

# Stories of a Mission Mystique

## *The Success of The Salvation Army*

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## Preface

Na een half jaar is hij af, mijn masterscriptie. Het succes van publieke organisaties hield mij al langer bezig en het onderwerp van mijn scriptie was dus ook snel gekozen. In mijn bachelor en master Bestuurskunde merkte ik dat de focus ligt op wat er fout gaat binnen de publieke sector, terwijl ik er van overtuigd ben dat we ook veel kunnen leren van de succesverhalen.

Het Leger des Heils is zo'n succesverhaal. Acht weken rondlopen op verschillende afdelingen waren een leerzame ervaring. Als 'white privileged kid' was ik nog nooit in aanraking gekomen met de doelgroep van het Leger, de zogenaamde onderkant van de samenleving. Ik heb geleerd naast ze te gaan staan en te luisteren naar de soms verschrikkelijke verhalen die ze met zich meedragen. Ik heb ervaren dat wanneer je dit doet, zij jou ook veel te bieden hebben, ieder op zijn eigen manier. Een man die mij altijd enthousiast begroette, iemand anders die me complimenten gaf over mijn rummikub vaardigheden, en de dankbaarheid van een man die ik hielp met stemmen tijdens de parlementsverkiezingen.

Daarnaast ben ik geraakt door de houding van de medewerkers: open, vol liefde, en met een enorme drang om de wereld een betere plek te maken. Graag wil ik Anne Marieke Groot bedanken voor de begeleiding vanuit Het Leger des Heils. Het was fijn om met jou te sparren over alles wat ik meemaakte en ik waardeer de vrijheid die je mij hebt gegeven om mijn onderzoek uit te voeren. Daarnaast wil ik mijn alle medewerkers en cliënten die ik gesproken heb tijdens mijn observaties bedanken. En tot slot natuurlijk ook mijn respondenten, bedankt.

Deze scriptie was niet tot stand gekomen zonder de begeleiding van dr. Stefanie Beyens. Stefanie, bedankt voor alle feedback, motivational speeches, en de ruimte die je me gaf om mijn eigen project vorm te geven. Merlijn, als tweede lezer, ook bedankt voor de uitgebreide feedback en in het bijzonder je hulp met het vormgeven van mijn onderzoeksmethode.

Tot slot, wil ik graag alle vrienden en familie bedanken die op allerlei manieren mij hebben gesteund. Rixt en Rik, alle dagen die ik samen met jullie heb gestudeerd, hebben dit halfjaar een stuk beter gemaakt. Bedankt Rixt, dat je op het einde mij van de laatste feedback hebt voorzien. Pap, mam, Judith, Wouter en Henk, ik heb jullie interesse en het meeleven erg gewaardeerd. Henk, bedankt voor de vele uren die je hebt gespendeerd aan het verbeteren van mijn Engels. Bart, bedankt dat ik er met jou altijd over kon praten. Tijdens mijn observaties deed ik allerlei indrukken op, het was fijn om dat met jou te kunnen delen.



## **Abstract**

Success of organisations in the public sphere is a much studied research subject. That makes sense because, the success of societies depends on the work of these kinds of organisations. Many studies use a quantitative approach and try to measure performance. This study has another angle and focuses on the organisational characteristics underlying success. Using the work of Goodsell (2011), I have assessed the success of The Salvation Army, a nonprofit organisation in The Netherlands, by gathering data through observations, interviews and document analysis. The results show that Goodsell's framework helps to understand the success of The Salvation Army. Furthermore, all characteristics of success are to some extent present within organisation. Its mission plays a vital role, in particular. This has a strong positive influence on the other characteristics.





## Introduction

Societies can only function when organisations with a public task function properly. Imagine a world without properly functioning hospitals, schools, and police stations. Especially, in a world characterised by many changes, such as globalisation, the fiscal crisis or outflows of refugees, it is vital that organisations are able to respond to these changes. However, what does that entail? When is an organisation successful in a changing society? In this study, I will assess the success of The Salvation Army looking at characteristics within the organisation underlying this success.

Multiple studies have looked at the success of nonprofit organisations, and evaluated aspects of this success. Examples of key indicators of success: constructive relations with external parties (Edwards, 1999), a clear long-term direction with room to respond to changes (Atack, 1999), highly motivated employees (Sowa, Selden, & Sandfort, 2004), and accountability (Lee & Nowell, 2015) Despite the increasing number of studies that focus on nonprofit organisations, there is no clear framework that integrates multiple aspects of success. When looking at leading journals (Nonprofit Management and Leadership; Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly) and books that give an overview of the existing literature (Anheier, 2006; Lewis, 2006; Worth, 2013), it is notable that many factors of success are discussed, but they are not integrated.

Due to the absence of an integrated model on the success of nonprofit organisations, Goodsell's framework (2011) is chosen to assess the success of The Salvation Army. His work is based on the success of six American public agencies. The choice for this specific model is based on two arguments. First, the framework of Goodsell focuses on the mission mystique of an organisation. Success is defined as: *possessing an intensity of purpose, energized culture and capacity to change* (Goodsell, 2011, p. 6) This means that the success of an agency is determined by more than just performance. The framework looks at performance, institution's culture, legitimacy and so on. Therefore, by applying this framework to a case you will get a rich description of success. Second, research shows that mission valence is important to be successful as organisation, because it has a positive influence on job satisfaction, performance, and transformational leadership and the ability to innovate. (Caillier, 2014; McDonald, 2007; Wright & Pandey, 2011). Goodsell's framework also emphasizes the important role of the mission of an organisation and in that way it distinguishes itself from other frameworks, such as Moore (2000), Peters and Waterman (1982), and Talbot (2010). In the second chapter I will elaborate on the position of Goodsell in relation to other well-known authors.

### The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army (Dutch: Het Leger des Heils) is an international care organisation that focuses on marginalized people: drug users, homeless people, and citizens with almost no

prospects to find a job. They have a quite diverse target group: an eighteen-year-old female with a child and no place to stay can receive help, but also a sixty-year-old man with schizophrenia and a drug addiction. The people that receive help from The Salvation Army have in common that they fall out of the scope of regular care organisations, because of their multiple and complex problems.

The choice to include a model of governmental agencies is made, because The Salvation Army resembles many aspects of governmental agencies. First, its main source of income is the subsidy that it receives from the government (in 2016: 348,7 million, 88,7%) (Het Leger des Heils, 2017). Second, government policies have a major influence on their work, for example the decentralisation of health care. Because of this policy, The Salvation Army now needs to negotiate about budgets with local governments instead of the national government. Third, they serve a public goal, by providing shelter and helping vulnerable people to deal with their issues. They serve, where government and other organisations fall short and help is needed.

The Salvation Army is a successful nonprofit organisation, because it is one of the strongest brands in the charity sector in The Netherlands (Beerda, 2016). Besides that, the subsidy that it receives from the government has increased in the last couple of years (2011: 275,6 million, 2016: 348,7 million) (Het Leger des Heils, 2012; Het Leger des Heils, 2017), while the government has made budget cuts in the health care sector. Furthermore, the organisation has been active in The Netherlands for over hundred years.

### Relevance

The success of The Salvation Army is important for the society. A dysfunctional Salvation Army can lead to an increasing number of homeless people, more citizens with debts, and less help for people with multiple and complex problems. Hence, the success of The Salvation Army is of vital importance for the Dutch society. Studying the success of The Salvation Army or other organisations in the public sphere, helps to know how we must react and solve societal wicked problems.

The academic contribution of this research is threefold. First, the characteristics of Goodsell's framework are abstract, this study tries to understand the characteristics of success on a more concrete level. It gives more insight on what success means at the work force of a nonprofit organisation and how these characteristics can be translated into practice. Second, the work of Goodsell is never replicated. By doing so, the strengths of his work can be reaffirmed and the possible weaknesses become more clear. Third, it explores the applicability of the framework of Goodsell in a different context, namely a Dutch nonprofit organisation. The goal is to assess the transferability of Goodsell's theory to other organisations and countries. By using his framework, this study also has added value for the body of literature about the success of nonprofit organisations, because it is missing an

integrated model of success. Existing literature highlights only some characteristics of success, but does not combine them in one model.

A single case design was used to get a deep understanding of one organisation. The main source of data is observations, therefore, it is possible to say something about how things go within the organisation. This is combined with interviews and analysing documents. Hence, the data gives a comprehensive view on success, looking at different levels within the organisation.

This leads me to the following research question:

*How can we understand the success of The Salvation Army?*

In the following chapters I will subsequently discuss: theory, methodology, context and the results of my study.

## **Goodsell's Mission Mystique Framework**

The quality of governmental and nonprofit organisations is a popular research subject. Performance measurement has become increasingly important, partly due to the demands for accountability and transparency. This call originates from three observations: 1) society has changed and new challenges urge organisations to perform well; 2) they are underperforming because they are not flexible, efficient, effective or accountable; 3) this leads to a performance gap and implementing new (business) models will solve this (Noordegraaf, 2015). This line of reasoning has led to an increasing number of articles on performance management. Measuring performance will lead to improvement is the underlying thought (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Methods that claim to measure performance are for example: the balanced scorecard (Kaplan & Norton, 1996), key performance indicators, and benchmarks (Anheier, 2006).

However, this way of thinking is also criticized by many scholars, because they believe that results cannot be measured by performance indicators. It raises questions about the objectivity of performance indicators, the influence of organisations on these indicators, and the possibility to frame the results in a positive way (Moynihan, 2008; Noordegraaf, 2011). In the case of The Salvation Army, when is the organisation successful? If a homeless man can live in his own house without any care? Or when a homeless man lives on the streets without causing trouble? And to which extent is the organisation the cause of the reintegration of a homeless man in society?

The framework of Goodsell can be linked to the critics of performance management. He uses mostly qualitative data to find out what characteristics of successful organisations are.

He is not the only one choosing this approach, hence there are many other theories and frameworks that I could have used in this study. However, they are all (slightly) different than the framework of Goodsell. For example, Mark Moore's approach towards success of organisation is focused on public value and therefore it matches Goodsell's theory. However, the values, goals, and the mission of the organisation are defined by the manager and not by the mission of the organisation (Moore, 2013). Peters and Waterman, *In Search of Excellence*, use almost the same words to describe excellence as Goodsell does with success, but they use more quantitative indicators, such as return on capital and sales (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Another important study is the work of Rainey and Steinbauer (1999). Maybe this work is most comparable with the framework of Goodsell. However, they see five factors as most important: 1) relations with external authorities and stakeholders, 2) autonomy, 3) leadership, 4) professionalism, 5) and motivation among members, whereas Goodsell says that every characteristic is equal in value and it differs per organisation what their impact is. Because of these differences, I have chosen to use the framework of Goodsell: I look at the organisation as whole and not specifically at managers, I use a qualitative design, and my approach is open. However, the framework is not often used (citations Google Scholar: 54), there is just one published book review, and his work is not repeated. Hence, there is little to no critique on the framework that I can include in my research.

Goodsell (2011) developed a new model about the success of public agencies by studying six successful American organisations in-depth. He chose these six organisations because of their good reputation and their diverse missions. Hence, his approach was relatively haphazard: he contacted organisations that were successful according to his students to see what these organisations had in common. The six cases he studied are: U.S. National Park Service, U.S. National Weather Service, U.S. Centres for Disease and Control and Prevention, Department of Social Services, Virginia State Police, and U.S. Peace Corps. He performed extensive research through interviews, documentation analysis, and observations. This has led to nine characteristics of success. Goodsell (2011, p. 6) defines success as 'possessing an intensity of purpose, energized culture, and capacity to change', the *mission mystique* of an organisation.

System Requirements	Prime Qualities	Essential Elaborations	Temporal Aspects
<b>A Purposive Aura</b>	1. A central mission purpose permeates the agency	2. The societal need met by the mission is seen as urgent	3. Has a distinctive reputation based on achievement
<b>Internal Commitments</b>	4. Agency personnel are intrinsically motivated	5. Agency culture institutionalizes the belief system	6. Agency history is known and celebrated
<b>Sustaining Features</b>	7. Beliefs are open to contestation and opposition	8. Qualified policy autonomy to permit appropriate change	9. Agency renewal and learning are ongoing

Figure 1: The framework of Goodsell (2011)

A central mission gives the agency direction, captures its importance, and underlines its *raison d'être*. Therefore, it is the basis of creating a *mission mystique*. It is important that the mission is not only something that is written on paper, but that employees know, understand and convey the message. The mission of the agency must address an urgent societal need. Of course, which needs are seen as urgent changes over time, but to maintain the *mission mystique* of the organisation it is important to convince external parties of the indispensable nature of the agency. Otherwise the right of existence of the organisation can be questioned. Furthermore, a distinctive reputation and record is essential, because people who matter - clients, political allies and stakeholders – must be convinced that the organisation is successful in fulfilling its task. As new organisations have had no time to build a distinctive reputation and record, they are automatically excluded. The best way to obtain a good reputation is an existing record of achievement. To achieve this employees need to be intrinsically motivated. Employees who are intrinsically motivated seek enjoyment, satisfaction of curiosity, or personal challenge in the work. They perform better, therefore, they contribute to the *mission mystique* of an organisation. Besides that, the history of an organisation is vital for forming an identity. Stories about past events influence who we are. These stories do not have to be completely true and are often positively framed, but that it is not necessarily a bad thing, because it is about the meaning that people give to these narratives and not about the facts. The last three characteristics are about the sustainability of the *mission mystique*. To maintain success, it is necessary to create room for contestation and opposition of existing work methods and beliefs. Otherwise, success can lead to uncritical group thinking and to an assumed monopoly of truth. An organisation needs room to develop policies and take on new activities. The work of public agencies is often supervised

by governmental organisations, which can curtail that autonomy. Therefore, it is necessary to find a balance between policy autonomy and meeting government's rules. Ongoing organisational renewal is essential to keep aims and practices up with the quickly changing society. This means that an organisation must be able to detect problems and solve them and to preserve these changes by embedding them in the culture (Goodsell, 2011).

The last characteristic needs some more explanation, because it is a broad and complex concept: agency culture. The culture of the organisation reflects each of the characteristics, but it also influences them. The ideal *mission mystique* culture reinforces the intrinsic motivation of employees, creates support for the mission, but it also reflects on the shortcomings of the agency and tries to enhance the quality (Goodsell, 2011). Many scholars have written about culture (see f.e. Schein, 1990; Martin, 1992 and more recent Ashkanasy, Wilderom, & Peterson, 2011; Schneider & Barbera, 2014) I will not give a complete overview of their work, because this falls outside the scope of my research. The definition of culture that I use in my study is the following:

*'Culture can now be defined as (a) a pattern of basic assumptions, (b) invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, (c) as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, (d) that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore (e) is to be taught to new members as the (f) correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.'* (Schein, 1990)

This means that culture is something that is widely supported on all levels within a group. What this culture, this pattern of basic assumptions, is can be distinguish by looking at observable artefacts, values, norms and rules of behaviour. These artefacts can often be easily observed, however, it is the deeper meaning of these observations that lead to the culture of the group (Schein, 2010). Besides that, culture is something that is present on all levels within the group. This means that it is necessary to interview or observe employees as well as managers and directors. A good way to learn anything about the culture is to submit oneself in the daily activities of members of the organisation, because you experience it yourself (Parker, 2000). The definition focuses on groups instead of organisations. This means that in one organisation, there can be multiple groups and therefore various cultures. In my case, it is possible that there is more than one dominant culture present within The Salvation Army.

## **A qualitative design**

The research question of this study was addressed with a qualitative design. The advantage of qualitative research is that it provides in-depth information (Boeije, 2010; Silverman, 2011). The goal is to get a better understanding of the research subject (Denzin & Lincoln, 2013), in this case, the characteristics of the success of The Salvation Army. Besides the qualitative

design of this study, the choice is made to intensively study one case, albeit in three locations, because it gives in-depth information (Swanborn, 2010; Yin, 2009). The Salvation Army was willing to let me do my research and I was not excluded from facilities, conversations or individuals. Together with my supervisor from the organisation, I decided which facilities I would visit and who I would interview. My suggestions were taken seriously, for example I suggested that I wanted to interview a retired employee and this was arranged. The one meeting where I was not allowed to go in, was a gathering of employees who would talk about their personal lives and their work-life balance. That meeting was too personal.

A range of methods is used to answer the research question: observations, interviews, and documents. These three methods are common in qualitative fieldwork, because it provides a comprehensive view of the research subject (Yanow, Ybema, & van Hulst, 2012). By combining multiple methods, data can be triangulated. This means that the data of one method can be compared to another (Boeije, 2010; Bryman, 2012; Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2010; Silverman, 2011). The use of different methods creates a richer view on the research subject, because the methods complement each other.

### Observations

One of the strengths of observations is that the data can be naturally occurring: the data exists independently of the researcher (Silverman, 2011; Smith, 2001). It makes it possible to understand the social situation by looking at three aspects: place, actors, and activities (Spradley, 1980). As researcher, I got access to different locations of The Salvation Army, interacted with clients, volunteers and employees, and participated in activities. By doing so I investigated how places, actors, and activities create the success of The Salvation Army.

I have not only observed, but also actively participated in the work that The Salvation Army does. There were multiple reasons for this active participation. First, the work of The Salvation Army is partly voluntary, so I could easily participate by pouring coffee, talking to clients or giving soup to homeless people. Second, it felt unpleasant to do nothing, while other voluntary workers and employees are helping and taking care of clients. Third, it was easier to get accepted by clients and employees when I did the same work as volunteers and tried to help where I could.

An important aspect of observations is writing down what you see. These field notes will be data the researcher is going to analyse. By writing about events, persons, and places, you turn it from a passing account to something set on paper that you can reread, consult, and analyse (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2001). Because field notes are reconstructions of situations, they are selective by definition. They never provide a complete view on the situation (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2001). To ascertain that the notes are as complete as possible, I took jotted notes during the day and reserved at least one hour per day to make a more extensive

report. Besides that, one day a week was used to improve this report and to start with analysing the data.

<b>Region</b>	<b>Facility</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Number of hours observing</b>
<b>Flevoland</b>	Sheltered housing	13-16 March	24
	Day and night care	20-23 March	24
	Social workplace	27-30 March	26
<b>Midden Nederland</b>	Sheltered housing	3-6 April	24
	Day and night care	10-12 April	18
<b>Amsterdam</b>	Sheltered housing	1-4 May	24
	Social workplace	8-11 May	12
	Neighbourhood centre	15-18 May	12
<b>Total</b>			<b>164</b>

*Figure 2: Overview observed facilities*

### Interviews

There are distinct advantages of combining observations with interviews. The main advantage is that a researcher's interpretation of what respondents say in the interview can offer a better understanding of observations and observations can provide the information to pose the right questions in interviews (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995).

A distinction must be made between two kinds of interviews: formal and informal. Informal are the conversations that you have during the observations in a natural occurring setting. Formal interviews are the conversations that are scheduled and are held in a more artificial setting. In my study the selection of respondents of informal interviews differs from the formal interviews. The first type did not have a selection process but is based on who I met during the observations. The respondents of the formal interviews are selected by a combination of selection by gatekeepers and myself (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). I have indicated which people I wanted to meet and my contact person of The Salvation Army also made some suggestions. Because I want to interview a diverse group of people, I asked if I could talk to directors and managers on national level and regional level with various responsibilities. Another difference between formal and informal interviewing is the way that they are recorded. I have made the choice to not record informal interviews on tape. Due to safety reasons, I could not bring my recorder everywhere I went. Hence, I should have walked to the safe to get my recorder, every time I had an informal conversation. This was not feasible, because clients would probably walk away and my conversations with employees were often not planned and interrupted by events. During the informal



interviews, I took jotted notes and later I have made an extensive report of the interview. Formal interviews are recorded on tape and transcribed. The approach of my interviews was open. I asked one opening question: What makes The Salvation Army a successful organisation? By using open-interviewing I gave respondent room to come up with their own reasons, instead of focusing on the characteristics named by Goodsell (2011).

<b>Position</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
General director on national level	Two
Human Resource director on national level	One
Policy employee/advisor on national level	Two
General director one regional level	Two
Financial director on regional level	One
Human Resource manager on regional level	One

*Figure 3: Positions of respondents*

### Documents

The last source of data is documents. The advantage of documents is that they are not created for this study, but that they already existed (Silverman, 2011). Besides that, they give useful information about the organisation, such as the structure of the organisation (Yin, 2009). The focus was on formal, already existing documents instead of informal documents, such as diaries, because they are more helpful to a meso-level study. A list of documents that were included can be found in Appendix 1.

### Data analysis

The data collected through observations and interviews was analysed using Nvivo. A process of open, axial and selective coding was used to distinguish important and recurrent themes in the data. Open coding explores the data and divides it in categories. All data was used in this phase of the process. The second stage, axial coding, was used to make connections between categories. The last stage is selective coding, as researcher you make connections between the categories (Boeije, 2010). As is customary in such processes, during the process is I have, in addition, gone back and forth between the different stages of the analysing process. It is an iterative process (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Especially the process of analysing the data gathered through observations is less simplistic. I analysed this data during the observations by writing a summary of each day and try to think of questions I got or answers I needed.

## **Ethics**

Social research in general faces some ethical issues, especially when people are involved (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). As a researcher, you must find a balance between the benefits of your research for participants and the harm that it can do them. In this paragraph, I explain the steps that I took to protect my respondents. This is important in every research that includes people, but in my case, it is even more important, because some of my participants are vulnerable people (Boeije, 2010).

### Informed consent

One of the most important ethical guidelines in social research is informed consent. It is essential that the participant understands the information that he receives, that he comprehends the possible risks and benefits of the research, and that he agrees with participating in the research (Boeije, 2010). In my research, I have tried to make sure that my participants give their informed consent. However, it was difficult to fully inform my participants, because they often did not fully understand what I did.

I have tried to explain my research by saying that it was about the success of The Salvation Army and that I looked at factors that make it successful. Often, I would give an example, like the motivation of employees. Besides that, I see *informed consent* as an iterative process. This means that respondents, can pose their questions about my research at any time, and that they can withdraw their cooperation at every phase. I always asked for their permission to use their story and I told them that I would not use their name. Furthermore, I explained my respondents that I was interested in The Salvation Army as organisation, not clients or employees individually.

### Benefit versus harm

Because it is difficult to get informed consent of every participant due to the complexity of their problems, I have used another concept to handle the ethical issues of this research. I have considered the benefits of my research for participants and how it could harm them. In that way, I wanted to increase the benefits and prevent harm-doing. During my observations, I helped participants when I could. This means that I performed some tasks, such as assist clients by finding a house. Besides that, I want my study to be useful for participants. Therefore, I will write a Dutch summary of my research, with practical recommendations.

### Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity

To preserve the privacy of the clients, employees and stakeholders of The Salvation Army I only observed situations where I was granted permission by my supervisor of The Salvation Army. I also told everyone what my role was, so that they could ask questions and could

decide to which extent they want to contribute to my research (Sieber & Tolich, 2013). I have anonymized the data, which entails that the data cannot be linked to individual names.

### Reflection on my own role

The Christian identity of The Salvation Army has an influence on the work that they do. I call myself a Christian too. In the first meeting with someone of the organisation it was confirmed that because of my Christian background they were more open to my research. Besides that, I can understand some observations better and employees might talk more freely because of our shared beliefs. I told them that I was a Christian too, when the subject came up. A possible negative consequence of this is my familiarity with Christian traditions and teachings, hence observations that I see as normal could be notable for another researcher.

Another factor that could have influenced the data is my educational background. Almost every employee of The Salvation Army has a degree in something like Social Work or Psychology. When I told people what I studied, they often reacted surprised. In combination with my lack of knowledge concerning social work, it could have made me an outsider. However, multiple times I received compliments about the way I interacted with clients. They said it was similar to what they would have done.

## **The Salvation Army**

William Booth, an English vicar, founded The Christian Mission in 1865. The name was changed to The Salvation Army in 1887. His goal was to tell people about the Bible, but he noticed that people in poor areas of London had other things to worry about. William changed his way of working and started to take care of people by handing out food (Ringelberg, 2005). This combination is still one of the characteristics of The Salvation Army: taking care of people and telling them about God.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 1887, the first meeting of The Salvation Army in The Netherlands was organised. The Salvation Army has fulfilled an important role in Dutch society. They have survived many changes in the healthcare sector and have been doing their work for more than 150 years (for a complete overview of the history see for example: Bollinger, 2013; Ringelberg, 2005).

The Christian identity of The Salvation Army plays an important role in everything they do. It is explicitly mentioned in annual reports, biblical texts are written on the walls of buildings, and there are multiple reports written about the function of this identity. New employees need to sign a statement that underlines this Christian identity. Although the organisation has a strong Christian identity, clients are helped independently of their personal beliefs.

## Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care

The structure of the organisation is a much-debated subject. Throughout the years the official structure has changed often. Bollinger gives a complete overview of these changes and links them to societal and political changes (2013). The Salvation Army consists of multiple organisations. These can be divided in a church and various foundations. In the beginning, there was just one organisation, but over time they split up. One important reason was the fact that to receive funding of the government it was desirable to be a foundation and not a church (Bollinger, 2013). There are now eight foundations and they all have a different task. The main foundations are: the religious denomination, welfare and health care, youth care and probation services, reshare, and fundraising.

My research will focus on the Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care. It is the largest body within the organisation and their tasks are similar to regular care organisations. They want to take care of people that need help, for example: drug users, homeless people, and citizens with almost no prospects to find a job. In 2016 they helped 56.461 people (Het Leger des Heils, 2017). What this aid entails differs, because their target group is quite diverse. A twenty-year-old homeless male with an addiction and who receives no benefits can seek the help of the Army, but it can also be an aggressive eighty-year-old woman with mental health issues and no social network. These people have in common that they often have multiple and complex problems and therefore fall out the scope of regular healthcare organisations.

The Foundation Salvation Army Health and Welfare is divided in twelve regions and 256 locations. This study was focused on three regions: Amsterdam, Flevoland and Midden-Nederland. With this selection, I try to make sure that my locations are a good reflection of the organisation and grasp the diversity of the various regions. Amsterdam is by far the largest region, and besides that it is a combination of urban and rural areas. Therefore, the different contexts wherein the Foundation participates are present in this research.

## **Illustrations of success<sup>1</sup>**

### Mission purpose

*A resident calls me. He wants to tell me what happened to him and why he is here. He says that everything went well until he used some drugs at a party. He did not know he was schizophrenic, but using the drugs triggered something. After some tests, they found out that he was schizophrenic. From that moment on, it went from bad to worse. He lost his job, his house, and lived on the street for a couple of years. He is doing well now. He is*

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<sup>1</sup> At the end of each paragraph there is a table with a few illustrations of the characteristic. I numbered all facilities (f.e. F.1A) and respondents (f.e. R.1), hence I can refer to them without naming them. Documents are also numbered (f.e. D.1).

*living at this facility for a few years and the medicines are working. He says: 'if you know me, I am often the same person, but sometimes I am not.'* (F.1A)

The Salvation Army is an international organisation that has formulated its mission on an international level. Its official mission is: *into the world of the hurting, broken, lonely, dispossessed and lost, reaching them in love by all means* (The Salvation Army, 2017). This mission is widely supported within the organisation. I noticed that when I talked to employees about why they wanted to work here. Most of them would say something similar to 'I want to take care of people living on the margins of society'. Respondents are however not familiar with the exact wording of the mission. Besides that, the mission is present in almost every document I analysed (D.1-D.13) Examples such as the one above, where The Salvation Army takes care of the margins of society, are numerous. The people that I met were always living on the disenfranchised. Depending on the target group of the facility, it can be a psychotic drug user, someone with a criminal record, or a person that lost his job because of a burnout and cannot regain his previous life. The last part of the mission, by all means, is shown by a mentality that never excludes anyone. I observed situations wherein a citizen walked in at five p.m. desperately needing a bed for a night and he got one, or where someone received help from The Salvation Army for over eight years and there was no perspective that she would get better, but they would not let her down and were often discussing how they could help her.

However, this mission does not stand on its own. It is undeniably linked to the Christian identity of the organisation. Every single employee that I spoke to calls themselves a Christian and they all signed a statement (Appendix 2) that entails the basics of the Christian faith. They share the same faith, identity, and values. This reinforces the mission, because it is something that employees understand and underline from their deepest convictions. According to the Bible, Jesus took care of the broken and lost, and employees want to follow his example. There was one exception: a woman was already working for The Salvation Army when signing this statement became mandatory. She told me that she does not believe in God and therefore she could not sign the statement. It is unknown when signing this statement was introduced, even people who worked at the organisation for over thirty years had to sign the statement. The Christian identity was often discussed at every facility I went to, and in the interviews it was a topic that always popped up. Furthermore, there was room for prayer before starting a meal and Christian holidays, such as Easter and Good Friday, were celebrated. Besides that, the Christian identity can be seen in the stage setting of the buildings. A phrase I saw hanging on the walls in multiple facilities was: 'serving God is serving people, serving people is serving God', and also: 'an empty stomach does not have ears', meaning that telling people about God is not efficient when they are hungry. Hence, the other often heard expression: 'soup, soap and salvation'. This is a statement of William Booth and indicates the priority of The Salvation Army. First, someone gets something to eat,

second, he can get a shower, and then when he is less vulnerable they will talk about the Bible. A comment must be made, that respondents in the interview made clear that their goal is not to convert someone. That would not be right, because the money they receive from the government is for helping people and not converting them, furthermore, their target group is often lost and lonely, and you do not want to abuse your power as caretaker by converting them.

### **Illustrations of the mission purpose**

'Into the world of the hurting, broken, lonely, dispossessed and lost, reaching them in love by all means.'

'Soup, soap, salvation' (D.13)

'Taking care of people living at the margins of society.' (f.e. 2A)

'We are there to prevent total deprivation and loss of people, it's also the mission to bring people to their destination, people who matter.' (R.1)

### **Urgent societal need**

*'When we visit clients of us, who live in their own house, they sometimes do not open the door. Other care organisation would probably give up on someone at that particular moment, because you do not get financial compensation for the time you are standing outside the house. We do not give up. We try to make contact through the mailbox, because our focus is taking care of the most complex individuals. To be honest, we can do this because we have more financial leeway than regular organisations, due to the money we receive from donations.'* (R.2)

The urgent societal need of the organisation is created by focusing solely on the margins of society: the citizens with multiple and complex problems, such as drug addiction in combination with a mild mental disorder and psychiatric issues. The choice to take care of this group is deliberate, because in that way The Salvation Army can distinguish itself from other care organisations.

*'I think we successfully reach out to the lost and marginalised of our society. We try to help them, and I think we succeed. On the other hand, there are still disregarded people and the margins of society will always exist. Our choice to focus on this group is one of the success' factors.'* (R.1)

During the weeks that I observed the workings of The Salvation Army, multiple examples of this focus on the most complex cases became visible. I met a person that survived two assassinations, undocumented asylum seekers, and people with severe drug addiction and schizophrenia. Hence, The Salvation Army does not only say that they will take care of the

outcasts, they really do. Besides that, they never give up on somebody. The Salvation Army will continue to try to take care of this person. For example, I met one woman who received help of The Salvation Army for more than eight years. She worked at a facility for people with no real prospects of finding a job and was functioning very well. However, she had some disabilities that made it almost impossible to find a real job for her. Hence, her supervisors extensively talked about how she could take the next step. Even after eight years, they would not stop helping her.

#### **Illustrations of the urgent societal need**

'We never give up' (f.e. F.1C)

'There is no care arrangement for a certain group of people, and we take care of them.' (R.8)

'We are focusing on a specific target group of people with multiple and complex problems. Regular care can be given by other people too.' (R.4)

'We have chosen to permanently being a party that helps people without a helper.' (D.2)

#### Distinctive reputation and record

The Salvation Army was founded in 1865 in Great Britain. It has existed for a relatively long time and therefore it has had the time to build a distinctive reputation (Goodsell, 2011). In the interviews it became clear that its reputation is of vital importance for the organisation. Multiple respondents said that they think that the organisation must be reliable, or chances are that they will lose the *raison d'être*. To maintain this reputation they invest in research, for example about disoriented people living on the street, they do not ask for more money of the government, and one of their objectives is to explain to (local) government which problems their target group is facing and how these can be solved. Besides that, they try to be a reliable partner for the local government by trying to find a solution for every complex problem, for example finding shelter for refugees during the months that thousands of people came to The Netherlands.

Another aspect of their reputation is their visibility. Officers wear uniforms, employees have a jacket with the red shield of The Salvation Army, and there is a flag. These symbols ensure that the organisation is recognisable. Employees think this helps them to do their work. For example, when they go to a hospital with a client and this client does not behave well, they do not have to explain the client's behaviour because of their uniform.

*I worked in Overijssel at the time of the major fireworks disaster which destroyed an entire district in the Dutch town of Enschede on 13 May 2000. My manager wanted to help and just walked through the crush barriers, wearing his uniform. He said: 'I am with The Salvation Army, I want to help, the 'soupbus' is on its way and we can take care of people'. They did not ask for his badge or something and just let him through. (R.5)*

The example above shows the power of the uniform but also says something about how external parties see The Salvation Army. Without asking, they let him through and accepted his assistance.

### Dutch citizens

*'Charities that focus on improving the situation in our own country are more popular among Dutch citizens. Hence, The Salvation Army (...) does have a strong reputation.'*  
(Beerda, 2016)

According to the study cited above The Salvation Army is ranked at the ninth place of strongest brands (out of 74) of the charity sector in The Netherlands. When looking at the charities in the healthcare branch, they are at the third place (out of fifteen). Furthermore, compared to other Christian organisations, The Salvation Army is the strongest brand. This reputation seems to be quite stable, because the study has been carried out every two years since 2000, and the rank of The Salvation Army is always around the tenth place (resp: tenth, thirteenth, eighth, ninth).

However, it is necessary to note that most Dutch citizens have relatively limited knowledge of the work that the organisation does. They see it as an example of charitable work that takes care of lost and broken people within society (Bollinger, 2013). Dutch citizens often do not know that it is a professional organisation with more than six thousand paid employees (Het Leger des Heils, 2017).

### Stakeholders

Stakeholders<sup>2</sup> review the cooperation with The Salvation Army as positive. They give a 7,7 on a scale of one to ten (Stichting Leger des Heils Welzijns- en Gezondheidszorg, 2014). Four aspects of cooperation were part of the survey: provision of information, receptiveness, agreements and collaboration, and experiences and treatment. Stakeholders are especially satisfied by how employees interact with them. They see employees as friendly, reliable, experts, and engaged. However, there is also room for improvement. The Salvation Army should communicate better about what they do, especially when there are changes in the staff it seems to be difficult to keep stakeholders informed.

### Clients

*'They help me but I would rather not be here.'* (f.e. F.1B)

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<sup>2</sup> The report does not specify which stakeholders are included. It only states that every region has approached eighteen stakeholders. A variety of stakeholders, various positions within organizations and various fields of work have been chosen to get a complete overview. One must think of local government and other care organisations.



This is probably the most used sentence by clients when they are asked what they think of The Salvation Army. Clients are in general positive about the organisation. They would prefer to be less dependent, but they do not have a choice and it is better than living on the streets, or being home alone. Clients who have their own house say that The Salvation Army enables them to enter the labour market. Another often heard opinion is that you can be yourself. You do not have to pretend to be something you are not. Jewish people can participate in Bible studies, a client with ADHD works in a team without taking his medicine, and a resident can collect as many clothes as he wants because due to his psychiatric disorder, he has multiple personalities and they need their own clothes. Two clients that I spoke to (on a total of around forty clients) at the same time were less positive. They said that many clients needed more support for example by applying for social security, but employees did not have the time to help them. I tried to continue the conversation by asking what the task of The Salvation Army is and when people are responsible for their own actions, but they did not respond to that question and kept repeating their point of view.

#### The ability to cover up scandals

*Flex Worker3 (FW): Did you hear what happened at facility X?*

*Employee (E): No, I heard something about a team meeting, but not exactly.*

*FW: One of the employees sold drugs to the residents of the facility. He was a drugs dealer for a few years.*

*E: (Surprised) What?*

*FW: You did not know this? But he is a colleague of yours.*

*E: No, I did not know. We heard that something was going on, because we sometimes work together with this facility. Where did you hear this?*

*FW: At a facility for young mothers and their children. I am surprised that they did know this and you guys did not.*

*E: Yes, me too.*

*(F.3A)*

Another explanation of the good reputation of The Salvation Army can be found in the ability of the organisation to solve problems and scandals within the organisation. External actors, like the media, are often not informed in case of incidents, even employees do not always know what happened. As a researcher, it is difficult to determine how many scandals there have been and how they have been solved, because only a few people within the organisation are involved and it is of course not a much discussed topic. It took me several weeks to find out that there were any scandals or incidents. The following conversation between an employee and a flex worker is a good example of the ability of the organisation

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<sup>3</sup> Flex workers do not have a tenure and work at different facilities of The Salvation Army. They work when employees are sick, on holiday, or when there are too little employees. The percentage of flex workers is the same in every region, because it is an official policy.

to keep things quiet. In this case the organisation was successful in keeping this story out of the press. An elaborate search on the internet did not give any results.

### **Illustrations of a distinctive reputation and record**

'Being reliable is essential.' (R.2 & R.3)

'The Salvation Army is seen as a voluntary organisation, not as a professional care organisation. Hence, sometimes we have trouble finding professionals, such as cooks, chauffeurs.' (R.5)

'Even the alderman of D66 appreciates our work.' (D66 is a Dutch progressive political party and against any expression of religion within the public sphere.) (F.2B)

'Stakeholders rate the reliability of employees with an eight on a scale from one to ten.' (D.7)

### Intrinsically motivated personnel

*While doing the dishes, I talked to an employee. She tells me that she always wanted to work for The Salvation Army. Her father works here too, at another facility. As a young girl, she heard him talk about his work and she became enthusiastic. In the middle of our conversation a resident walks by and says: I think you should look at your car. He immediately leaves the room. The employee stays calm and says to me: I will look at my car, it is my parents' car, so I hope that nothing is wrong. After fifteen minutes, she comes back and tells me that something black was spread all over the front of her car and she likes to know who did this, but probably will never find that out. She tells me that she likes the target group, because the group is difficult and they have complex problems, but you can really help them. Besides that, she likes her colleagues, the atmosphere is very good. She always loves going to work. Another resident enters the room and asks her what education she had. She tells him that she went to community college. He starts to laugh and says: then you are stupid. She responds with: no, I am not, I am not a really good student who learns fast, but I am not stupid. This just suited me better. The resident keeps laughing and telling her that she is stupid. I feel for her, but I do not want to interfere. The resident walks away without saying anything. I ask her what she thinks of this. She answers: this is just part of the deal. If you are not able to ignore this stuff, you cannot work here. (F.2B)*

The example above illustrates the challenges that employees face in their work and the way they react. The work they do is often complex and difficult. As one employee told me: 'I have known most clients for over five years, so I have some sort of relation with them. However, you cannot trust them, because they will disappoint you time after time. Due to their addiction or disease they are lying to you to get what they want.'

Despite this, employees are still motivated to help their clients. My observations are confirmed by the employee satisfaction survey (Stichting Leger des Heils Welzijn- en

Gezondheidszorg, Jeugdzorg en Reclassering, 2016). Employees enjoy doing their work (96 percent); are inspired by their work (93 percent); and are proud of the work they do (96 percent). When I asked employees why they liked their work, their answer often was that they find the target group interesting and challenging. They love to work with them because they feel that they can help them. As one of the HR-manager mentioned, employees of The Salvation Army are often so-called *rescuers* (Dutch: Redders). They want to help and save people, sometimes at the expense of their own needs (Karpman, 1968). Besides this, the Christian identity also plays an important role in the motivation. They want to help people, because Jesus did that, or because they want to practice their beliefs. Ninety percent of the employees feels inspired by the Christian faith to go that extra mile for the benefit of the clients (Stichting Leger des Heils Welzijn- en Gezondheidszorg, Jeugdzorg en Reclassering, 2016).

### Illustrations of intrinsically motivated personnel

'I enjoy doing my work.' (R.2)

'In general, the people who you work with do their work with passion and are enjoying it, that makes my work more fun.' (R. 7)

'I love the target group and my team. That is why I always love to go to work.' (F.2A)

### Agency culture

The definition of culture and the literature described in chapter two helped me to observe artefacts of culture and give it a deeper meaning. I looked at differences and similarities between the facilities. Besides that, I focused on artefacts that were visible at the work force as well as in the interviews with managers and directors, because it is important that the culture is present in all levels of the group. Similarities between facilities were present despite differences in leadership style of managers. Some managers influenced the atmosphere at the workforce, while others were less visible. The first group had strong opinions about how things should be arranged and tried to prescribe this to employees. Where other managers gave employees room to make their own decisions. Except this difference in managerial style, I did not see major deviation between facilities. Although, differences between regions were expected by managers and employees that I spoke with. The fact that the culture is the same at various facilities can be caused by national policies and events, using the same computer systems, and wearing the same clothes.

First, I noticed that employees and clients were giving many compliments to each other, but they also complimented me often. Sometimes just small compliments: 'I like your bag', other times more focused on the work they do: 'You did a very good job by helping that client seeking for a house. I think you easily connect with the clients, because you do not judge them.' These compliments are part of a positive atmosphere that is present in most of the facilities. There was only one facility where I thought the atmosphere was more negative.

This positive culture contributes to the mission of the organisation, because it is important to approach the clients in that way. This helps them to recover and it boosts their confidence, so that they can make improvements.

However, these observations contradict the opinion of some of the respondents, who said multiple times that they think there is no room for compliments. They said that there was an atmosphere where if employees were successful you would not give a compliment, because they were just doing their job. This interview made me reconsider the previous statements. I concluded that it is more common to compliment people that are new, such as interns, flex-workers and myself. Employees do not compliment each other often, maybe because if they do something good, it is just seen as their work.

Secondly, I experienced The Salvation Army as an open organisation. Employees are approachable. They welcomed me, even when they did not know that I was coming to observe (there had been a mix-up at one of the shelters). I felt part of the team even though it was just for a week. When I arrived for the first time at a facility, I often did not know where to go, and I asked employees to help me. This open and positive atmosphere is important for the organisation, because when reaching out to the lost and lonely people in society, it helps to be open and welcoming. It makes it easier to connect with them. The following example illustrates this:

*P: How did you encounter The Salvation Army?*

*C (Client): I was walking with my dog in the neighbourhood. I needed to post a letter, so I walked to the mailbox. While standing there, a woman began to speak to me. We talked a little and she invited me to come to the neighbourhood centre. So, a few days later I walked by, I saw she was in there, and now I am here a few days a week. (F.3C)*

Besides the open atmosphere, the culture of The Salvation Army is characterized by a 'do first then think' mentality. This is something that I saw in my observations (see example below), but was also mentioned by multiple employees and managers. This mentality makes it possible to always help someone when they are in need. Of course, just as with every other care organisation in The Netherlands, there is a waiting list if people want to participate in a longer care program, but when a citizen desperately needs a bed for a night, it is always possible. The example below is an illustration of that.

*Around 5 p.m. two women walked in. They introduce themselves as people who do 'outreach' work. This means that they are walking down the streets to find homeless people who need help. They ask if one man can stay here for the night. They found him in a park, he is a well-known homeless man, who has lived in the streets for more than twenty years, and usually he does not want to receive any help. However, he is sick and could really use a good night sleep. The employees of The Salvation Army do not hesitate*

*and say that he can stay here. They will make a bed for him. Five minutes later the man enters the building and directly walks to his room to sleep. (F.2B)*

Another aspect of the culture of The Salvation Army is the fact that people tell many stories. These stories are about the history of the organisation, but also about events that just happened. This culture of telling stories is stimulated by the information that is transferred at the end and beginning of each shift. They tell each other what has happened during the shift to make sure that their colleagues are up-to-date. Important information is transferred during multiple sessions, until everyone knows the story. Because stories are told, employees are often well-informed. In short, storytelling helps employees do their work.

The last aspect entails the furnishing of the buildings. Every facility I went to was sparsely furnished. The things that were needed were present, and they made it more domestic using paintings, flowers and by putting coffee-pots and tea-pots on the table. However, there was no frivolous luxury. This shows how modest the organisation is, but it can also be connected to the mission. Because the focus of The Salvation Army is on the margins of society, clients often lived on the streets, do not have much stuff, and are not used to luxury. The furnishing of the buildings corresponds with this and therefore clients feel more at home. Furthermore, it would not be practical to buy expensive stuff, because multiple times during my observations things, such as a thermos for coffee, were stolen out of the kitchen or living room. Lastly, the modesty of the organization can be linked to the Christian identity, in some policy documents this connection is made explicit (f.e. D.10).

### **Illustrations of agency culture**

'All of us are doing our best, that is just normal.' (R.7)

'You are a good intern' (F.3A)

'When you go to another facility, you will notice that the furnishing is the same everywhere.' (F.1A)

'The Christian identity is visible in the choice for certain materials: modesty and sustainability are important words. (D.10)

The resident has a time-out. I was not there when it happened, but I hear all about in conversations during work and the transfer of information at the beginning and end of each shift (F.3A).

'Despite existing rules or written policy, people just go, six thousand professionals who want to take care of that client, the deprived person. Even if it is against the rules.' (R.1)

'I always say: we are part of the neighbourhood. You are welcome! Our doors are open, you are welcome, we would love for you to visit. (R.4)'

### History of the organisation

*October fourth 1992, an airplane of an Israeli airline loses two engines while flying above Amsterdam. While preparing for an emergency landing, it crashes into two flats in Amsterdam. Forty-three people die, including the crew and the only passenger. We, as The Salvation Army, were immediately ready to help. We went there to provide soup and bread to citizens, policemen, firefighters, just about everyone who was there. I think that is one of the strengths of The Salvation Army: being there and help people in every way we can. (R.5)*

The history of the organisation is ubiquitous, in stories, documents, and buildings. The example above is one of the stories about the history of the organisation, but there are plenty more. Majoor Bosshardt was (and is) the face of the organisation in the Netherlands. She died ten years ago, but when you ask a Dutch citizen what The Salvation Army is, they will probably mention her. Her picture is present in almost all facilities and was mentioned often in conversations. Besides that, most employees also know who the founder of the organisation is, William Booth, and stories about his work with the poorest people in England. A well-known quote of his, 'An empty stomach does not have ears', is a phrase that was used in various conversations I had, but it is also present in the buildings. The quote is for example written on the wall of the cafeteria of the headquarters.

### **Illustrations of the history of the organisation**

*'During World War II we opened our doors for the first time. We did not have beds, but I have seen pictures of people just hanging against some robes.' (R.1)*

*Old pictures are hanging on the wall and a quote of William Booth is written down on the wall. (F.1C)*

*'An empty stomach does not have ears, said William Booth.' (D.1)*

### Contestation of beliefs

*(FW): Why do we only have fifteen minutes to transfer important information at the end and beginning of each shift?*

*Employee (E): Before we had thirty minutes, but we changed that because we thought it was too long.*

*FW: I worked at another care organisation and there we did have thirty minutes. I think fifteen minutes is too short to really know what happened in the earlier shift.*

*E: I disagree. Fifteen minutes is enough. We discussed everything, did we not?*

*FW: No, I do not think so. I asked a question about the history of a client, because I am here as flex worker and do not know everything, but there was no time to discuss my question.*

*E: I think your question can be answered during our shift, and not during the fifteen minutes we transfer information. Then we just discuss the important things that happened that day.*

*FW: But having time to discuss these questions is equally important I think.*

*E: I do not agree. If you want to change something, you must speak with the manager.*

*(F.1A)*

On the work floor, there are many conversations about clients and the way things go. Employees talk about what the best treatment is for clients: is their medication working well? Furthermore, they talk about their existing work methods: is it possible to create a more peaceful atmosphere during dinner or why do we not give methadone after eight p.m.? However, these conversations often do not lead to change, see for example the situation described above. I noticed that it is difficult especially for interns and flex workers to contest existing work methods. Their input could however be valuable, because they approach it from a clean slate or can compare it to other care organisations.

During my observations, I also witnessed a few ethical discussions: Do we send a client to the hospital when there is trial of a new and expensive medicine, when we know that he is using drugs and drinking alcohol? Do we take care of someone who has survived two murder attempts, when it will endanger other clients and employees? The answer to these question is often yes. But as we look for example at the discussion about the man who survived two murder attempts, it is notable that employees can give their opinion, but the ultimate decision is made by the manager of the facility. In that way, The Salvation Army is a hierarchical organisation. It also shows that the wishes of individual clients are important, because they can attempt a trial of a new medicine, independent of the objections of employees.

When you want to change something, the best place to be is the team meeting. Most of the time it is held once every two or three weeks. Discussed topics were for example the trouble that clients caused in the neighbourhood and the implementation of the new long-term strategic plan. The influence of employees on the existing policies and work methods differ between each facility. This is caused by various factors, but one was clearly present in my data, and that is the leadership style of the manager. Some managers were more open to ideas of employees, while others were less open.

Another type of participation is the residents' meeting of sheltered housing facilities. Although the interviewees saw these meetings as important and useful, in practice they are not successful. During my observations, I never participated in a residents' meeting and conversations with employees confirmed that there are at most two residents present at a meeting. Even though employees try to persuade residents to come by putting up posters

and talk about the meeting a few days in advance, most residents do not come to these meetings.

#### Illustrations of contestation of beliefs

'I am just an intern, they do not listen to me.' (F.2A)

Officially the man must leave, because the rule is that you can stay here seven nights a month. However, in about eight days he will get his own house. Do we let him stay or does he have to sleep on the streets? Two employees and one intern discuss this situation, they decide that he can stay until he gets the key of his new house. (F.2B)

'The Salvation Army thinks that it is important that clients have a say in the care that is provided to them.' (D.12)

Employees try to start a conversation with the residents about how they can improve the situation. Residents respond with: I have given ten tips, but you do not listen, or: I do not care. (F.1A)

#### Policy autonomy

The main source of income of The Salvation Army is the subsidy that it receives from the Dutch government and because of the decentralisation of the health care, The Salvation Army needs to report to every local government about what they do with the money. Despite these formal accountability relations, within the organisation there is freedom to act. This is partly due to the 'do first then think' mentality. Therefore, the priority of employees is to help their clients, second they take into account existing rules, even when this can lead to rather extreme situations (see example below). This mentality is partly due the fact that clients of The Salvation Army have multiple and complex problems and often do not fit the standards of the health care sector. Therefore, employees must be inventive and creative. Besides that, the focus of the organisation is taking care of people: formal procedures are important, but not the priority. The example below shows that employees will do anything to take care of their clients, even if this is against regulations.

*At facility X there is a woman that is terrified by her son, because he is aggressive. Therefore, he is not welcome to visit her. One of the first days that I am at this facility, she tells an employee that her son has a gun. The employee discusses this with a colleague. They are both concerned, because of his aggressive behaviour he can do himself or others harm. Besides that, they see that the woman gets more and more terrified by her son. They want to solve this. One of the employees comes up with a plan: he tells the resident that her son can put his gun in the letterbox of The Salvation Army. The other employee has her doubts about this plan and suggests that they must speak with the manager about this situation. However, the employee seems to be convinced that this is a good plan and rejects the suggestion to talk with the manager. Later that day during the*



*team meeting, he says that he has made a mistake by telling someone to hand in his gun by The Salvation Army. If another resident would have found it, it could have led to dangerous situations. However, he wanted to help the woman who is afraid of her son.*  
(F.2A)

This 'do first then think' mentality is also visible in the relation with external stakeholders, such as the local government. The Salvation Army is able to act quickly when necessary. This is something that stakeholders appreciate, because it solves problems that they have. One can think of the recent refugee crisis, where The Salvation Army was the first to open an accommodation with beds and showers. However, there are also stakeholders that are less positive about the inventiveness of The Salvation Army. They say that the organisation does not act quickly and pro-actively. The report does not specify on which arguments this opinion is based and why there are differences between stakeholders (Stichting Leger des Heils Welzijns- en Gezondheidszorg, 2014).

#### **Illustrations of policy autonomy**

'People always say that The Salvation Army is hierarchical, but my experiences are different. (...) On the streets it is: just do it. I was surprised how much I could do independently, when I came here.' (R3)

'We have made arranged with some clients about their alcohol consumption. For example, we keep the alcohol for one of the clients and he gets two cups a day. Officially, we cannot do this, because he possesses the alcohol. However, if clients agree, we come up with a plan. The goal is to help them to recover and to get rid of their addiction.' (F.1A)

#### Ongoing agency renewal

The healthcare sector in The Netherlands is subject to many changes. The most recent one is the decentralisation of healthcare from national to local level. These changes affect care organisations, because they must adapt to the new situation. Within The Salvation Army three major changes have taken place since 1990. First, the structure of the organisation was modified. One organisation was divided into multiple foundations. This made it easier to get subsidy from the government, because the church of The Salvation Army was now separated from the Welfare and Health Care Foundation (Bollinger, 2013). However, this change has increased the distance between these two foundations and this was something that most people did not like. Hence the cooperation between the two is renewed, which for example means that they work together in the neighbourhood centres. Another change is the decentralisation of care in 2015. This entails that local government is now responsible for the care that people receive. Meaning that The Salvation Army must develop a relation with every local government where they are active, 388 to be precise. Third, The Salvation Army has changed their working methods by focusing more on the capacities of clients. This is called *recover-oriented working*. The starting point is that every client has talents and

opportunities, meaning that everyone can recover to a greater or lesser extent, depending on the abilities of the client. An example of *recovery-oriented working* is that residents of one facility now must use an alarm to wake themselves. Before, they always were woken up by employees. However, in the real-world people use an alarm, so by doing this, clients are better prepared to stand on their own feet. This new way of working is taught to employees by a course that they follow in groups. By changing its way of working, The Salvation Army responds to a societal movement, where people must participate more (Trappenburg, 2008).

Smaller changes are also present on the work floor. For example, phasing out the use of plastic cups for ecological reasons; and reorganizing the dinner to create a more domestic feeling.

Another aspect of this characteristic is giving employees the education they need to do their work. The Salvation Army invests in training and learning programs. Employees are trained to respond to aggressive behaviour of clients, to provide first aid, and to work recovery-oriented. Besides that, employees who want to become a manager must follow a Master's degree in health care management. This program is provided by the University of Applied Sciences Utrecht. I spoke to multiple directors that have followed this Master's program of the University Utrecht.

### **Illustrations of ongoing agency renewal**

With his manager he discusses his points of improvement, such as providing more structure for the clients. Besides that, he learned to really connect with clients by asking how they are and to commiserate. (F.1C)

'I have a lot of respect for the director that has changed the structure of the organisation by delinking the church from the care organisations. Because of that, the care organisation could flourish. It was a brave decision.' (R.9)

'The reorganisation had as goal to better respond to societal changes and to meet governmental requirements.' (D.1)

'What we do more and more is to seek the connection with the church society. Because of what I just said: in the past, there were only Salvation Army soldiers working here. That's just not the case anymore. However, The Army is no longer an Army when the church is not linked to the care organisation, so we try to reconnect a little.' (R.3)

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## **Conclusion**

This study describes the characteristics present in a successful organisation. Using the framework of Goodsell it gives some interesting insights in the concept of success. Goodsell describes the *mission mystique* of an organisation as an intensity of purpose, energized culture, and capacity to change. The research question that this study answers is:

*How can we understand the success of The Salvation Army?*

When looking at the results of my study, I can conclude that this *mission mystique* is present within The Salvation Army. All nine characteristics are to some extent reflected in the data. Of course, there is room for improvement, for example by adjusting the reputation that The Salvation Army has as a voluntary organisation. Or by focusing more on the professional aspects, or by creating more room for contestation of beliefs, that is better listening to interns and flex workers.

Analysing the data, it became clear that the reason why The Salvation Army is a successful organisation, is the vital role of the mission. Their mission, *into the world of the hurting, broken, lonely, dispossessed and lost, reaching them in love by all means*, influences the other eight characteristics. The basis of their success is the cogency of the mission, that is present in the other characteristics. The mission underlines their urgent societal need, their distinctive reputation, the motivation of personnel, their history, urges them to contest existing working methods, creates policy autonomy, and renews their organisation. Therefore, the framework helps to understand the success of The Salvation Army, because it is focused on the important role of the mission. It helps to clarify the success of The Salvation Army. The vital role of the mission is visualized in the figure below.



*Figure 4: The power of the mission*

The use of multiple methods: observations, interviews and analysing documents, has been helpful to answer the research question, because it gives a better understanding of the role of the characteristics. For example, the mission of The Salvation Army is clearly stated on paper in policy documents, well-known by managers as seen in the interviews, and influences the daily work of employees. Therefore, data triangulation has created a richer view on the research subject.

Another purpose of this study was to assess the transferability of Goodsell's theory to other organisations and countries. Because the nine characteristics are all present within the organisation, one can say that this theory can be applied to any nonprofit organisation in The Netherlands. However, some small differences can be found. First, giving compliments and celebrating success does not fit the down to earth mentality of most Dutch people. This can influence multiple characteristics of the framework. For example, there is less room to celebrate successes of the organisation and therefore the culture is more down to earth and less ecstatic. Second, as nonprofit organisation the autonomy of The Salvation Army is probably to a greater extent ensured in comparison to public agencies. However, more research is necessary to fully assess the transferability of Goodsell's theory. Within this study his theory was applicable and useful.

## **Discussion**

By using the framework of Goodsell to understand the success of The Salvation Army, this study contributes to existing literature on success of nonprofit organisations. There was no model that integrated various characteristics of success, as Goodsell does. Besides that, the results of this study confirm the results of previous research wherein the mission plays an essential role in the success of an organisation (Caillier, 2014; McDonald, 2007; Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999; Wright & Pandey, 2011).

The approach of this study to assess the success of The Salvation army has some advantages over the performance measurement methods, such as the balanced scorecard and key performance indicators. It looks beyond the quantifiable results of an organisation and focuses on the factors that underlie its success. An advantage of this is that it makes insightful what is necessary to create and maintain success. Besides that, it is difficult, maybe even impossible, to measure all the results of a nonprofit or public organisation.

Although, the framework of Goodsell was useful in understanding the success of The Salvation Army, it has its flaws. The characteristics cover a whole range of abstract aspects, but there is something missing, namely work conditions. Goodsell does not talk about the role of ICT, salaries, transport, and so on. For example, every facility of The Salvation has a car to bring clients to the hospital, visit other facilities, or do grocery shopping. This car indirectly contributes to the success and the mission of the organisation, because it makes

employees more flexible and able to help client in case of a visit to the hospital. The characteristics of Goodsell's framework are too abstract to calculate these work conditions in.

#### Limitations of research

Apart from the theoretical and empirical added value of this study, there are also some restrictions. First, this study assumes that The Salvation Army is a successful organisation, but one can question this. I did not extensively research the quality of the organisation, but focused on the characteristics of success. Second, The Salvation Army has more facilities than the ones that were included in this study. They take care of young mothers with children, adolescents, and elderly people with dementia. It was not feasible to observe all these groups. By going to multiple facilities in different cities and interviewing employees with various positions, I am convinced that I can say something about the organisation as whole, without seeing everything. Lastly, I told everyone that I studied the success of the organisation, this could have influenced my data, because people might do their best to let things appear better than they are. However, the target group makes this almost impossible, because social desirable behaviour is not something they aspire. This means that you can be angry if you are, scream if you want, or say it if you do not like it. There is almost no social desirable behaviour, let alone make things better than they are.

#### Recommendations for further research

Similar to every other study the results and limitations raise new questions. Therefore, I will do some recommendations for further research. First, to get more insight in the differences between The United States and The Netherlands an international research that compares successful public or nonprofit organisations in these countries will be valuable. This will lead to a better understanding of the cultural differences and the effect on the concept of success and its characteristics. Second, more research is necessary to confirm the value of Goodsell's framework. This study is the first replication, but further research would help to better understand the characteristics of success. Third, to grasp the concept of success it is useful to combine quantitative and qualitative data, because some factors such as intrinsic motivation are quantifiable, were others are more qualitative, for example the societal need of the organisation. Research that would come up with a framework that combines multiple qualitative and quantitative methods would give a rich view on success.

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## Appendix 1: List of analysed documents

- (D.1) Annual report The Salvation Army 2016
- (D.2) Annual report The Salvation Army 2015
- (D.3) Annual report The Salvation Army 2014
- (D.4) Annual report The Salvation Army 2011
- (D.5) Annual Report Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care 2016
- (D.6) Annual Report Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care 2015
- (D.7) Stakeholdersatisfaction report 2014 Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care
- (D.8) Employee satisfaction report 2016 Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health care and Youth Care and Probation Services.
- (D.9) Long-term strategic plan Foundation Salvation Army 201
- (D.10) I.D. book 2 Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care, about the identity of the organisation in the recruitment and selection procedure
- (D.11) Note on Recovery of ordinary life (Notitie Herstel van het gewone leven) Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care, March 2015
- (D.12) Information for clients (Clientwijzer), Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care
- (D.13) Note on identity, touched by Christ , moved by people (Nota identiteit: Door Christus aangeraakt om mensen bewogen, Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care, 2006
  - (D.14) Addition to note on identity, Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care, 2016
- (D.15) Note on expertise by experience and recovery of ordinary life (Ervaringsdeskundigheid en herstel van het gewone leven) Foundation Salvation Army Welfare and Health Care, 2016

## **Appendix 2: Statement that employees need to sign (Dutch)**

### **Oorsprong**

'The Salvation Army' werd in 1878 opgericht door de methodisten predikant William Booth en zijn vrouw Catherine Booth. Hun stond voor ogen de boodschap van Jezus Christus te verspreiden onder zoveel mogelijk mensen door middel van een nieuwe, slagvaardige organisatie. Bewogen door de maatschappelijke problemen die hij in Londen zag, kwam William Booth al gauw tot het inzicht dat hulpverlening en verkondiging, daad en woord hand in hand gaan. Hij schreef daarover in zijn standaardwerk "In Darkest England and The Way Out" (1890). Dit inzicht werd samengevat in de drieslag: "Soup, Soap and Salvation" (Soep, Zeep en Redding).

Vanuit diezelfde bezieling is het Leger des Heils als beweging ook in Nederland actief sinds 1887. Het Leger des Heils is werkzaam op vele maatschappelijke en kerkelijke terreinen.

In 1990 werd de Stichting Leger des Heils Welzijns- en Gezondheidszorg (W&G) opgericht om het sterk gegroeide werk van maatschappelijke dienstverlening meer professioneel te kunnen voortzetten. W&G maakt samen met onder meer het Kerkgenootschap Leger des Heils deel uit van het Leger des Heils in Nederland, dat nog altijd een onderdeel is van de wereldwijde organisatie The International Salvation Army.

### **Doel**

De doelstelling van de Stichting Leger des Heils Welzijns- en Gezondheidszorg luidt:

1. "De Stichting stelt zich ten doel daadwerkelijk uitdrukking te geven aan de doelstellingen en werkwijze zoals omschreven in de statuten van het Leger des Heils en beoogt in dit kader directe materiële en immateriële hulp te verlenen aan mensen die deze hulp willen aanvaarden zonder onderscheid naar godsdienst, levensovertuiging, politieke gezindheid, ras, geslacht of welke andere in het kader van haar doelstellingen niet relevante grond dan ook.
2. Het Leger des Heils heeft tot doel om op elke daartoe geschikte plaats, tijd en wijze het evangelie – met name de daarin vervatte oproep tot bekering – in woord en daad uit te dragen, in de ontmoeting met de medemens ook aandacht gevend aan diens maatschappelijke noden en behoeften en daarin trachten te voorzien, hetzij vanuit de eigen organisatie hetzij door anderen, er van uitgaande dat voor het waarlijk samenleving-zijn naar Gods bedoeling nodig is: ieders bekering tot en gehoorzaamheid aan Jezus Christus."

### **Competentie**

Het Leger des Heils is een organisatie die medewerkers op basis van hun persoonlijke competenties selecteert. Dat is niet zo uniek. Veel organisaties doen dit. Echter het feit dat het hebben van een christelijke levensovertuiging als een van de persoonlijke competenties

wordt gezien wel. Van alle medewerkers van het Leger des Heils wordt verwacht dat zij over die competentie beschikken. Dat wordt concreet gemaakt door aan iedere medewerker te vragen de doelstelling van het Leger des Heils te onderschrijven. Deze doelstelling wordt als volgt uitgewerkt.

### **Uitwerking**

Binnen de Stichting Leger des Heils Welzijns- en Gezondheidszorg werken mensen samen die bezielen door Jezus Christus zich inzetten voor goede toegankelijke hulp aan kwetsbare mensen met vaak complexe problemen. Deze hulp wordt geboden zonder onderscheid te maken tussen mensen. Door deze inzet werken zij aan gerechtigheid en solidariteit in de samenleving. Vanuit het besef dat God er is voor iedereen, maar in het bijzonder voor wie geen helper heeft, willen zij er zijn voor maatschappelijke vondelingen. Zo willen zij vertrouwen wekken, winnen en waarmaken. Daarin zijn zij vasthoudend en gedreven in de hoop dat mensen zich uiteindelijk kunnen richten op het leven zoals het bedoeld is.

Vanuit de waardigheid van de mens benaderen zij cliënten in respectvolle bejegening. De cliënt met zijn of haar noden en behoeften staat centraal. In het besef dat de mens als één geheel is geschapen, gaat het hun om héél de mens. In hun benadering gaat het om een integrale aanpak.

Dat betekent ook dat zij naast materiële hulp aandacht schenken aan immateriële hulp. Waar mogelijk zijn zij bereid tot een gesprek over zingeving, het bieden van perspectief. Zij zijn aanspreekbaar op wat hen beweegt en zij zijn bereid daarover te spreken wanneer een cliënt aangeeft hierover te willen spreken en er voor open staat. Zij respecteren het wanneer een cliënt een andere geloofsovertuiging heeft en zij zijn bereid regelingen te (laten) treffen om een cliënt te laten bijstaan door een ander die meer aansluit bij de overtuiging van de cliënt.

Omdat mensen elkaar nodig hebben, zijn zij erop uit bruggen van wederkerigheid te slaan tussen kwetsbare mensen en mensen die niet in een kwetsbare positie verkeren. Het gaat om mensen voor mensen.

Aanwezigheid en hulp bieden zij vanuit en met bezieling. Van daaruit doen zij hun werk in professionaliteit, met zakelijkheid. Want het gaat om het bieden van zo goed mogelijke kwaliteit. In het intercollegiale contact kan persoonlijk geloof een bijdrage leveren aan een positieve houding in het tegemoet treden van vaak complexe problemen. Onderlinge verschillen in geloof worden gerespecteerd. De stijl van werken is die van bescheidenheid en soberheid.

## **Verklaring**

Hierbij verklaar ik

Voorletters en naam: .....

Geboortedatum: .....

de doelstelling van Stichting Leger des Heils Welzijns- en Gezondheidszorg te  
onderschrijven, zoals hierboven beschreven en uitgewerkt.

Datum: .....

Handtekening: .....

De ondertekende verklaring wordt bewaard in het dossier van de werknemer. De  
werknemer zelf krijgt een kopie van het getekende exemplaar.