated was what expectations the participants had for the Learning Community, however all the interviewees said the same; they had no expectations and just will let it happen. When looking at motivation, there are different elements where focus is laid. First of all, the motivation to participate are *individual intellectual benefits, individual emotional benefits, individual career advancement and community-related considerations* (Appendix five). Thus, gaining knowledge about leadership (topic of Learning Community), gaining more self-confidence, and also gaining experiences which can contribute to the future job position, which will probably have something to do with leadership. Moreover, helping one another is also part of the motivation. Another motivation for participation to the Learning Community was because of the *variety in daily tasks*.

Then, there are barriers and facilitating factors for motivation to continuously active participate to the Learning Community (Appendix four). Barriers are *online meetings, personal reasons, the demanding of the preparations, an unpleasant ambiance and no interesting topic*. *Online meetings* are felt as less motivating as everyone is behind their own camera and having a real discussion is harder as one is more likely to let someone else finish their talk first before reacting. *Personal reasons* can come up which might limit the motivation to participate as there are other more important activities which need to be finished first. One interviewee mentions that when the *preparation is too demanding*, it will be less motivating as there are also other things which should be accomplished. *An unpleasant ambiance* works as a barrier for the motivation as people will then be less likely to share their experiences and thoughts and thus see less perspectives and learn less. Same goes for *no interesting topic*, as people are then more likely to quit and thus less contributions which results in less learning. On the opposite, facilitating factors for motivation are *physical meetings, interaction, interesting topics and personal attention*. *Physical meetings* are mentioned in every interview, and is felt as important facilitating factor for motivation as communication is then more easily and body language can be better seen and thus understood. *Interaction* with other participants would facilitate motivation as then it would be more interesting and thus stimulate the learning too.

When an *interesting topic* is discussed, people will be more likely to keep the focus on the topic. Moreover, when there is *personal attention* from the LC representatives, one's motivation will be facilitated as everyone's qualities can be used and individually looked is what one can learn. The detailed table can be found in Appendix four.

In addition, elements of a *pleasant learning climate* are described throughout the interviews as *getting to know and trust the other members, mutual support, an active role, a calm and relatively small (<30) group, daring to share their opinion, a lot of interaction in the group and thus hearing different perspectives.*

Last but not least, the intention to participate to the Learning Communities is at all interviewees 100%, on the condition that there are no personal reasons for absence.

Interviews after meeting two

During the interview different facilitating factors and barriers for motivation have been given. Facilitating factors which are given are *importance of physical attendance, pleasant atmosphere, interesting subject, multiple perspectives, active role, small groups, mutual support, having a common goal and recognition.* On the other hand, barriers are *hybrid meetings, absence due to personal reasons / other appointments, no clear structure and searching for contact outside of the meetings* (Appendix five). The detailed table can be found in Appendix four.

Moreover, all the participants would recommend the Learning Community to other people, because of the develop yourself, and increase the level of self-reflection. All participants had a tip for the Learning Community representatives, which were to create an image with what can be expected, help to create more structural clarity in the meetings and to give some background theory about the topic. Tips for future participants which were given were joining the meetings actively, reflect each day on what critical incidents you had that day and closely follow the LinkedIn group for next appointments.

Observation first Learning Community

When analyzing the notes of the observation of the first Learning Community, three main themes were discovered; motivation to participate, positive learning climate and an active role. Reasons for motivation is heard while mixing in the smaller groups, mainly the motivation is to meet new people in real-life, variety in daily tasks next to writing a thesis, having *ambitions to fulfil a leadership role in the future, thus gaining skills, knowledge and experiences.* A *positive learning climate* is displayed in this observation by elements like laughing with one another, having small conversations with the neighbors and the facilitator calling participants by name which makes them smile. In addition, *an active role* is represented by active listening, answering questions, do what is asked, thinking and writing things down, react to others, having a critical perspective and nodding.

Observation second Learning Community

From the observation of the second Learning Community, again multiple themes are seen: active vs passive role, positive learning climate, group dynamics and participating online or physical.

An *active role* is seen especially when the group is divided into multiple smaller groups (around four people), where everyone shares their opinion about a critical incident. Also, the people who were a bit quieter in the bigger group (*passive role*) now shared their opinions and views. At the end, discussed is that the participants would like to discussing these issues in both smaller groups and the whole group, as that creates additional value than discussing it only in the whole group or only in smaller groups. Within the discussion in the whole group, the two participants who joined online, did not say anything. This is in line with the previous Learning Community, thus stated can be that *joining a physical meeting online* makes it harder to participate well in the discussion. An active role is further seen in nodding, asking follow-up questions and questions to make the story clearer. A more passive role is seen when someone tells a story about a course in the program, which is recognized by 70% of the participants, however, the other three participants did not follow that course and also took a more passive role in that discussion. Therefore, not *recognizing the problem* might limit the motivation to actively participate. The *positive learning climate* is enhanced by the fact that a social contract is developed by all the participants together. Moreover, halfway through the meeting a participant took initiative to use nametags.

Comparison between the interviews and observations

	Participant 1		Participant 2		Participant 3			Participant 1		Participant 2		Participant 3		
	Facilitating factors	Limiting factors	Facilitating factors	Limiting factors	Facilitating factors	Limiting factors		Facilitating factors	Limiting factors	Facilitating factors	Limiting factors	Facilitating factors	Limiting factors	
Motivation before meeting one	<i>Importance of physical attendance</i>		<i>Importance of physical attendance</i>		<i>Importance of physical attendance</i>	<i>Online meetings</i>	Motivation after meeting two	<i>Importance of physical attendance</i>		<i>Importance of physical attendance</i>		<i>Importance of physical attendance</i>	<i>Hybrid meetings</i>	
				Absence due to personal reasons / other appointments					Absence due to personal reasons / other appointments					
		Preparation time	Being prepared											
		<i>Unpleasant atmosphere</i>							<i>Pleasant atmosphere</i>					
	<i>Interesting subject</i>	Uninteresting subject	<i>Interesting subject</i>		<i>Interesting subject</i>				<i>Interesting subject</i>		<i>Interesting subject</i>			
	<i>Multiple perspectives</i>				<i>Multiple perspectives</i>				<i>Multiple perspectives</i>		<i>Multiple perspectives</i>		<i>Multiple perspectives</i>	
	Social interaction		Social interaction		Social interaction									
			Active role		<i>Active role</i>				Active role				<i>Active role</i>	
	Participants know each other		Participants know each other		Participants know each other									
	<i>Small groups</i>		<i>Small groups</i>		<i>Small groups</i>				<i>Small groups</i>		<i>Small groups</i>		<i>Small groups</i>	
	<i>Mutual support</i>				<i>Mutual support</i>				<i>Mutual support</i>		Mutual support		<i>Mutual support</i>	
					<i>Personal attention</i>									
									Common goal of LC					
												Stucture not clear yet		Stucture not clear yet
										Searching for contact outside the meetings				
							Recognition		Recognition		Recognition			

Table 5 Comparison overview study two for participant one, two and three

In table 5, one can see the facilitating factors and barriers for each participant before meeting one and after meeting two. The factors which are mentioned by the participant in both interviews are in italics. The facilitating factors and barriers are not directed to a specified reason for motivation, as this was not clearly defined in the interviews. Therefore, only facilitating factors and barriers for motivation in general are presented.

An important facilitating factor which is seen at all participants before meeting one and after meeting two is the *importance of physical attendance*. Moreover, other facilitating factors before and after are an *interesting subject*, *multiple perspectives*, *active role*, *small groups* and *mutual support*. Facilitating factors which are mentioned by only one participant after meeting two are *pleasant atmosphere* and *common goal of LC*. *Recognition* is seen as an important facilitating factor after meeting two as it is mentioned by all participants. Important barriers which are given after meeting two, are *hybrid meetings*, *absence due to personal reasons / other appointments*, *searching for contact outside the meetings* and *structure is not clear yet*. However, the barriers before meeting one did mostly not align with these, as they were *online meetings*, *absence due to personal reasons / other appointments*, *preparation time*, *unpleasant atmosphere* and *uninteresting subject*. Facilitating factors like *participating actively* especially in *smaller groups* and *recognition of the problem* were also observed during the observations of the experimental Learning Community.

Conclusion Study Two

This conclusion will give an answer to the research question: “*What are barriers and facilitating factors that motivate continuous active participation in a Learning Community?*” Continuous active participation in a Learning Community is motivated by *individual emotional benefits, individual intellectual benefits, individual career advancement and community-related considerations*.

However, the barriers and facilitating factors cannot be appointed to a specific form of motivation. Therefore, in the table 6, an overall summation of barriers and facilitating factors from study two is presented.

	Facilitating factors	Barriers
1	Importance of physical attendance	Preparation time
2	Interesting subject	Unpleasant atmosphere
3	Multiple perspectives	Uninteresting subject
4	Social interaction	Absence due to personal reasons / other appointments
5	Participants know each other	Online meetings
6	Small groups	Searching for contact outside the meetings
7	Mutual support	Structure not clear yet
8	Being prepared	Hybrid meetings
9	Active role	
10	Personal attention	
11	Common goal of LC	
12	Recognition of the issue	
13	Pleasant atmosphere	

Table 6. Overview of all facilitating factors and barriers from study two

Main conclusion

The main conclusion for this research is that there are multiple facilitating factors and barriers that motivates continuous active participation in a Learning Community (table 7). There are also different considerations of motivation, however remarkable is that the barriers and facilitating factors are not consistent across all types of motivations, which was expected based on the literature (Ardichvili, 2008). Therefore, in general is said that the facilitating factors stimulate continuous active participation in a Learning Community. And by avoiding barriers, the participant's motivation to actively participate will not decrease.

	Facilitating factors	Barriers
1	Format - intervision (1) ¹	Format – plenary (1)
2	Interesting subject (1, 2) ²	Uninteresting subject (1, 2)
3	Mutual support (1, 2)	Online meetings (1, 2)
4	Face-to-face meetings (1)	Hustle and bustle of work (1)
5	Planning the meetings well in advance (1)	Lower mutual support (1)
6	Active role (1, 2)	Reluctant to share information (1)
7	Variety of experiences in the group (1)	Preparation time (2)
8	Having a common goal (1, 2)	Unpleasant atmosphere (2)
9	Multiple perspectives (2) ³	Absence due to personal reasons / other appointments (2)
10	Social interaction (2)	Searching for contact outside the meetings (2)
11	Participants get to know each other (2)	Hybrid meetings (2)
12	Small groups (2)	Structure not clear yet (2)
13	Being prepared (2)	
14	Personal attention (2)	
15	Pleasant atmosphere (2)	
16	Recognition of issue (2)	
17	Importance of physical attendance (2)	

Table 7. Overview of all facilitating factors and barriers of both studies

Concluded can be that there are themes within the facilitating factors and barriers. A theme which is seen in the facilitating factors is the design of the Learning Community, which consists of the factors: *format – intervision, interesting subject, face-to-face meetings, planning the meetings well in advance, small groups and personal attention*. Another theme is a positive learning climate, which consists of the factor: *mutual support, social interaction, participants get to know each other, pleasant atmosphere and recognition of the issue*. Moreover, group composition consists of the factors: *variety of experiences in the group and multiple perspectives*. The last main theme within the facilitating

¹ (1) means that the factor was a result of study 1 only

² (1,2) means that the factor was a result of both study 1 and 2

³ (2) means that the factor was a result of study 2 only

factors is the participant's individual commitment, which consists of the factors: *active role, common goal and being prepared*.

Within the barriers, the themes from the facilitating factors mostly align. To start with the design of the Learning Community. This consists of the barriers: *format – plenary, uninteresting subject, online meetings, hybrid meetings and still unclear structure*. Barriers in a learning climate are *unpleasant atmosphere and lower mutual support*. A participant's individual commitment can be limited by the *hustle and bustle of work, reluctance to share information, preparation time, absence due to personal reasons / other appointments and searching for contact outside the meetings*.

When looking at facilitating factors, a positive learning climate is even a main theme in the facilitating factors revealed by this research. That aligns with the thoughts of Emanuel et al. (2022) and Bell and Kozlowski (2010), who state that a positive learning climate is a facilitating factor of the Learning Community and active learning. Moreover, social interaction is seen as a facilitating factor, which according to Bryk and Schneider (2002) foster a willingness to share thoughts and learn from each other. Another facilitating factor was an active role of the participants. Moeke et al. (2021) agrees with this facilitating factor, however adds that the participant's organization should stimulate the participant for active participation. The latter does not align with the data obtained from this research, as participants feel they are responsible for their own active role they adopt. A possible difference might be that the participants from this research all participated voluntarily, which may be a sign of a high intrinsic motivation. That might be different when participants are 'pushed' by his/her organization. The facilitating factor having a common goal aligns with the vision of Gannon-Leary and Fontainha (2007), who state that having a sense of purpose is a critical success factor.

Discussion

In this chapter, the contribution to the knowledge will be explained and practical implications are given. Moreover, the limitations are discussed and possible options for future research are presented.

Theoretical implications

This study adds to the literature as no previous research has examined the facilitating factors and barriers of motivation to continuously participate in a face-to-face Learning Community. Ardichvili (2008) and Ardichvili et al. (2003) both examined virtual Communities of Practice. However, there were no facilitating factors and barriers for face-to-face Learning Communities. Moreover, when starting a Learning Community, there is a handbook of how to set up a Learning Community (DuFour & DuFour, 2013). However, this handbook mostly focusses on the design of the Learning Community, though, participant's reasons to continue participation is also an important factor. As whether or not the participant chooses to continuously actively participate has much more effect on the learning effect than only the design of the Learning Community. Therefore, this research presents a list of facilitating factors and barriers to continuously participate.

As stated in the introduction, there is still some unclarity about the differences between the different designs of a Learning Community. For example, about the fact whether participants from Learning Communities and Communities of Practice are from the same or different organizations (Borzillo et al., 2011; Emanuel et al., 2022). It can be concluded from the data that there is in some cases a barrier regarding sharing information to others. As the reluctance to share information only occurs in some cases and not in none nor in all, one can conclude that it depends on the participant / organization whether or not participants are willing to share information. However, from the data can be stated that one can probably learn more from participants from different organizations as they have another perspective on matters. From this study one can conclude that the learning effect of a Learning Community is likely to be maximized when participants are from different organizations. Replicating this research to other designs of Learning Communities and comparing the lists of facilitating factors and barriers with one another, might give more insights in the differences between the different designs. This will also give better grounded clarity about the conceptual difference (Carter & Adkins, 2017).

In addition, this research adds new insights to situated learning, as that is a Learning Community's foundation (Priest et al., 2016). Here, facilitating factors and barriers for motivation to continuously participate are listed. To get the most out of situated learning, one could use the enumerated facilitating factors and barriers in their favor. This way, the participants will be more likely to continuously participate and thus gain more knowledge with the help of situated learning (Nicolini et al., 2016).

Practical implications

Next to theoretical implications, this study also provides practical implications. A first practical implication is that the above-mentioned facilitating factors (table 7) could be implemented in order to strengthen the participant's motivation to continuously participate in the Learning Community. Thereby, the above-mentioned barriers (table 7) could be avoided. That might need some adaptation and adjustments for the organizations who facilitate a Learning Community. Moreover, instead of making presence in the Learning Community mandatory, the organizations could implement these facilitating factors and avoid barriers. This way, participants will be more likely to continuously participate in the Learning Community, and no obligations are needed. Thus, the participants might prioritize the Learning Community above other tasks. The participants will have a higher motivation for continuous active participation, and thus keep on developing himself. That in turn results in a better competitive position for the organization (De Boer, 2022).

Additionally, the Learning Community is set up for the participants to learn from and with one another. Therefore, it is important that the representatives have the same mindset as the participants, as they facilitate the Learning Community. Representatives should align their view with the view of the participants, so that they can facilitate the Learning Community to the expectation of the participants. When while starting a Learning Community, the facilitating factors are implemented and the barriers are avoided, the maximum motivation for continuous active participation will be reached. Moreover, letting the participants participate on a voluntary base will positively contribute to whether or not the role they adopt is active.

Another practical implication is the fact that this research stated that Learning Communities with participants from different organizations have most likely a higher learning effect than with participants from the same organization. This because participants from different organizations have another perspective on the issue, and so multiple different perspectives can be heard. Which is something to take in mind when starting a Learning Community.

Limitations

As every study, also this study has some limitations. First of all regarding study one, where the interviews have been conducted one year ago by a different researcher. This may have posed challenges for the current researcher in fully capturing the entire meaning and important factors emphasized during the interviews. Moreover, there was a double retrospective aspect as the interviewees were also interviewed after the Learning Community took place. Another limitation of study one is the fact that a fixed number of interviews were analyzed, instead of continuing until data saturation was reached. In order to correctly complement the retrospective data from study one, a single-case-study was set up, to examine a Learning Community directly from the beginning onwards.

However, a limitation of study two, the single-case-study, is that only been two meetings of the Learning Community had taken place at time of the research. Two from the three interviewees have attended both meetings, however one interviewee only participated in one Learning Community. This discrepancy in attendance might influence the results, as the expected outcome and desired effects for the participants might not have been fully realized yet. Another limitation is that the Learning Community and the participants were observed. The observer, however, possessed of pre-existing insights and personal preferences related to the topic, which could introduce bias into the observations. This possible lack of objectivity could reduce the general reliability of the results. However, as that was known beforehand, the observations are only used to have additional prove for results from the interviews.

It is important to acknowledge these limitations to be able to correctly interpret this research's results and conclusions. Moreover, points which future research could improve if needed should be recognized.

Future research agenda

Future research could focus on the motivation to continuously participate after a whole series of meetings of the Learning Community, instead of after only two meetings. A longitudinal study will acquire more reliable insights in the facilitating factors and barriers to continuously actively participate as more experiences are covered in the participants' answer. Especially, as according to De Laat et al. (2011) participants play different roles during the period of the learning activity. Also because continuous participation is not participating only the first two times in a Learning Community. As continuous participation regards participating in all meetings of the Learning community. That longitudinal study might result in less fluctuation in reasons for motivation to continuously actively participate.

Moreover, another suggestion for future research is to replicate this study to other forms of Learning Communities, thus for example a Community of Practice. When this research is also carried out in that area, the results can be compared to each other. Possible more clearance about the difference and similarities between the forms of Learning Communities can then be gained.

Another topic for possible future research regards the fact that this study focused on the barriers and facilitating factors for motivation to continuously actively participate. In this study it has become clear that the barriers and facilitating factors could not be appointed to a specific form of motivation, based on the current collected data. As that was also not the core of this research, future research might focus on that specifically and find a relation.

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Appendices

Appendix One: Interview questions

Before meeting one

Thank you once again for your participation in the LeaderCommunity and this interview. Our thesis research focuses on learning in a Learning Community, looking at knowledge and skills, motivation and a positive learning climate. We will process your answers to the questions anonymously. Do you mind if we record this interview so that we can process the results correctly?

Basic information:

- What is your age?
- What are you studying?
- Do you have a part-time job? If yes, where and what is your position?

1. In your opinion, what is leadership?
2. How would you describe a leader? And why?
3. What qualities make someone a leader?
4. What challenges do you experience while exercising leadership?
5. Have you participated in a Learning Community before? If so, what do you expect from this LC?
6. What knowledge and skills would you like to gain during this Learning Community?
7. How do you expect to gain knowledge and skills during the Learning Community?
8. What leadership experience do you have?
 - a. No experience: what leadership experience do you have?
9. How would you describe your current leadership style when leading?
 - a. No experience: If you were in the position of your manager, what would your leadership style be?
10. What could you still grow in in terms of leadership?
11. What motivates you to participate in the Learning Community?
12. In what ways can the Learning Community organisers ensure that participants' motivation to participate remains high?
13. What factors might hinder your motivation to participate in the Learning Community?
14. To what extent do you intend to attend all meetings of the Learning Community?
15. When do you feel safe in a study- or work-related group?
16. To what extent do you dare to give feedback or give your opinion in a study- or work-related group?
17. Can you describe the learning environment in which you learned a lot?
18. What were the social characteristics of this environment? For example: motivation, psychological safety, social interaction, group dynamics
19. Can you give an example of a learning environment in which you had positive experiences and were able to learn a lot as a result?
20. What are your expectations from the design of the Learning Community?
21. What are your expectations of how the Learning Community will be run?
22. Which do you prefer, physical or online meetings? (In terms of motivation and positive learning climate)
23. Why does this form of meetings have your preference?

After meeting two

Since our research is about Learning Communities, we now have another interview to look at your experiences so far.

First of all, I am very curious to know how you have experienced the LC so far.

1. In what ways do you think you can apply the skills you learnt during the Learning Community in your future professional and personal life?

2. How has the Learning Community motivated you to continuously participate? Which factors played an important role in this and which factors did not?
3. What obstacles did you encounter when participating in the Learning Community and how did you deal with them?
4. How did you experience the physical and online meetings? Which do you prefer and why (in terms of motivation and positive learning climate)?
5. How did you experience the group formation within the Learning Community?
6. What activities were undertaken to build trust in the group?
7. In what ways do the different working formats (such as plenary or small group) contribute to stimulating group formation?
8. Can you give examples of situations in which you were able to learn a lot within this Learning Community?
9. How could you have learned/get more out of it?
10. What tips would you give future participants to get the most out of the Learning Community?
11. What would you recommend to Learning Community organisers to make future meetings even more valuable?
12. Finally, would you recommend the Learning Community to other people who want to improve their personal and professional skills and knowledge and why?

Appendix Two: Comparative case study - Overview quotes on motivation

Case A

		CASE A				
Motivation		Project leader - LC-R1	Facilitator LC-R2	Participant 1 - P1	Participant 2 - P2	Participant 3 - P3
3. Community-related consideration	"You like to learn from People, but and I didn't write a blog for bickering either, know transferring your knowledge to someone gives even much more appreciation than gaining knowledge from someone. So from that idea that People are willing to learn from each other, People are willing to help each other further"	These were people who, on the one hand, either had an issue to contribute or something to share, so certainly those first times, interest was high.	Let's get together again and see how we can help each other move forward.	I'm going to participate in that and then I'll see what it costs me in terms of time investment or what I can get out of that or what I can give to someone.	Above all, it has also been just saying the practical examples of other companies. Being able to brainstorm, being able to help other companies.	
4. Normative considerations	-	That is coloured, so to speak, by your own talent or by your ideas or by your values. That does help another person, because it also makes it clear that it is precisely your values and norms that are responsible for this.	Because what is not new to me may be new to someone else. And that doesn't mean I can't teach someone else something on that subject. Because in the end, of course, it's give and take	it is nice to help colleagues / fellows	-	
1. Individual emotional benefits	If they have learned things from each other. If you, I can tell them all sorts of things. But when you hear it from a peer from a colleague and in particular say also the struggle that someone else also has, you also just become part of it. Yes, then you share with each other and and that works best.	You always have those individual goals, of course, but having the feeling that you are not alone and that this can contribute, yes people have to go through that experience first.	-	is always nice for your own development to also be able to tell that you are actually quite well on your way or that you have a good take on something. So yeah, then you look at yourself and get satisfaction from your work,	-	
2. Individual intellectual benefits	Then the round takes place where real conclusions and tips and advice are given	That the participants work and learn with each other as partners, so they help each other with their own learning.	brainstorm with your peers, you also learn how they do it and what their take on certain topics is.	For me personally, I really like it because I was just looking for an alternative to my former colleagues, so to speak, with whom I could brainstorm a lot and I suddenly found that again in that intervention so that's why it really appealed to me and I would also be in favour of it in this form	I just find that very inspiring to brainstorm about that and see how others stand in it	

Case B

	CASE B				
	Project leader - LC-R1	Facilitator LC-R2	Participant 1 - P1	Participant 2 - P2	Participant 3 - P3
Motivation					
3. Community-related consideration	Issue problems we are struggling with in terms of that theme to include the experiences of other companies to learn from them in order to move forward	And companies from the same sector that of course also creates connectedness. Well the same common parts when it comes to care and issues.	Yes, we're all in logistics anyway, but we do have distinctive things. Yes, I think if we work together, and we are also aware of that, to improve the image of the sector, that will be good for the whole sector.	When we start a working form, we also learn from each other. And when we engage in discussion about propositions, we learn from each other.	but is it really with the approach of just discussing cases and learning from each other.
4. Normative considerations	All participants can both contribute something to the group and make use of it	So then it seems as if at the front, the ground rules are also already discussed in brackets to... well what participation also asks that that is not a kind of just sponge and hang back but that it is also... that you also have to get better from that together so to speak.	So on many levels I find I have learned and benefited from it. And also share my knowledge and experience.	if you know like-minded people, participants in the group, if you've brainstormed with them and you know you're on a good track, that gives you more confidence anyway	So it's not just getting information, but more importantly helping each other and then
1. Individual emotional benefits	Also make sure that indeed they don't just come to bring, but also, You don't just come to get, but also come to bring things, so that it's an exchange of.	and you also feel like oh yes it has added value for me, then you also feel that yes then you really make an effort to always be there.	the valuable thing about it is that we are talking to people from the same industry about it.	But also in that, I say, being able to talk about it with others, with like-minded people, so to speak, that gives me a piece of confidence that I am on the right track and that I can make it my own and implement it for myself, but also with my colleagues.	And you end up having to, because even though I can do a lot of things here just like that, you end up having to defend it, of course, and explain it to your supervisor within an organisation.
2. Individual intellectual benefits	And that one also comes to certain insights that one did not know before.	There are a number of participants who already have a certain maturity, so to speak, on this theme and who... I do believe that because of this, you always learn something, I also believe that, but that because of this, yes, you do keep your knowledge, so to speak, at the right level, but that above all they have something to contribute	It's not that you apply all that one to one immediately, but it adds to your knowledge and you use that to form your own strategy if I must say so.	We have solutions that I saw the big companies saying, we didn't think of that, we should do that too. How well you guys are doing. While those big companies had solutions that we hadn't thought of. Or maybe we had thought of them, but were like, that's something for the big ones.	So surely you can really brainstorm with each other about a problem, say, that you recognise. And of course you don't get that so quickly from a book. And also often by just talking to each other about that topic, you do come up with new ideas.

Case C

	CASE C				
	Project leader - LC-R1	Facilitator LC-R2	Participant 1 - P1	Participant 2 - P2	Participant 3 - P3
Motivation					
3. Community-related consideration	If I understand you correctly, also towards a kind of joint responsibility for the functioning of that Community of hey, what should we do	People dare to talk much more freely and people, what I said, they want to participate really by really participating, not just listening, but now participating. That does represent a change.	Yes if I invent something and share it then everyone will benefit.	when you really get together, have a session like this to discuss the projects together and look for the optimisation for the whole chain	So if you can develop something where you can also help the others later on to pull up with you, you actually get better yourself and that's the power of that community.
4. Normative considerations	-	-	-	I'm thinking whether it would be better then to go through that again if you were doing in-depth projects, that would help I think.	-
1. Individual emotional benefits	-	More ways are learned, more depth comes into what is learned, people become more conscious and purposeful in their learning.	you are continuously always learning, so in itself, but also from presentation give you new information new insights. So I develop in that as a person both professionally and as a person, yes.	-	I would say [interest is] definitely deepened, because I have obviously gradually come to see that it can have a very positive effect such a community
2. Individual intellectual benefits	because Everyone recognises it, the recognition of the chain problem they all have.	I do notice, that does bother me, you have to pull a little harder, but do you deliver something? If you do something with the community that is perceived as more important than the issues of the day, then people are willing to invest in it. Because people solve the delusion of the day with that.	But of course I myself learn a lot from it, from other examples	Learning from each other and sharing knowledge so that myself, and our company can do with that with the optimisation that we want to create ourselves also in the supply chain. So it's actually really intrinsic motivation.	yes I think there were I would say three useful things that came out that were ready and could be learned away.

Appendix Three: Comparative case study – Overview quotes on facilitating factors and barriers

Case A

	Description	Quote Participants	Quote LC Representatives
Motivates continuous participation	Individual emotional benefits	<i>P2: Is always nice for your own development to also be able to tell that you are actually quite well on your way or that you have a good take on something. So yeah, then you look at yourself and get satisfaction from your work.</i>	<i>LC-R2: You always have those individual goals, of course, but having the feeling that you are not alone and that this can contribute, yes people have to go through that experience [of not being alone] first.</i>
	Individual intellectual benefits	<i>P1: brainstorm with your peers, you also learn how they do it and what their take on certain topics is.</i>	<i>LC-R2: That the participants work and learn with each other as partners, so they help each other with their own learning.</i>
	Community-related considerations	<i>P3: Above all, it has also been just saying the practical examples of other companies. Being able to brainstorm, being able to help other companies.</i>	<i>LC-R1: You like to learn from people, ... transferring your knowledge to someone gives even much more appreciation than gaining knowledge from someone. So from that idea that people are willing to learn from each other, people are willing to help each other further.</i>
	Normative considerations	<i>P1: Because what is not new to me may be new to someone else. And that doesn't mean I can't teach someone else something on that subject. Because in the end, of course, it's to give and take.</i>	<i>LC-R2: That is coloured, so to speak, by your own talent or by your ideas or by your values. That does help another person, because it also makes it clear that it is precisely your values and norms that are responsible for this.</i>
Barriers	Uninteresting subject of LC	<i>P3: The only thing is, as soon as someone's subject, or the case that someone brings, doesn't quite match your own interests, you drop out extremely quickly, I think.</i>	
	Hustle and bustle of work	<i>P3: Which means that my time is limited. So I have to make choices about when to participate or not. And ideally, and also certainly out of interest, I would just participate in all of them, but that's just not realistic anymore.</i>	<i>LC-R1: But you also see that the span of control is always very big, right? So if the slightest thing has to happen, and they have to cancel my appointment, because there's another fire to put out somewhere.</i>
	Online meetings	<i>P3: To my mind that [online meetings] brings up much less discussion, because you wait for each other very nicely.</i>	<i>LC-R1: Like if people drop out easily or people cancel easier or or maybe, and then I'm waiting, beginning of a session. And then we two haven't dialed in and there I am again busily appending and then they do</i>

			<i>'forget' or 'no, I'm not here'. Yes, I find that very annoying.</i>
Facilitating factors	Format of LC - interview	<i>P2: I personally like the real interview, so that you really get the space to give your opinion on something, or share your tips or highlight the pitfalls with someone again, that's what I like best.</i>	<i>LC-E2: That's why this interview session was born, the idea was born from that, to get more depth in that and in learning, to have a bit more space for that.</i>
	Planning the meetings well in advance	<i>P1: If it is planned, then you automatically start planning around it and then see if that works out.</i>	
	Face-to-face meetings	<i>P1: That seeing each other in person at times might also add a lot.</i>	<i>LC-R2: Sharing the way of thinking and working, undercurrent, connection with each other, yes you can't overcome that through Teams that's not possible that's really in the personal situation.</i>
	Mutual support	<i>P3: You can say yourself, if you want to bring something in you have all the space to do so. Everyone is heard.</i>	<i>LC-R2: But such an interview session allowed people to be very vulnerable.</i>

Case B

	Description	Quote Participants	Quote LC representatives
Motivates continuous participation	Individual emotional benefits	<i>P2: But also in that, I say, being able to talk about it with others, with like-minded people, so to speak, that gives me a piece of confidence that I am on the right track and that I can make it my own and implement it for myself, but also with my colleagues.</i>	<i>LC-R2: and you also feel like oh yes it has added value for me, then you also feel that yes then you really make an effort to always be there.</i>
	Individual intellectual benefits	<i>P1: It's not that you apply all that one to one immediately, but it adds to your knowledge and you use that to form your own strategy if I must say so.</i>	<i>LC-R1: And that one also comes to certain insights that one did not know before.</i>
	Community-related considerations	<i>P1: Yes, we're all in logistics anyway, but we do have distinctive things. Yes, I think if we work together, and we are also aware of that, to improve the image of the sector, that will be good for the whole sector.</i>	<i>LC-R1: Issue problems we are struggling with in terms of that theme to include the experiences of other companies to learn from them in order to move forward.</i>
	Normative considerations	<i>P1: So, on many levels I find I have learned and benefited from it. And also share my knowledge and experience.</i>	<i>LC-R2: So, then it seems as if at the front, the ground rules are also already discussed in brackets to... well what participation also asks that that is not a kind of just sponge and hang back but that it is also... that you also have to get better from that together so to speak.</i>

Barriers	Online meetings	<i>P1: But is still harder to connect with people. You know in breaks you talk about other things too. It's harder to network then and really use the full potential of such a meeting.</i>	<i>LC-R1: To keep it going also and then you also see that that really non-verbal communication really adds value, also in a meeting like that.</i>
	Reluctant to share information	<i>P1: I think a lot of companies are willing to make it, but not always bring it. And yes, that is something that is also a bit expected. That you prepare for such a meeting. So that you actually have something meaningful to talk about.</i>	
	Lower mutual support due to changing group	<i>P3: If you have a new group every time, then, you start with everyone is new, you introduce yourself again and then you have to explain that a bit. I think people are then less likely to point out what's not going well in the organization.</i>	
Facilitating factors	Format – intervision session	<i>P2: So then you get a dialogue among yourselves and then you start brainstorming. How do you solve this and how do you deal with it? That's very instructive, that in my experience sticks 10 times better than, with all due respect by the way, than the best speakers we've had in the group.</i>	<i>LC-R2: Then chose to break up into small groups, precisely to give everyone a chance to speak and share, because that is almost impossible in such a large group.</i>
	Planning the meetings well in advance	<i>P1: So you can always plan it far in advance and aim to be able to attend.</i>	<i>LC-R1: We need to continue that: meetings at regular intervals, but each time per meeting.</i>
	Mutual support	<i>P3: So you can get to the depths right away.</i>	<i>LC-R2: Really the motivation to together make something out of it, I can still feel that from the group.</i>
	Face-to-face meetings	<i>P2: Big difference in interaction whether we are physically together or we are all behind our screens.</i>	<i>LC-R1: Surely face to face has much more depth I must say. Much more much easier to form a discussion. To keep it going also and then you also see that that really non-verbal communication really adds value, also in a meeting like that. Easier to make agreements at that moment.</i>
	Active role	<i>P2: But by actively participating in the conversations and being able to brainstorm with others, often I did so by asking for a problem statement in a very structured way.</i>	<i>LC-R1: That has everything to do with I think with time and one time also had better preparation than the other or a certain person who did come to the meeting more prepared one time than the other.</i>

	Specify a subject	<i>P3: Yes, I liked that. We did that when we had large groups. So we really asked, you know, what kind of topics would you like to discuss and so on?</i>	
	Variety of experiences in group		<i>LC-R2: There are a number of participants who already have a certain maturity, so to speak, on this theme and who... I do believe that because of this, you always learn something, I also believe that, but that because of this, yes, you do keep your knowledge, so to speak, at the right level, but that above all they have something to contribute.</i>
	Having a common goal		<i>LC-R2: There's the similarity there but that of course within that theme... everyone has their own goals in that or they're not even individual goals I think also organization goals and then underneath that are the individual goals.</i>

Case C

	Description	Quote Participants	Quote LC representative
Motivates continuous participation	Individual emotional benefits	<i>P1: You are continuously always learning, so in itself, but also from presentation give you new information new insights. So I develop in that as a person both professionally and as a person, yes.</i>	<i>LC-R2: More ways are learned, more depth comes into what is learned, people become more conscious and purposeful in their learning.</i>
	Individual intellectual benefits	<i>P2: Learning from each other and sharing knowledge so that myself, and our company can do with that with the optimisation that we want to create ourselves also in the supply chain. So it's actually really intrinsic motivation.</i>	<i>LC-R1: I do notice, that does bother me, you have to pull a little harder, but do you deliver something? If you do something with the community that is perceived as more important than the issues of the day, then people are willing to invest in it. Because people solve the delusion of the day with that.</i>
	Community-related considerations	<i>P3: So if you can develop something where you can also help the others later on to pull up with you, you actually get better yourself and that's the power of that community.</i>	<i>LC-R1: If I understand you correctly, also towards a kind of joint responsibility for the functioning of that community of hey, what should we do.</i>
	Normative considerations	<i>P2: I'm thinking whether it would be better to go through that again if you were doing in-depth projects, that would help I think.</i>	
Barriers	Online meeting	<i>P1: In a Teams goes anyway then you all have to mute and</i>	<i>LC-R2: But ofcourse that was online, so then you still couldn't...</i>

		<i>then again you have all sorts of other interference factors that don't contribute positively to enthusing the debate.</i>	<i>It was a good meeting, but I still didn't feel...</i>
Facilitating factors	Planning the meeting well in advance	<i>P1: I would like to see a long-term view and also much more planful so plan planning.</i>	
	Mutual support	<i>P2: If you see that it becomes more professional and seeks more depth, and recognisability of course from each other. So that's always good I think and that also brings other energy so that does.</i>	<i>LC-R1: In which you do indeed agree on some mutual efforts.</i>
	Face-to-face	<i>P2: That connection of course you usually do physically because Teams is more difficult especially when there are, sometimes there were as many as 30-40 people in.</i>	<i>LC-R1: And that and that I don't see that happening so easily online, because you have to be able to have that discussion about what the tool solves.</i>
	Format	<i>P1: I don't think they are very specifically distinctive in that it's more the way they bring it.</i>	<i>LC-R2: Not just from this workshop, but we actually want from all the tools we develop we want to organise workshops based on that.</i>
	Active role	<i>P3: As long as it is the case that members are indeed also seriously engaging on it and also doing their best for it. It is not just natural sponging and a bit of listening, you are also expected to just be active participants and also watch along.</i>	<i>LC-R2: You have to be willing to share things that are going on within your company. And that doesn't mean commercial data, but that just means yes, how you deal with operational issues.</i>
	New participants	<i>P3: We also have new entrants indeed coming in and then you do see that you also get an extra interface with them in that way, different from the pure operation you run with each other.</i>	

Appendix Four: Single-case-study – Overview quotes on motivation

Before meeting one

Quotes		Before meeting one		
		Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3
Facilitating factors	Importance of physical attendance			P3: I think then it's best also to have some more Yes interaction that's a bit mixed up Internet or via zoom or things like that you often have one talking anyway and then the other and in a physical space It's a bit easier to interact, so to speak.
	Being prepared		P2: What you mentioned that People have also prepared themselves well and can compete well.	
	Interesting subject	P1: Well, it is then a learning community about leadership right? Yes, well I think anyway yes it the subject of leadership I do find interesting, so Maybe I'm just going to get some more knowledge about that in that community.	P2: Trying to improve my speaking skills, I have yet. I suffer from a stutter that shoots in there from time to time. And I notice that that does Mix in also with your self-confidence and that too especially for speaking in front of a group or a at least a somewhat larger group.	P3: But I'm very curious about what specific communication skills belong to a leader then and not mainly of well, what do I think myself, but also a little bit yes, from the science what is said about that, I'm very curious about what Yes what is said about that, so yes, That's Maybe a little bit.
	Multiple perspectives	P1: I learnt a lot in situations where many People dare to express their opinions to learn yet again Maybe know another aspects or multiple perspectives fall a certain point.		P3: Yes, receiving criticism is not always very easy, but it can actually be very helpful. Yes, to see things from a different perspective and to think again, oh yes, what do I really think about this?
	Social interaction	P1: I think having a lot of interaction I think that would help.	P2: And that you engage in conversation with each other instead of you hear person A saying Something person B. In turn giving their own response to that, But that there is not a, But that there is no conversation taking place. That at least I would be in favour of you actually engaging in conversation with each other	P3: In which there is a lot of interaction
	Active role		P2: I think when when I'm interested in this and you're there and you notice, oh yes, This is really something that I'm very interested in. Then automatically a yes then, then I would automatically want to give my opinion, but sometimes for example on things that we actually don't really care that much about, then I don't even think it's worth sharing my opinion Because. Yes then just don't actually feel like it.	P3: But after that, I do think I just dare to say, oh well, Maybe this could be a bit better, or a Well, yes, I saw this Because I'm there to learn myself, so I hope others will then do the same with me.
	Participants know each other	P1: Yeah absolutely, I think if you're sitting with familiar People, then yeah, I think that's a bit nicer anyway, because then you just have some familiarity around you	P2: I know it I that my stutter responds, often with whether I feel confident Or that whether communication is easy and of. That's why for me that confidence is important, because yeah, make sure I know how to get a little more calm in my voice?	P3: It's really just a bit of a start just the ice to be broken within the group getting to know each other briefly
	Small groups	P1: Yes, I think yes, you were just sitting with the master then, just purely their own master, so It was just not too big a group either.	P2: I think for me, Learning often comes in small groups anyway.	P3: If I look a bit at my studies, for example, smaller groups
	Mutual support	P1: Yes, I think it also very much depends. The person I think it persons. If you know oh, these are just pretty chill People then for example for me already a lot nicer or safer in a way. But I also think if you can just say what you want to say when you have a question or a remark that it is also encouraged that people don't necessarily look at you strangely when you ask something or remark. Yeah also just kind of People of who just kind of think the same way or so. Maybe it helps a bit in that as well.		P3: I think that very much depends on whether Everyone is valued as part of the group and that it is also okay to make mistakes. And yes that that's just part of the process and that everyone sees it as such. Not that if someone makes a mistake you immediately express a little bit of Oh well, This might not be for you, But that it really is for everyone. A place is to learn something and that you can therefore make mistakes in it. You can I think yes I would feel comfortable.
	Personal attention			P3: Perhaps also a bit of personal attention.
Limiting factors	Online meetings			P3: Yeah, I think so. I'd still go along with it then, because I've now signed up over, so then I'll just go and do that too, But I do think it [online meetings] would make my motivation a bit less.
	Absence due to personal reasons / other appointments		P2: it would be rather Maybe still for personal reasons. Because I'm working on my master's thesis and that that Maybe yes that that there is a once Yes that there is some that in some time shortage and that you Therefore then Maybe Are inclined to Skip an appointment.	
	Preparation time	P1: Or if you might also have to do a lot of things for it.		
	Unpleasant atmosphere	P1: If the atmosphere Maybe not so nice after all		
	Uninteresting subject	P1: If it turns out afterwards Maybe not to be as interesting after all, as you might have expected or so.		

After meeting two

Quotes		After meeting two		
		Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3
Facilitating factors	Importance of physical attendance	P1: Yes for interaction, physical is nice though. Because then of course you do lie comfortably in the group. You can just chat and just have conversations. I think that's just a bit easier	P2: I think with this kind of type of project that being physically present does matter a lot. I wouldn't participate myself either through teams or or zoom. That seems to me. Yes, then you don't pick up as much to my mind that also the the vibe you are in together, because that is very very important. So yeah, I would keep it constantly present myself and never want to experience it online.	P3: I do think it's a shame, because yes, those who are online, they can obviously listen in, but yes, you can't really contribute anything,
	Pleasant atmosphere	P1: I think I like the atmosphere there.		
	Interesting subject	P1: In general, I find leadership very interesting, so That is also a motivation of mine	P2: It's more Because I still find it interesting to go around myself.	
	Multiple perspectives	P1: I also liked that you could then walk around a bit at one point. When Everyone had written everything down that you could compare a bit or have a conversation with People about that or spar a bit in that, so That was also nice again.	P2: Also nice to be able to hear other participants' insights and perspectives.	P3: And yes I did notice there that it was kind of interesting to get someone else's perspective? And yes, just. How someone else would solve that
	Active role	P1: More intense than I thought for a first meeting.		P3: I notice that everyone is just enthusiastic and active
	Small groups	P1: For myself, personally, I think my preference would be rather smaller groups. I think I would share things a bit easier then	P2: I personally like being able to work in a smaller group of work.	P3: small group is
	Mutual support	P1: atmosphere there I do like.	P2: I think what I did like very much was last time there was a that very much suggested that there should be some form of a social contract that Everyone is at least on the same page in terms of values how you treat others and the information that in other maybe post. So yes I I thought that was a very good approach.	P3: And that you have space to, Yes say what you want and Yes, It's very casual
	Common goal of LC	P1: Everyone is naturally in it that with the same goal.		
	Recognition	P1: That not that Everyone worded the same thing exactly. But that it actually kind of did. I had the idea at least that it all kind of came down to the same thing.	P2: For me myself, it's well, personally more pleasant if you're really completely familiar with with case you can certainly empathise and picture it. But it's just those last few just those last few pro percentages that do it.	P3: Yes yes exactly and what also Because quite a lot of things with some People also corresponded then you do see Yes often you are not so good at and then you see that actually a lot of other People struggle with that too, so that makes it a bit easier then.
	Limiting factors	Hybrid meetings		
Absence due to personal reasons / other appointments		P1: And yes, there was unfortunately another appointment that I couldn't cancel, so That was actually the main reason.		
Structure not clear yet			P3: Or at least last time we were also with the problem. Of okay, should we raise a hand now or just go straight into it? And yes, when you're with a smaller group, it feels all Natural, then it's easier to jump in when another person stops for a moment, is for me personally, I find.	P3: That structure a little bit. Of course that has to come from within the group as well, because Everybody has to be comfortable with that and Everybody has to agree, but. Yes Maybe a bit more occasional steering from or you Maybe a bit making the choices of light, well for example with that WhatsApp Group and LinkedIn? Is it very much open. And yes from that group it is quite difficult sometimes yes as an individual to make a choice there of. Well, I do decide for the group that we are going to do this. And, I think maybe it would help if they were a bit more like okay, well, We've all heard these arguments. We choose to do this, and then We see how that goes. I think that would be valuable.
Searching for contact outside the meetings		P1: I was searching Because I Of course that link I can't find it either and I couldn't get into that whatsapp group or something no idea and I couldn't find that LinkedIn group I hadn't found at first either, so I was running a bit behind I think after those first meetings I think yes too bad this well		

Appendix Five: Single-case-study - Overview quotes on facilitating factors and barriers

Before meeting one

Before meeting one		
		Quote
Facilitating factors	Importance of physical attendance	P3: I think then it's best also to have some more Yes interaction that's a bit mixed up Internet or via zoom or things like that you often have one talking anyway and then the other and in a physical space it's a bit easier to interact, so to speak.
	Being prepared	P2: What you mentioned that People have also prepared themselves well and can compete well.
	Interesting subject	P1: Well, It is then a learning community about leadership right? Yes, well I think anyway yes it the subject of leadership I do find interesting, so Maybe I'm just going to get some more knowledge about that in that community.
	Multiple perspectives	P3: Yes, receiving criticism is not always very easy, but it can actually be very helpful. Yes, to see things from a different perspective and to think again, oh yes, what do I really think about this?
	Social interaction	P2: And that you engage in conversation with each other instead of you hear person A saying Something person B. In turn giving their own response to that, But that there is not a, But that there is no conversation taking place. That at least I would be in favour of you actually engaging in conversation with each other
	Active role	P3: But after that, I do think I just dare to say, oh well, Maybe this could be a bit better, or a Well, yes, I saw this Because I'm there to learn myself, so I hope others will then do the same with me.
	Participants know each other	P2: I know it I that my stutter responds, often with whether I feel confident Or that whether communication is easy and of. That's why for me that confidence is important, because yeah, make sure I know how to get a little more calm in my voice?
	Small groups	P2: I think for me, Learning often comes in small groups anyway.
	Mutual support	P3: I think that very much depends on whether Everyone is valued as part of the group and that it is also okay to make mistakes. And yes that that's just part of the process and that everyone sees it as such. Not that if someone makes a mistake you immediately express a little bit of Oh well, This might not be for you, But that it really is for everyone. A place is to learn something and that you can therefore make mistakes in it. You can I think yes I would feel comfortable.
	Personal attention	P3: Perhaps also a bit of personal attention.
Barriers	Online meetings	P3: Yeah, I think so. I'd still go along with it then, because I've now signed up over, so then I'll just go and do that too, But I do think it [online meetings] would make my motivation a bit less.
	Absence due to personal reasons / other appointments	P2: it would be rather Maybe still for personal reasons. Because I'm working on my master's thesis and that that Maybe yes that that there is a once Yes that there is some that in some time shortage and that you Therefore then Maybe Are inclined to Skip an appointment.
	Preparation time	P1: Or If you might also have to do a lot of things for it.
	Unpleasant atmosphere	P1: If the atmosphere Maybe not so nice afterall
	Uninteresting subject	P1: If it turns out afterwards Maybe not to be as interesting after all, as you might have expected or so.

After meeting two

After meeting two		
		Quote
Facilitating factors	Importance of physical attendance	P2: I think with this kind of type of project that being physically present does matter a lot. I wouldn't participate myself either through teams or or zoom. That seems to me. Yes, then you don't pick up as much to my mind that also the the vibe you are in together, because that is very very very important. So yeah, I would keep it constantly present myself and never want to experience it online.
	Pleasant atmosphere	P1: I think I like the atmosphere there.
	Interesting subject	P1: In general, I find leadership very interesting, so That is also a motivation of mine
	Multiple perspectives	P3: And yes I did notice there that it was kind of interesting to get someone else's perspective? And yes, just. How someone else would solve that
	Active role	P3: I notice that everyone is just enthusiastic and active
	Small groups	P1: For myself, personally, I think my preference would be rather smaller groups. I think I would share things a bit easier then
	Mutual support	P2: I think what I did like very much was last time there was a that very much suggested that there should be some form of a social contract that Everyone is at least on the same page in terms of values how you treat others and the information that in other maybe post. So yes I I thought that was a very good approach.
	Common goal of LC	P1: Everyone is naturally in it that with the same goal.
	Recognition	P3: Yes yes exactly and what also Because quite a lot of things with some People also corresponded then you do see Yes often you are that also a bit insecure about the things you are not so good at and then you see that actually a lot of other People struggle with that too, so that makes it a bit easier then.
Barriers	Hybrid meetings	P3: I do think it's a shame, because yes, those who are online, they can of course listen in, but yes, you can't really put anything in, so yes, I'm always, preferably just physically there myself. I understand it's not always a possibility, but. Yes, It's the combo just doesn't work so well I think Because it's very interactive and that can either If it's all online or all physical.
	Absence due to personal reasons / other appointments	P1: And yes, there was unfortunately another appointment that I couldn't cancel, so That was actually the main reason.
	Structure not clear yet	P3: Or at least last time we were also with the problem. Of okay, should we raise a hand now or just go straight into it? And yes, when you're with a smaller group, it feels all Natural, then it's easier to jump in when another person stops for a moment, is for me personally, I find.
	Searching for contact outside the meetings	P1: I was searching Because I Of course that link I can't find it either and I couldn't get into that whatsapp group or something no idea and I couldn't find that LinkedIn group I hadn't found at first either, so I was running a bit behind I think after those first meetings I think yes too bad this well