

# Research Report

## BSc upgrade



## Collective domestic outsourcing in communities

*Literature study on the collective offer of household activities in communities arranged by a mediating agency*

# Research Report

## Bachelor upgrade

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*Course number: YSS-81812*

*ECTS: 24*

*Start date: 01-11-2015*

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## **ABSTRACT**

In today's society there is a growing demand concerning domestic outsourcing. This trend combined with the increasing interest in collective experiences among individuals, the sharing economy and the fact that the business-to-business sector is increasingly outsourcing multi-services created the idea for a collective domestic outsourcing concept. Collective domestic outsourcing is defined as; merged household activities of individual households in a community and conducted by a professional on payment. The purpose of this study is to investigate what the potential added value of collective domestic outsourcing is for households. In order to achieve the aim, this research will investigate if there is a potential to arrange collective domestic outsourcing in today's society and to what extent it may have added value for households. Additionally, it tests the hypothesis: collective domestic outsourcing through a mediating agency has the potential to create added value for households.

This exploratory literature study showed that a collective arrangement of domestic outsourcing in communities has a potential. This is because there are trends and developments in society which increase the demand for domestic outsourcing, and positively influence the attitude of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing. Additionally, a collective arrangement showed that it has the potential to reduce or remove the barriers which retain households from outsourcing domestic tasks. These are; the price, access of third parties in home, time related to trusting the service employee, bad transparency of the market, dislike of the 'employer' role and the administrative burden. By reducing or removing these barriers the demand for (collective) domestic outsourcing might increase. So based on this literature study, it can be concluded that the collective arrangement of domestic outsourcing might be possible in today's society.

The added value of the collective arrangement is, besides the time-saving, that it has the potential to create a more transparent market and therefore it provides a better chance for households to find an appropriate service supplier. Additionally, it fully unburdens the households because an intermediate is responsible for merging the household activities and finding appropriate service suppliers. It also has the potential to lower the price of household services. This study showed that a mediating agency, which is fully responsible for the execution of household activities, as an intermediate might have a positive contribution to the added value of collective domestic outsourcing for households because they are able to reduce the barriers and offer more convenience to the households. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

Key words: households, household activities, domestic outsourcing, collective arrangement

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## MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The combination of paid work and household activities has increasingly become challenging for Western households (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2007). As a consequence, domestic outsourcing is more and more accepted in today's society and households are actually making more use of it (Bitmann et al., 1999; De Ruijter, 2004; Tijdens et al., 2000). With this growing demand for domestic outsourcing and the increasing need among individuals for collective experiences in this sharing economy (Oomes et al., 2014; Bothun et al., 2015), a collective domestic outsourcing concept might be interesting for households. Especially since this collective concept is already adapted in the business-to-business sector (Dommerholt, 2012), so it is interesting to investigate if it is feasible in the business-to-consumer sector. Therefore, this exploratory literature research investigates the following general research question:

*Is there, in today's society, a potential to arrange collective domestic outsourcing in communities? If yes, to what extent may it have an added value for households?*

As can be seen in the GRQ this research is focused on the added value of collective domestic outsourcing for households, whereby *collective domestic outsourcing* is defined as: household activities of individual households in a community merged and conducted by a professional on payment. Added value for households means that the concept is useful and helpful for them, so that the benefits outweigh the drawbacks. With the developments concerning the decrease of social participation and individualisation in our mind, it is interesting to investigate if a mediating agency, which takes full responsibility for merging the household activities in a community and the execution of these activities, can add value to the collective domestic outsourcing concept. Therefore, this research also tested the hypothesis:

H1: collective domestic outsourcing through a mediating agency has the potential to create added value for households.

This research showed that there are trends and developments in society nowadays which indicate that collective domestic outsourcing might be possible. These trends and developments influence the demand for outsourcing or they influence the attitude of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing. Overall, there are more trends and developments which have a positive contribution to the demand and the attitude of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing. Additionally, a collective arrangement showed that it has the potential to reduce or remove the barriers which retain households from outsourcing domestic tasks. These are; the price, access of third parties in home, time related to trusting the service employee, bad transparency of the market, dislike of the 'employer' role and the administrative burden. By reducing or removing these barriers the demand for (collective) domestic outsourcing might increase. So based on this literature study, it can be concluded that the collective arrangement of domestic outsourcing might be possible in today's society. The added value of the collective arrangement is, besides the time-saving, that it has the potential to create a more transparent market and therefore it provides a better chance for households to find an appropriate service supplier. Additionally, it fully unburdens the households because an intermediate is responsible for merging the household activities and finding appropriate service suppliers. It also has the potential to lower the price of household services. This study showed that a mediating agency, which is fully responsible for the execution of household activities, as an intermediate might have a positive contribution to the added value of collective domestic outsourcing for households because they are able to reduce the barriers and offer more convenience to the households. Therefore, the hypothesis is accepted.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

This BSc upgrade serves as a final assessment for MSc Management Studies, specialization Facility Management. This chapter is an introduction to the research subject. Paragraph 1.1 gives an introduction of the research subject, paragraph 1.2 presents the problem statement.

## 1.1 Introduction to the case

When people come home after a long day of working, they still have to keep up with the household activities. 40% of the Dutch population feels rushed once a week because of the limited available time for these mandatory tasks. 10% of the population experiences this feeling daily and this amount of people is increasing according to Cloin et al. (2013). The combination of paid work and household activities has increasingly become challenging for Western households (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2007). People feel like they have more obligations, tasks and expectations to meet in business and private life (Cloin et al., 2013; De Ruijter, 2004). From past to present the household activities keep playing a big role in everyone's life (Hulst, 2005). According to Tijdens et al. (2000) the time spent on household activities can be decreased in three ways. At first the household members can increase the work pace of performing the household activities, so they perform them faster. However, mainly this decreases the quality or the norm of the household activities. This means it is at the expense of the household members (e.g. the house is less clean, the meal is less nice). Another solution to decrease the time spent on the household activities is to purchase market substitutes which will conduct a part of the activity (e.g. microwave, dishwasher). The third option is to let a third party conduct the household activity partly or fully. According to De Ruijter and Van der Lippe (2008) this is well-known as; *domestic outsourcing* and is defined as: A third party performs the household activities for a household on payment (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2008).

The concept of replacing self-performed household activities with purchased household services is growing (Bitmann et al., 1999; De Ruijter, 2004; Tijdens et al., 2000). Nowadays around 1 million households in the Netherlands purchase household services like cleaning, maintenance, gardening, child care at home and other household services (Visser et al., 2014). On average each of these households devotes 196 hours a year to a third party to conduct their household activities. This amounts to a total of more than 272 million hours which are annually outsourced by Dutch households. Therefore, the Dutch domestic outsourcing market reaches a volume of 2.5 billion euro a year (Visser et al., 2014). This figure only includes the household services purchased by households and not by companies. Additionally, the household services executed in the informal market are not included. The market for domestic outsourcing exists of several segments, whereby the market segment concerning cleaning of the house has by far the biggest contribution nowadays. Almost half (1.1 billion euro) of the total amount is issued to the cleaning service. Secondly the maintenance of the house is often outsourced to a third party and thirdly, child care (Visser et al., 2014).

Whether household's actual make use of the household services offered by third parties depends on several factors according to literature. The total income of the household and the time-availability for conducting the household activities have proven to be the most important factors (Delauney, 2010; Van der Lippe et al., 2004; Tijdens et al. 2000; Sullivan and Gershuny, 2013). So, the higher the income of the household and the less time available for household activities, the more likely outsourcing options are used. With this in our mind it is straightforward that an increase of dual earner households resulted in an increase of domestic outsourcing (Tijdens et al., 2000). On the other hand, dual earners as well as one-

person households will experience a lack of time available for the mandatory tasks (Cloin et al., 2013). Since, CBS also expects an increase of the one-person households this might also contribute to a growing demand for domestic outsourcing. Another development which is occurring and might lead to a bigger demand of domestic outsourcing is that people no longer take it for granted that their time is completely absorbed by household and family tasks. This leads to a preference of spending less time for household activities, which leads to an increasing amount of money for the household services (SCP, 2004).

With the growing demand for domestic outsourcing and the increasing need for collective experiences in a sharing economy (Oomes et al., 2014; Bothun et al., 2015), a collective domestic outsourcing concept might be interesting for households. Especially since this collective concept is already adapted in the business-to-business sector (Dommerholt, 2012), so it is interesting to investigate if it is feasible in the business-to-consumer sector. In this research *collective domestic outsourcing* is defined as: household activities of individual households in a community are merged and conducted by a professional on payment.

Up till now there have been a lot of studies researching the domestic outsourcing concept of the household activities for single households but none of them has researched whether it is possible to merge the household activities of different households in a community. Therefore, it is interesting to investigate if, besides the aforementioned trends and developments, there might be a potential added value for collective domestic outsourcing for households. Therefore, this research will investigate the following general research question:

*GRQ: is there, in today's society, a potential to arrange collective domestic outsourcing in communities? If yes, to what extent may it has an added value for household?*

However, Oomes et al. (2014) showed that there is a decrease of social participation in communities because of the individualisation, so it might not be possible to let the household arrange this merging. Therefore, a possible solution is to let the merging of household activities in a community executed by an intermediate. This mediating agency is in this case responsible for merging household activities and finding a third party that will conduct the household activities. In this research the added value of this merging agency will be investigated by testing the following hypothesis:

*H1: collective domestic outsourcing through a mediating agency has the potential to create added value for households.*

This research will only use literature to investigate what collective domestic outsourcing could imply for households. During this research the focus is on the voluntary choice to outsource household activities and not because it is necessary or indicated (e.g. by the government or hospital). Additionally, this research is limited to the demand side of domestic outsourcing and the benefits, it will not elaborate on the several offers of domestic outsourcing.

The final outcome of the research will contribute to the literature because the subject has not been researched yet in this context. The research will show whether a collective domestic outsourcing has an added value for households. This report starts with the problem statement and the research methodology. The literature study is described in section 3, whereby the specific research questions will be answered one by one. This reports ends with the conclusion whereby the general research question will be answered and the hypothesis will be tested.

## 1.2 Problem statement

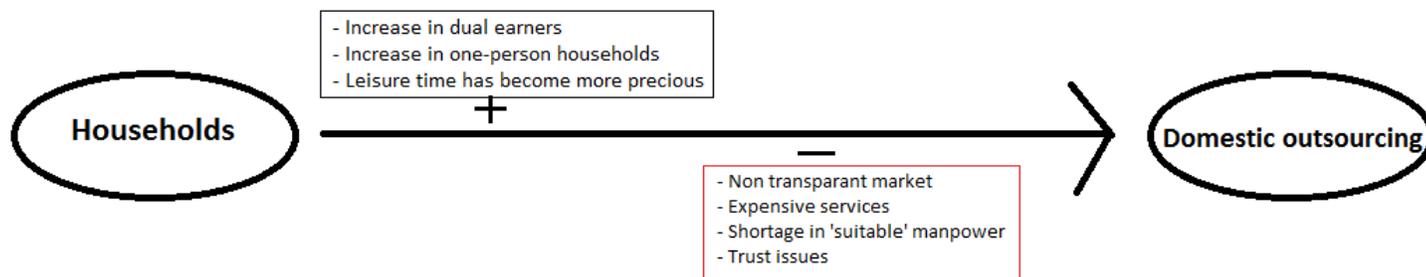
In total 13% of the Dutch households purchase household services. However, this market has the potential to grow (Visser et al., 2014), especially with the aforementioned developments among the households (e.g. increase of dual earners and one-person households, and increase precious leisure time).

Visser et al. (2014) executed a study among 15.000 households and 32 service suppliers of domestic tasks in the Netherlands. The results of this study showed several drawbacks for households and service companies to operate in the domestic outsourcing market. However, according to Visser et al. (2014) the potential market exists of 1.964.064 households, which is an increase of 96,4% compared to the households which purchase household services nowadays (1 million).

The domestic outsourcing market is a tough market for companies for several reasons. Firstly, because supply and demand are fragmented; most companies offer a specific service for one specific demand (Visser et al., 2014). Secondly, the high pressure on the price of household services (Tijdens et al., 2000). This is due to the fact that the allocation of household activities is often driven by the maximization of financial outcomes (Delauney, 2010). In this case the trade-off effect occurs which means; the individual who is responsible for the household activities compares the time spent on household activities with their potential earnings on the labour market and will consider self-performing or outsourcing. The option which will yield the highest benefit will be chosen (Van der Lippe et al., 2004). In order to create a demand for domestic outsourcing the prices cannot be higher than the income of the specific household member, so this decreases the bargaining power of service suppliers. The third factor which makes the market tough for service suppliers is that a lot of household services are performed in an informal market and therefore it is not officially included in the statistics. This causes the fact that service companies cannot get a good overview of the size of the market nowadays (Visser et al., 2014).

The aforementioned factors make the business-to-consumer market for domestic outsourcing a tough market for companies and this has consequences for the households. Previous research showed that it is not easy for households to find suitable service suppliers for their household activities (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2008; Visser et al., 2014). This is due to several issues. Firstly, there is a supply shortage of 'suitable' manpower. There are not enough companies operating in this market with the right employees. The service suppliers enter the private sphere and most households do not just let someone enter this sphere. Secondly, trust and a personal connection is required, therefore it is not always easy to find the appropriate person (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2008; Visser et al., 2014). Thirdly, the bad transparency of the market also contributes to this issue. Nowadays households who decide to outsource household activities make use of recruitment channels like family, friends or neighbours. They mostly propose service employees which are appropriate and therefore trustworthy (Visser et al., 2014). Finally, an issue which is an important factor in the decision whether or not to outsource the household activities is the price.

Figure 1 shows an overview of the developments in society which contribute to an increased demand for domestic outsourcing and the barriers which withhold the households from actually making use of it. several developments show that the domestic outsourcing market has the potential to grow, but there are still factors that retain households of making use of it and these mainly have to do with the supply side (e.g. non transparent market, shortage in suitable manpower, price).



*Figure 1 Factors influencing demand and use of domestic outsourcing from the perspective of the households*

So how can we make the domestic market more interesting for service suppliers in order to fulfil the demand of households concerning their household activities and create added value? As mentioned before, the barriers for service companies to operate in the domestic outsourcing market are related to; bad transparency of the demand (e.g. fragmented demand and informal market) and the high pressure on the price (Delauney, 2010; Visser et al., 2014). So what exactly makes the business-to-business market more transparent and financial interesting for service companies? Of course the demand for services of a single household is not comparable to the demand of a company. Therefore, the service companies might assume that the business-to-consumer market is not interesting for them. Additionally, the service companies are not operating in the private sector because the revenues in this sector are in general lower than the revenues in the business sector (Tijdens, 2000). But what if we merge the demand concerning services of households in a specific community and represent it to third parties? This reduces the fragmented demand of services and therefore reduces one of the barriers of service suppliers to enter the business-to-consumer market. Nowadays there are service suppliers which offer a single service to a specific group of consumers. For example; the child care or home care. But most service companies have not yet offered multi-services to communities. In the business sector companies increasingly choose for outsourcing multi-services contracts, a trend towards integrated services (Dommerholt, 2012). So, in the business-to-business market this merging of services has already been adopted. It is interesting to investigate whether this principle has a chance of succeeding in the business-to-consumer market and has the potential to offer added value for household.

With the trends in society in our minds concerning the decrease of social participation and the increase in interest of collective experience (Oomes et al., 2014) a mediating agency might be interesting for merging the household activities in a community and represent them to service suppliers. This concept might work in today's society if it is beneficial for households. Therefore, this research will test the following hypothesis: collective domestic outsourcing through a mediating agency has the potential to create added value for households.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is an exploratory literature research whereby insight will be gained concerning the added value of collective domestic outsourcing, if possible via a mediating agency which will merge the household activities in a community in order to outsource them to third parties. Thereby this research will focus on domestic outsourcing and the motivations and barriers of making use of this. Thereafter, it will investigate the benefits and drawbacks of a collective arrangement of domestic outsourcing. The aim of the study is to investigate what the potential added value is of collective domestic outsourcing for households. In order to realize this, an objective is set and research questions are formulated. Both will be described in the upcoming sections; 2.1 and 2.2. Finally, the research methods will be described in section 2.3.

### 2.1 Research objective

The research objective is:

*To investigate what may be the potential **added value** of collective domestic outsourcing for households, by identifying the benefits and drawbacks.*

Added value in this research means that the collective domestic outsourcing is helpful and useful for the households. So that the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

### 2.2 Research questions

#### General Research Question

**Is there, in today's society, a potential to arrange collective domestic outsourcing in communities? If yes, to what extent may it has an added value for household?**

This general research question will show if collective domestic outsourcing makes a chance in today's society, so is it possible to arrange it? There might be a possibility if there are trends and developments in society which can contribute to the success of collective domestic outsourcing, and if possible barriers can be reduced or challenged. If there might be a possibility, this research will identify the added value for households when they participate in it.

In order to answer the general research question it is essential to break it down into several specific research question which will investigate the fundamental information. The final outcome of this research shows whether collective domestic outsourcing via a mediating agency has added value for households and thereby it will test the formulated hypothesis.

#### Research Question 1:

What are households and what typical household activities are associated with this?

#### Research question 2:

Why do, or do not, households currently outsource household activities?

#### Research question 3:

To what extent is it possible to collectively outsource domestic tasks?

#### Research question 4:

What are the current trends and developments which influence the attitude of households towards collective domestic outsourcing?

### Research question 5:

What will be the benefits and drawbacks of collective domestic outsourcing for households?

## **2.3 Research method**

In order to achieve the purpose a thorough literature study will be conducted. Each specific research question will be answered with literature whereby books, journals, white papers, articles, magazines and researches concerning social science and household studies will be used. These literary pieces will be searched on Scopus, WUR library, Google scholar and at the library of WUR. Additionally, relevant articles will be found through snowballing; citations in articles which refer to valuable sources for this study.

The relevant literature will be organized per research question. First of all, this research will start on the household level whereby the concept of households will be defined and the corresponding household activities identified (RQ1). In particular, there has been little concern with the question; how the household activities are organized in a household (Berk and Berk, 1979), but there are several studies which are focused on single or several household tasks and the execution of them. These studies are used for defining households and household activities and are found by searching on keywords like; households, household structures, household- and domestic tasks/duties/activities.

The question why households choose to outsource certain household activities will be researched during research question two (RQ2). This question will elaborate on the decision making process of domestic outsourcing and the factors which influence these decisions, it will finally provide an overview of the factors that motivate and withhold the households of domestic outsourcing. Articles which are focused on domestic outsourcing through ready-made products or other appliances are out of the scope because this study only takes the service sector of domestic outsourcing into account. Relevant studies are found by using keywords related to; barrier and motivations, determinants and critical success factors for domestic outsourcing.

Thereafter, the concept of collective domestic outsourcing will be researched to see to what extent it can be arranged (RQ3). Hereby the study focuses on the early indicators which may indicate that outsourcing of domestic tasks is increasing or that a collective arrangement is possible. So, the literature used for this research question are concerning developments in society and the economic sector which influence the acceptance of domestic outsourcing and collective arrangement of services. Additionally, the communities will also be taken into account. Keywords that are used are related to collectivity in life, trends in the outsourcing, economic sector and consumer behaviour and communities.

In order to investigate if collective domestic outsourcing might have a chance of succeeding in today's society, the trends and developments will be checked to see whether these contribute to the attitude of households towards the new concept (RQ4). Thereby literature is focused on the trends and developments that have a direct influence on this attitude or on the demand towards (collective) domestic outsourcing. Other trends and development are out of the scope for this study and not taken into account.

After answering specific research questions one to four I will focus on the benefits and drawbacks of collective domestic outsourcing (RQ5). This information will be used in order to finally answer the general research question whereby it will be checked whether the benefits outweigh the drawbacks and if the hypothesis can be accepted.

### 3. LITERATURE STUDY

In order to achieve the purpose of this study it is necessary to investigate the current situation of and within the households, the society and to investigate the factors that influence the decision whether to purchase household services. At first the households and household activities will be explained, secondly the decision for domestic outsourcing will be researched and thereafter the concept of collective domestic outsourcing will be explained. Additionally, the society will be researched and finally the drawbacks and benefits of a collective arrangement of household services in a community.

#### 3.1 Households in the Netherlands

This section will identify the categories of households which will be used in this research. Households refer to the people in a family or other groups that are living together in one house (Berk and Berk, 1979). The amount of households in the Netherlands is increasing from 7,4 million in 2015 to 8,5 million in 2045 (CBS, 2014). However, the previous years there have been some changes among households. The next section will elaborate on that in order to answer RQ1: *What are households and what typical household activities are associated with this?*

##### 3.1.1 Developments among households

In history the roles in a household were clearly divided; the man in house was the breadwinner and the woman was the homemaker. The responsibilities of the women in managing the household activities (e.g. cooking, cleaning and child care) were held to take priority over paid employment (Gershuny and Robinson, 1988). However, these traditional work and family roles have recently undergone significant changes; a more equal division of the household activities (Perrone et al., 2009).

The developments that contributed to these changes in traditional roles are the increase of women who got paid labour (De Ruijter, 2004) and the decrease of the average size of families because of less children (Gershuny and Robinson, 1988). At the end of the 90's the households with dual earners increased (Tijdens et al., 2000). This means both men and women are faced with the challenge of successfully navigating between the roles for work and family domains. So there is a conflict between the time-availability and the household activities among dual earners (Van der Lippe et al. 2004). However, all kinds of households experience a challenge between the household activities and paid labour (Perrone et al., 2009).

The amount of one-person households is increasing. CBS expects that in 2060 44% of the households exist of one person, nowadays this percentage is 36 which are more or less 2,7 million households. The increase of one-person households is caused by a growing population, an ageing population and because more and more people live alone for a longer time. Additionally, the CBS expect more divorces which also causes one person's households (CBS, 2014). These one-person households often have a lower income than the average (Tijdens et al., 2000).

4.7 million households exist of two or more-persons (CBS, 2015). These type of household have three ways to generate their income; 1) single-earner, 2) dual earner and 3) one-and-a-half earner. Among these two or more-person households there is an increase of dual earners. Dual earner implies that the partners together work at least 60 to 65 hours per week (CBS, 2015). In 2005 51% of the households under the age of 65 were dual earners, in 2009 this increased to 57%. This is due to an increase of the participation of women in the workforce. In 1969 30% of the women was working, in 2012 this was 61%

of the women (CBS, 2014). Among the younger generation households, whereby the average age is 35, 75% exist of dual earners. According to CBS the dual earner model is becoming the standard for the younger generation. A single-earner household is rare nowadays, only 18% of the households among the younger generation exist of a single earner household (CBS, 2015), this means one partner works at least 35 hours per week (Cloin et al., 2013). Besides the dual earners and the single earners there is the one-and-a-half earner household. This household exist of two partners whereby one of the partners is working fulltime, which is at least 35 hours per week, and the other one is working part-time, this is at least 12 hours per week (CBS, 2014). This type of household occurs the most among couples with an average age of 55. The CBS stated that the dual earners have a significant bigger amount of money to spend than the single or one-and-a-half earner household. The difference with a single-earner household was 8.500 euro (CBS, 2015).

Another change in the structure of households is that there is a decrease in the average number of children and the birth-rate is still decreasing. So there is an increase of household without children. In the Netherlands 1.1 million households have one child, 1.1 million have two children and 407.000 households have three or more children (CBS, 2015). The decrease of children is a result of the increase of interest among women to build a careers (Tijdens et al., 2000). So the big families with a lot of children have become rare. These demographic changes cause changes in the organization of daily life among households.

### 3.1.2 Definition household activities

A lot of definitions are given to the concept household activities, domestic chores or household work. The definitions are more or less the same, but they have been used in different ways. Overall the household activities are the routine activities people undertake in their homes, like; cooking, cleaning and washing (Tijdens et al., 2000). Tijdens et al. (2000) used a comprehensive description for the household activities. This definition entails three main categories; the full description per category is shown in table 1.

Household activities	Tasks
1) <b>General household activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cooking (meal preparation)</li> <li>- Cleaning (vacuuming, making beds, washing windows, cleaning floors and furniture)</li> <li>- Maintenance clothing (washing, ironing, repairing, dry cleaning)</li> <li>- Shopping (grocery shopping, clothes, furniture and other shopping)</li> <li>- Organizing the household</li> <li>- Chores outside (sweeping)</li> </ul>
2) <b>Raise and care of children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Child care (babies and other children)</li> <li>- Child supervision (helping with homework, playing with the children, drop off and pick up for activities)</li> <li>- Care of other family members</li> </ul>
3) <b>Do-it-yourself (DIY) tasks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Maintenance of the house</li> <li>- Maintenance of other objects (e.g. bicycle)</li> <li>- Care of pets</li> <li>- Care of plants</li> <li>- Gardening</li> </ul>

Table 1 Categories of household activities by Tijdens et al. (2000)

All the household activities summarized in table 1 are present in most of the households, but the way they are performed differs. As can be seen in figure 2 the general household activities are the most time-consuming activities. This activity includes the preparation of meals, grocery shopping and cleaning. The women spent 15,3 hours per week to these activities and in total 23,3 hours per week. The men spent 7 hours per week of the 12,3 on the general household activities. Overall the cooking is the most time-consuming activity, especially if you take the grocery shopping into account. Secondly the DIY task is a time-consuming activity (e.g. maintenance and reparations at home). The figure also shows a decline in the time spent on household activities between 2006 and 2011. This has to do with the purchase of household appliances (Cloïn et al., 2013).

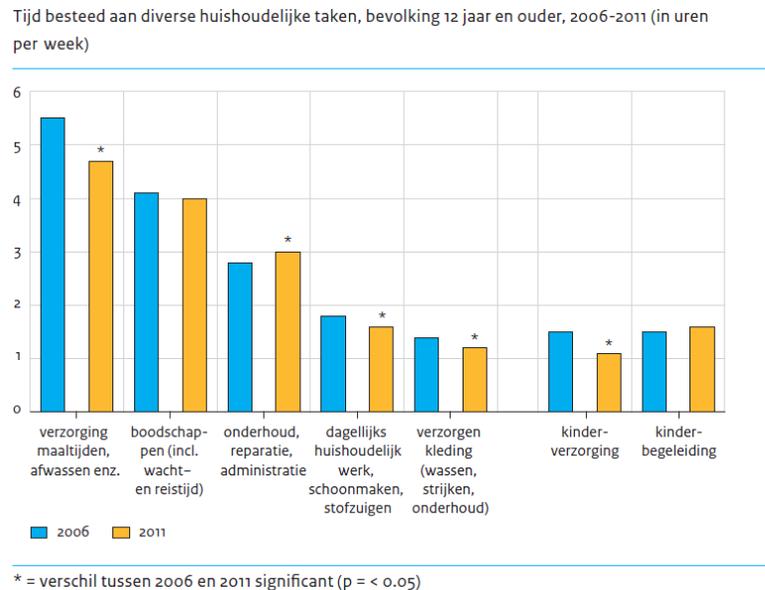


Figure 2 Time spent per household activity, population 12> years, 2006-2011 (hrs per week) (Cloïn et al., 2013)

### 3.1.3 Conclusion – RQ 1

Thanks to the above section the RQ 1 can be answered in this section.

*What are households and what typical household activities are associated with this?*

Households refer to the people in a family or other group that are living together in one house. Among these households there are several structures for example; one-person households and two-or-more person households with or without children. The type of household influences the amount of household activities that has to be undertaken. Household activities are the routine activities people undertake in their homes, like; cooking, cleaning and washing. Since the general household activities and the DIY-tasks are the most-time consuming this research is only limited to these two categories. These categories exist of the activities described by Tijdens et al. (2000) in table 1. These are for example activities like cooking, cleaning, washing, (grocery) shopping and the maintenance of the house. So, the care of children will not be taken into account because this can be seen as leisure time for some parents. Additionally, there is already a collective offer for childcare.

How household activities are conducted and allocated depends on the structure of the household,

for example; how many household members and the participation in workforce of the household members. Overall the income of the households influences the amount of time available for the household activities and the organisation of the activities (Berk and Berk, 1979). So, time availability for the household activities and the income of the household are the most important factors to decided how to execute or arrange the household activities (Delauney, 2010; Van der Lippe et al.,2004; Tjzens et al. 2000). With these two main considerations in our mind we can make four types of households whereby time and money are the main issues. Table 2 shows an overview of these four types of households with an example of a household per category.

<b>Structure of household</b>	<b>One-person household</b>	<b>Two-or-more person household</b>
<b>1. High income and a lot of time</b>	Pensioner	Pensioners or a single earner with a high income
<b>2. Low income and a lot of time</b>	Unemployed	Single earner with a low income
<b>3. Low income and little time</b>	Single earner with low income	One-and-a-half-earner with low income or dual earner
<b>4. High income and a little time</b>	Single earner with high income	One-and-a-half earner with high income or dual earners

*Table 2 Structure of households*

According to Tjzens et al. (2000) the dual earners as well as the single earners in a one-person household experience a lack of time for the execution of household activities. Both of these types of households spent significant more time on paid labour. Therefore, these two are allocated to the group 'a little time'. A lot of time is related to a household whereby at least one person is unemployed, so he or she has the time to conduct household activities. The income is also defined as high and low whereby a low income is related to an income under the 'modaal', so unemployed household members or a household with an income till 26.000-32.500 euro. This means that a high income is related to the 'modaal' or higher.

## **3.2 Households and domestic outsourcing**

This section will elaborate on the decision making process for domestic outsourcing. Domestic outsourcing means that a third party performs the household activities for the households on payment (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2008). The relationship between the supplier and the household can vary; fulltime employment and lodging, up to a chore once a year. This study is focused on the middle of these two, the daily unto the annually performed household activities. Besides, it only takes the service sector of domestic outsourcing into account, so not the industrial sector (e.g. ready-made meals). In this section the reasons why households outsource their domestic tasks will be investigated. These are divided in the section motivations and barriers for domestic outsourcing. Finally, the second research question will be answered: RQ2: *Why do, or do not, households currently outsource household activities?*

### **3.2.1 Motivations for domestic outsourcing**

The growth in the demand for paid domestic labour is explained as a consequence of the rise of employed women because performing household activities is highly labour intensive and it is difficult to combine these activities with work (Bittman,1999). Mainly because the 'equal responsibility' of household activities and the care of children is not achieved. In real life the women are still mainly responsible for these household activities (Bittman,1999). However, whether households actual make use of these household services offered by third parties depends on several things (Tijdens et al., 2000; Van der Lippe et al., 2004; Visser et al., 2014). But what are the main reasons to start outsourcing domestic tasks, what motivates them?

Tijdens et al. (2000) mentioned that time-saving is one of the main reasons for households to purchase household services. By outsourcing their household activities, the household members have more time to spent with the children, to work or to do things they enjoy. Sullivan and Gershuny (2013) even showed that in a household where the wife is part time employed or unemployed the use of domestic services was significantly lower than household where the wife was employed full time. Indicating that the women's time availability for household activities is an important factor whether households outsource domestic tasks or not. Another motivation to outsource domestic tasks is the convenient (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2007), because domestic outsourcing can be a strategy to relieve the double burden of paid and domestic work. Additionally, Tijdens et al. (2000) mentioned the financial situation. The decisions to outsource or not to outsource will be made based on the price of self-performing household activities and the price of outsourcing it to a third party. The costs of a self-performing household activity can be based on the loss of the income due to the time spend on the household activities, which is called opportunity costs, or the costs of self-performing household activities can be based on the costs of the end result. So the value is equal to the price on the market sector, which is the price of letting conduct a third party the household service. At the time that the self-performing becomes more expensive than outsourcing there will be a switch from self-performing to outsourcing. This will also be the case if the prices between self-performing and outsourcing are the same but the total income of the household increases (e.g. a higher income or from single to double earners) (Tijdens et al., 2000). So, another motivation to start outsourcing domestic tasks is if it yields the highest benefit for the households. Visser et al. (2014) also investigated what the main reasons are to outsource the activities. The research results are shown in table 3. As can be seen in the table 'a lack of time' and 'not able to perform them' are the most common motives to outsource the household activities. When the total household income gets higher, the reason 'lack of time' also occurs more often. Conversely, 'I am not able to perform them' account more for the households with

a lower income. However, the study of Visser et al. (2014) included the households whereby the help in the household is necessary, so they are dependent. If you exclude this market segment the motivation 'a lack of time' becomes even higher. Except for the market segment; maintenance, for this segment the fact that 'someone else can do it better' is the main reason to outsource these activities. Services like; cleaning, childcare and other household activities are mainly outsourced because of a lack of time (Visser et al., 2014). Households which mention that they experience a lack of time is due to; an increase of working hours or the arrival or increase of children (Visser et al., 2014).

	<b>Not able to perform them</b>	<b>Price (not expensive)</b>	<b>Someone else can do it better</b>	<b>Lack of time</b>	<b>More leisure time</b>	<b>Do not feel like it</b>
<b>% of total market</b>	34%	8%	18%	39%	10%	15%

*Table 3 Motivations for customers to outsource household activities, N=1895 (Visser et al., 2014)*

Besides these main reasons, the decision to outsource household activities also depends on the household activity itself (Van der Lippe et al., 2004). Certain tasks such as caregiving and cooking are related to specific times of day, and it is particularly these tasks that can be attractive to outsource. For tasks that need to be performed at specific times, it matters when partners' time is available. For these inflexible tasks, someone needs to be home to perform the task (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2007). Work flexibility makes it easier for employees to perform inflexible tasks themselves. For flexible tasks, such as cleaning and maintenance, it does not matter when they are conducted. For these tasks, it only matters how much time is available (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2007). Additionally, a study by Van der Lippe et al. (2013) showed that the pleasure people associate with certain tasks affects the division of outsourcing the household activity. So if people do not enjoy certain tasks, they outsource them more often, even if they have flexible working hours (Van der Lippe, 2007).

Eventually outsourcing household activities by hiring a third party can end up saving time and energy so that the cost is well worth it. The point of outsourcing is that the household can accomplish more without saying goodbye to their leisure time (Sullivan and Gershuny 2013). Tijdens et al. (2000) proved that domestic outsourcing significantly decreases the time spent on household activities, mainly outsourcing the cleaning activity is time-saving.

### **3.2.2 Barriers for domestic outsourcing**

As you can read in the above sections all kinds of factors influence the demand for domestic outsourcing, but which factors retain households of actual making use of it? This section will identify the barriers.

Tijdens et al. (2000) mentioned that the household are searching for affordable and accessible household services of high quality. Due to these requirements concerning the domestic outsourcing there are some barriers which retain households of outsourcing their household activities or which form the reason why they stopped outsourcing the activities. Windebank (2007) investigated why household will not make use of domestic outsourcing and found some explanations. Firstly, there is the question of financial constraints. 66% of the households declared that they did not have the money to pay for household services. However, as Windebank (2007) mentioned affordability is a subjective concept and is related to the consumption choices. It may be therefore that absolute cost is not the real issue for some.

The possible explanation that is given is that the work in the household is a natural skill for women, rather than acquiring skills. So, this means that the domestic tasks are influenced by the essentialist view of women's capacities and role in life (Windebank, 2007). Additionally, it is also possible that households just prefer to spend their money on different things than household services. Even though the financial situation is a subjective concept, Visser et al. (2014) proved that the price of household service can be a barrier. As can be seen in table 4 the price is even the main barrier. 42% of the households think it is too expensive. In 41% of the cases domestic outsourcing is not necessary, the most used explanation for this reason is that the price is too high in relation to the added value of domestic outsourcing. So in many cases this category is also related to price (Visser et al., 2014).

However, Visser et al. (2014) also researched the requirements for households to start making use of domestic outsourcing in the future. 27% would like to outsource their household activities if the price decreases. This means the price is an important barrier and an important factor in the decision whether or not to outsource the household activities. However, research of Visser et al. (2014) showed that an increase in the price had less effect on the demand than an increase of the administrative burden associated with the hiring of a service employee at home. The average price per hour for a service employee at home is nowadays €9,60, if this price increases with 10% the market will decline with 9% to 25%. However, this increase of the administrative burden (e.g. mandatory payment of taxes or the obligation to keep of payment records) will affect in a bigger decline of the market of 20% to 40% (Visser et al., 2014). Besides this financial barrier there are more cultural or social barriers. One of them is that it is possible that some households just do not like the 'employer' role. They feel uncomfortable by employing other people to do the household's less attractive tasks (Windebank, 2007). Some women who employ domestic service workers feel like contributing to a system of class-based inequalities, which provides them an uncomfortable feeling. Another barrier is taking a third party into the private sphere of the household. This is a problem based on the fact that it is hard to trust a third party with access to all parts of the home (Windebank, 2007; Tijdens et al., 2000). This contributes to another barrier which is the time it takes to hire a domestic employee who is 'capable of gaining the trust of families' (Windebank, 2007). Visser et al. (2014) proved this concern by showing that 12% of the households would like to use domestic outsourcing if the reliability of the performance of the service and of the service employee can be ensured. As Visser et al. (2014) stated, this is also the reason why households make use of recruitment channels like family, friends or neighbours because by doing this they hope to find the appropriate person. By finding the right person it is important that he or she is trustworthy, that there is a personal connection and that he or she has good references (Tijdens et al., 2000). Because the majority of households make use of their own network to find the appropriate person only 4% of the households mentioned the shortage of supply as a barrier for domestic outsourcing. Dutch households mainly outsource their household activities to people they know, if this is not possible than this forms a barrier for outsourcing household activities (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2008). So the bad transparency of the market then also forms a barrier for the domestic outsourcing, because of this it is hard to find an appropriate person outside the recruitment channels like family and friends (Visser et al., 2014).

	Not necessary	The service employee stopped	Too expensive	Bad experience	Cannot find appropriate service employee	The regulation is too complicated	I prefer self-performing	Do not find it proper to outsource household activities
% of total market	41%	15%	42%	6%	5%	3%	13%	2%

Table 4 Barriers for outsourcing household activities, N=1468 (Visser et al., 2014)

### 3.2.3 Conclusion – RQ2

This section will answer RQ2;

*Why do, or do not, households currently outsource household activities?*

Several factors have an influence on whether households purchase domestic services or not, also called motivators and barriers. In table 5 these are summarized.

Motivators	Barriers
1. Time-saving	Financial situation (the price is too high, prefer other consumptions)
2. Convenient of domestic outsourcing (unburden households)	Moral of the women (conservative attitude)
3. Financial situation (yield higher benefit)	Access of third party in home
4. Effort/energy saving	Time related to trusting the service employee
5. Flexibility (not able to perform the inflexible tasks)	Bad transparency of the market (actual finding the appropriate person)
6. Resentment towards household activities	Dislike of 'employer' role
7. Someone else can do it better	Administrative burden

Table 5 the motivators and barriers for domestic outsourcing

The actual motivation to start domestic outsourcing is overall time constraints because of work or other mandatory tasks. Domestic outsourcing can be a solution for households because it is convenient, someone else takes over the responsibility of the household activities. The household can save time, effort and energy. Besides it makes them more flexible concerning time agreements. Besides these reasons, the decision to outsource household activities also depends on the household activity itself; flexible or inflexible tasks and the pleasure associated with the household activity.

The most important barriers concerning domestic outsourcing are related to financial, social and cultural issues. Overall, the price is an important barrier and an important factor in the decision whether or not to outsource the household activities. But if households can afford the service is subjective. Domestic outsourcing is a 'luxury service', which means that households have to see the added value of it otherwise they will prefer to spent the money on other things. Additionally, the administrative burden and the time which is related to hiring a service employee is seen as a barrier and the fact that it is hard to find a reliability service employee because of trust issues. It is remarkable that only 4% mentioned that the shortage of supply is a barrier, this might be because they mainly outsource their household activities to people they know and are not actively searching for service suppliers in the market, so they do not know about the shortage. So, the bad transparency is an important barrier. An important cultural barrier is the fact that household members feel uncomfortable when an 'outsider' is doing their household activities.

### **3.3 Collective domestic outsourcing**

Up till now there have been a lot of studies researching the domestic outsourcing concept of the household activities for single households but none of them has researched whether it is possible to merge the household activities. This section will elaborate on the concept of collective domestic outsourcing by answering RQ3: *To what extent is it possible to collectively outsource domestic tasks?* In order to answer this question this section will start with a definition of collective domestic outsourcing and some early indicators of domestic outsourcing and collective domestic outsourcing. Thereafter it will be investigated to what extent collective domestic outsourcing is possible for households by reflecting on the barriers of domestic outsourcing.

#### **3.3.1 Definition collective domestic outsourcing**

The new concept; collective domestic outsourcing, is defined as:

*Household activities of individual households in a community merged and conducted by a professional on payment*

In this research it is about the voluntary choice to outsource household activities and not because it is necessary or indicated (e.g. by the government or hospital). Thereby, it is about the household activities undertaken in the homes (indoor and outdoor), so this means that this research is focused on the service sector and not the industrial sector like; delivering end-products (like meals) to the homes. The concept of collective domestic outsourcing will only focus on the household services mentioned in section 3.1.2. Households can choose if they want to purchase the services and the frequency of the execution (e.g. daily, weekly, monthly or annually).

#### **3.3.2 Early indicators**

If we just look at the domestic outsourcing market this has made a rise in acceptance in the previous few years on several manners. The main reasons why these services are getting more popular is because of the convenient they deliver and the time it saves for households (Tijdens et al., 2000; Bitmann, 1999; Hermanides, 2016). An example is the rise of the delivering services, this services provide convenient and time saving options to consumers. For example; restaurants are increasingly offering a delivery service but also the supermarkets nowadays have a delivery service in order to help the households save time and provide convenience (Hermanides, 2016). Furthermore, online shopping grows much faster than traditional ones because of; the convenient and access to every store 24/7. Outsourcing the shopping for clothes to a personal shop assistant who knows your personal style based on purchases in history is even getting popular (Horzyk, et al. 2009). The companies who provide these services in order make the life of household more convenient have to be flexible enough to respond to new customer demands or new groups of customers (Well,2004).

These trends towards a more convenient life for households, are forms of outsourcing domestic tasks. Other examples of fully outsourcing services to third parties, so called early indicators, are; the in Dutch called 'tafeltje-dekje' (meals on wheels) and organisations like; Hellofresh, Marley Spoon and Mathijs Maaltijdbox. These organisations provide a meal box with fresh ingredients for several recipes and have made a rise in popularity the last year (Hermanides, 2016).

Additionally, there are early indicators for the collective concept. For example; the neighbourhood watch, whereby the households in the neighbourhood together with the police and security take care of

a safer neighbourhood. Due to the increased use of technology this neighbourhood watch is transformed in a digital communication between the households and the neighbourhood watchers via a Whatsapp-app group. Whatsapp makes possible that they can keep in touch with each other, especially when something suspicious is happening so that they can contact the police (Land et al., 2014). Furthermore, a research showed that there is sharply rising demand concerning the child care (Tijdens, 2000). According to Sullivan and Gershuny (2013) the childcare service is the outsourced service that is found most common and therefore used more often. The child care service is an indicator of collective domestic outsourcing because the service is provided to more households. Another early indicator is the home care for elderly or dependent people. This is an organisation which provides home care for people who need help or assistance with housekeeping, care or nursing. The clients can be elderly, people with chronic illness or people with physical or mental disabilities. The care matches the needs and lifestyle of the dependent persons because the service can be performed at the home of the client. The aim of these home care organisations is that the people can live as long as possible independently at home in a well-known surrounding (thuiszorg gids, 2016). CBS expects that the demand towards the assistant and help at home increases every year with 4%. Mainly because it is expected that in 2030 38% of the people older than 75 needs support or help at home (CBS, 2016), this means that there will be a bigger demand towards tailor made services at home. Another example of early indicators is; the increase of organisations that motivate consumers to cooperate in order to fulfil their needs. For example; Blablacar (connects drivers with free seats with passengers looking for a ride via an app or website), Air-BNB (an online marketplace for the rental and booking of private accommodations) and Peerby (an app and a website that allows you to borrow stuff from people in the neighbourhood) (Bothun et al., 2015).

### **3.3.3 The collective arrangement of domestic tasks**

Overall, these growing amount of early indicators show that people are open to domestic outsourcing and that the market has the potential to grow (Hermanides, 2016). The early indicators which offer a single service to more households or which motivate a 'collaborative consumption' even indicate that collective domestic outsourcing might have possible success in this regard. This is because they have similarities with the collective domestic outsourcing concept; they both provide services to a community, but still it is tailor made service and the early indicators which motive collaborative consumption makes sure people are willing to work together.

However, the majority of organisations provide a single service or a service for a specific group of customers. Collective domestic outsourcing is in this way a new concept because it provides several services to a community (e.g. the general households activities and DIY tasks). So why merge the demand concerning household services in communities? For many people daily life has a certain structure which will be identical to many other families. This means that most people have a collective rhythm of life (Cloin et al., 2013), so you would presume that a collective offer of household services would fit this. Moreover, communities exist of individual households which often have a geographical component. Since, households live nearby each other and most of the time several people know each other they might have similarities concerning their lifestyle (Thomas, 2011). Therefore, it might be possible to merge their needs concerning household activities and offer them collectively to third parties which can perform them. Thereby communities are exclusive for one another so the needs in one community can be different than another (Thomas, 2011). The collective concept is a structure designed to facilitate the individual households in a community. However, the success of any collective concept is bound to how well it

manages the user's desire and the ability to control the process (Thomas, 2011). Therefore, it is important that the desires of households are identified and represented correctly towards third parties.

### **3.3.4 Conclusion – RQ3**

This section will answer research question 3:

*To what extent is it possible to collectively outsource domestic tasks?*

The new concept; collective domestic outsourcing, is defined as:

*Household activities of individual households in a community merged and conducted by a professional on payment.*

The domestic outsourcing market has made a rise in acceptance in the previous few years on several manners (Tijdens et al., 2000). Several single services became popular because they provide a certain convenient for the customers and time-saving options (Hermanides, 2016; Berger et al., 2014). Additionally, Tijdens et al. (2000) mentioned that domestic outsourcing is the only way to substantial decrease the time necessary for performing the household activities. The market of domestic outsourcing has the potential to grow since the level of acceptance is increasing (Bitmann, 1999). The increase of several services show that households are interested in the convenient of outsourcing (Hermanides, 2016; Berger et al., 2014). For example; delivery services, online shopping and a personal assistant. Besides these trends towards more domestic outsourcing, there are also early indicators for a collective arrangement of household services whereby (tailor made) services are provided to more households. These early indicators do not only show that households are more open to outsourcing and the convenient it provides, but they also show what is possible in today's society with the changing mind-set of consumers. For example; the rise in child care shows that it is possible for households to trust third parties, otherwise they would not let their children stay there. So why trust third parties with your children but not with your household activities? The use of home care for elderly and dependant people also shows that this trust is possible if it has to. Therefore, the barriers for domestic outsourcing concerning the moral of the women, access of third parties in the home and the uncomfortable feeling related with the 'employer' role might be rejected. Additionally, there is a rise in the use of domestic outsourcing (Bitmann et al., 1999; Visser et al. 2014; Van der Lippe et al., 2004). So this means that more and more households are willing to spend their money on this luxury product. Another barrier was the administrative burden. In this case it might be that the administrative burden and time for hiring a person are partly taken over by the organisations which provide the home care and children care. These organisations also make sure that the market is more transparent because households just can go to this organisation in order to arrange an agreement with the service employees. Therefore, this intermediating organisation might be interesting for collective domestic outsourcing.

The neighbourhood watch via Whats-app, and the new organisations like Air-BNB, peerby and Blablacar show that households are able to work together in order to fulfil their demand neighbourhood. So co-creation and cooperation of households in a community might be possible. This is also the case for collective domestic outsourcing since the demand concerning household activities will be merged by some citizens into one big demand towards the third parties. This might be possible in communities because, daily life has a certain structure which will be identical for many households (Cloïn et al., 2013). So it might be that households have similar demands concerning household activities therefore it can be merged. Especially the households in a community because these household live nearby each other and most of

the time several people know each other it might be possible to merge their needs concerning household activities. Thereby communities are exclusive for one another so the needs in one community can be different than another (Thomas, 2011).

All in all, the early indicators show that a concept like collective domestic outsourcing might be possible since households are increasingly making use of similar services. So the barriers do not always retain households from making use of it. However, in order to let this new concept, succeed it is, among others, important to remove or reduce the barriers for households to enter the market. If collective domestic outsourcing has the power to realize this will be investigated in section 4. Additionally, it is important to investigate if the concept is feasible with the mind-set of today's society, this will be done in the next section.

### **3.4 Trends and developments**

Before there can be decided whether collective domestic outsourcing can be of added value for households it is important to investigate whether it is feasible in today's society. Therefore, this section will be focused on the trends and development in society which influence the attitude of households towards domestic outsourcing and by doing this influences the demand concerning collective domestic outsourcing. Additionally, the trends and developments among consumer behaviour that might have an effect on the attitude are also investigated per household service. RQ4:

*What are the current trends and developments which influence the attitude of households towards collective domestic outsourcing?*

#### **3.4.1 Trends and development in society**

There are much development and trends going on in society on several themes like; demographic, economic, social-cultural, technical, ecologic and political. However, this section is limited to the trends and developments that influence the demand of (collective) domestic outsourcing and the attitude of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing.

##### **Demographic**

Developments in society which might have an influence on the domestic outsourcing demand is; the ageing population. This is due to an increased life expectancy and a decreased fertility rate (Honigh-De Vlaming, 2013). Another factor that contributes to this development is the decrease of the birth-rate and less children. CBS (2015) expects that in 2030 one of the three inhabitants will be 55 years or older. The generation that is approaching this age is increasing and this has impacts on the health care (Oudijk et al., 2011). This is due to the fact that ageing is often accompanied by physical and mental health problems, so the ageing of population causes a likely growing demand for care in any way (Oudijk et al., 2011). Overall, the elderly are able to do more by themselves and for longer because they are becoming healthier in general, but where necessary they need help from their families and social networks (Honigh-De Vlaming, 2013). When this is not an option these people mainly have to go to an elderly house because they are not entirely able to take care of themselves anymore (Honigh-De Vlaming, 2013). In this case domestic outsourcing might be a solution for them to avoid or postpone going to an elderly house, therefore they may see the added value of outsourcing options and this will have a positive influence on the attitude of people towards domestic outsourcing.

Another development is that the amount of households is increasing. It is expected that the

number of households will increase till 2060 until an amount of 8,6 million households. Due to, among others, the ageing population the amount of one-person households will increase (CBS, 2015). For these households domestic outsourcing might be interesting since they have the full responsibility for the household and labour tasks. According to Tijdens (2000) they spent significant more time on paid labour and therefore they experience a lack of time for the execution of household activities. So this might have a positive influence on their attitude towards domestic outsourcing.

### **Social-cultural**

The mind set and behaviour of Dutch individuals or groups is changing slightly. The Dutch population has experienced a strong trend towards individualisation the past decades (Beer, 2007). De Beer (2007) believes that individualisation is related to detraditionalisation, which means; the loss of adherence of individuals to traditional institutions. Overall, the rise of the transactions through media contributes to the individualisation because households have been changing towards more individual agendas (Silverstone, 2005). Oomes et al. (2014) showed that there is also a decrease of social participation in communities because of individualisation. Therefore, individualisation might have a negative influence on the attitude towards collective domestic outsourcing because households are more focused on managing everything by themselves instead of bundling their needs or powers.

In the contrary there is also an increased interest in collective experiences. Experiencing the same as other people do, or with other people gives an extra dimension to the experience according to Oomes et al. (2014). The rapidly changing world due to several technical innovations increases the need of individuals for collective experiences.

Urbanisation became a trend in the past 25 years in the Netherlands. It is a development that is expected to continue in the coming decades. Of the Dutch population, 83% lives in the cities, in 2025 this percentage will be around the 87% (Hilbers et al., 2011). This means in the rural areas the population is decreasing because the people move to the cities. As a consequence, the cities have more highly educated people while in the rural areas the amount of household and employment decreases whereby the purchasing power also decreases (Hilbers et al., 2011). Therefore, it is easier to find trustful and appropriate employees in the urban areas than in rural zones (Windebank, 2007). This will contribute to a more positive attitude towards domestic outsourcing in the city, since it is easier to find trustworthy and appropriate service employees there. In contrary, the people in the urban places will be less attracted to start outsourcing domestic tasks to third parties.

Furthermore, cultural issues can retain households for making use of domestic outsourcing. According to Windebank (2007) these difficulties are related by inviting a third party in to the most private sphere and the moral of households, especially the women in households. They do not like to play the 'employer' role and make somebody else responsible for the household activities. The essentialist view of the women is related with their responsibility for all the household activities and childcare. This feeling causes a negative attitude towards domestic outsourcing. However, since more women are participating in the workforce this essentialist view of the women is slightly changing. They are more focused on their career and the care of children than the household activities (Houtman, 2002). Therefore, they take the help in the household by third parties for granted more often, which will have a positive influence on the attitude towards domestic outsourcing. However, there still will be families which will find it hard to hire a third party for their domestic tasks (Windebank, 2007).

## **Technical**

Technology has become an integral part of our daily lives (Van Dijk et al., 2000). In the Netherlands the ICT has made a rapid grow among households. Since the early 1990's personal communication systems (e.g. mobile phones, personal computers) at home and at work have greatly facilitated people's networking capabilities inside and outside their homes (Kennedy et al., 2007). The transactions of information on the internet made the households more independent of professionals, the so called 'crowdsourcing' means that individuals make use of professionals or other individuals for information through the internet. By doing this collective knowledge and creativity will increase among the Dutch population (Kennedy et al., 2007). So this might decrease the need for outsourcing maintenance tasks since they are able to do more activities by themselves. This means the reason for outsourcing 'someone else can do it better' is less applicable.

However, in today's society it is 24/7 possible to go online to connect with friends and family for sharing information. This contributes to the fact that people feel more rushed and stressed (Kennedy et al., 2007; Cloin et al., 2014). Therefore, leisure time is more precious and people prefer to spend it on things they enjoy instead of household activities. So the feeling of being stressed might have a positive influence on the attitude of households towards domestic outsourcing. Additionally, the social media, makes people trigger to do anything they want. Due to the digital age, combined with the globalization, there are many more options and choices in live. This is contrary to the life in the past, nowadays people want to do a lot and feel useful, this is a feeling they do not get of cleaning the house. They prefer to undertake something adventurous or challenging, but time is the constraint (Hulst, 2005). Therefore, this might contribute to an increased interest towards domestic outsourcing.

Also in other respects the Dutch households will face an increase of electronics. For example; a greater penetration of electronic appliances in the households (Van Dijk et al., 2000). These appliances are able to decrease to time spent on household activities and therefore they might form a threat on the demand for domestic outsourcing. Especially since the goal of the most technologies in daily life is unburden the people or saving time (Van Dijk et al., 2000), this corresponds with the goal of domestic outsourcing.

## **Economical**

The Dutch economy is growing again since 2014, the activities, exports, employment and the consumption of households grew, it is expected that the economy keeps growing (CBS, 2015). Nowadays the employment is growing so this reduces the unemployment slowly to 7,0% in 2016. In addition, it is expected that the consumption of households will increase in 2016 as a result of low inflation while the wages do not go down (CBS, 2015). This state of grow will motivate households to consume more, therefore they might be more willing to spend money on luxury products or services like domestic outsourcing.

Besides, more women will participate in the workforce since this is getting the standard (CBS, 2015; De Ruijter, 2004). So there will be more dual earners in the Netherlands which causes a rise of pressures from new responsibilities in the paid workforce and the household tasks at home. Time constraint is a main reason to start using domestic outsourcing and since dual earners experience this feeling the most (Visser et al. 2014), an increase of dual earners might have a positive effect on the attitude and the demand towards domestic outsourcing.

In order to facilitate the work-life balance the employers offer the employees several services for example; working at home or offering flexibility of work hours (Bakker and Geurts, 2004). According to De Ruijter and Van der Lippe (2007) the households that nowadays make use of domestic outsourcing are not the ones who have fixed work hours. The study showed that employees with more flexible jobs outsource more often their household activities than taking responsibility for the tasks themselves. This might be because the family members prefer to monitor the household service supplier, due to trust issues. However, if you compare these hours with conducting the household activities by themselves there is still less time spent to observe the third party. So it saves time. Additionally, it is an investment in the trust relationship between the third party and the household. Once this relation is good enough the household will let them do the tasks while there is nobody at home, and then this is what is the most time saving (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2007). So having flexible working hours facilitates the balance of work and home by facilitating the use of domestic outsourcing (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2007).

### **3.4.2 Trends and developments in consumer behaviour**

Under the influence of demographic, social-cultural, technical and economic trends the consumers wishes, needs and decision-making process is also changing. This means the; finding, buying, use, evaluating and disposing of products and services (Nederstigt and Poiesz, 2003). Trends in consumer behaviour that might affect their attitude towards (collective) domestic outsourcing will be described in this section.

In the previous section it is mentioned that digitalisation makes it possible that people can be 24/7 connected. This makes them able to share information and knowledge on and on (Kennedy et al., 2007). This sharing has also influence on the economy. The economy is going towards a sharing economy which entails sharing of products, services and costs (Bothun et al., 2015). For example; organisations as Blablacar, Air-BNB and Peerby. Thanks to the consumer's willingness to use the internet and try mobile apps there are lower barriers to entry this sharing economy. Additionally, this economy shows that consumers are willing to cooperate with each other. For this economy trust, convenience and a sense of community are important success factors (Bothun et al., 2015). The mind-set of sharing products and services will grow in the future as consumers become more trusting of relationships tied to social sentiment and communities of users. Then they will be more willing to lease and share products instead of buying. Nowadays more and more companies are experimenting and see if they can benefit from the trend towards this 'collaborative consumption' (Matzler et al., 2015; Oomes et al., 2014). If this collaborative consumption continues this means that the trust level among consumers is growing, that they tend toward more convenience and that they are more willing to communicate with each other, these three things will have a positive influence on the attitude of consumers towards collective domestic outsourcing because this is also about communication, trust and convenience.

Another important trend is that today's consumers prefer to personalize products and services (Oomes et al., 2014). The consumers want to be recognized as an individual with their own needs, they want to co-create a product or service and they are willing to pay for it. So there is a trend from mass marketing to individual marketing wherein the marketer focuses directly to the individual consumer, groups or segments (Nederstigt and Poiesz, 2003; Oomes et al., 2014). Since collective domestic outsourcing is also focused on a group of consumers and their wishes and needs, this concept will be interesting for households. Therefore, this trend will have a positive contribution towards collective domestic outsourcing. Another trend is that the consumers often have a feeling of being stressed or overworked. Therefore, their interest concerning relaxing and a healthy life style is increased (Oomes et al., 2014). This feeling might influence the attitude towards domestic outsourcing positively because

people prefer to spent their time on ‘relaxing’ than doing domestic tasks.

### 3.4.3 Conclusion – RQ4

The trends and developments that might have an effect on the attitude of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing are divided into negative and positive influences per subject. The overview of table 6 is the answer on RQ 4:

*What are the current trends and developments which influence the attitude of households towards collective domestic outsourcing?*

<b>Trends and developments per subject</b>	<b>Positive influence on attitude</b>	<b>Negative influence on attitude</b>
<b>Demographic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ageing population</li> <li>- Increasing one person households</li> </ul>	
<b>Social-cultural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Urbanisation</li> <li>- Increasing interest for collective experiences</li> <li>- Increase of women in the workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Individualisation</li> <li>- Decrease of social participation</li> <li>- Urbanisation</li> <li>- Cultural issues (essentialist view of the women)</li> </ul>
<b>Technical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing interest among individuals to experience and do more (thanks to social media)</li> <li>- More precious leisure time, (24/7 online)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Crowdsourcing</li> <li>- Increasing use of household appliances</li> </ul>
<b>Economic</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increasing consumption of households</li> <li>- Increasing amount of dual earners</li> <li>- Flexible work hours</li> </ul>	
<b>Consumer behaviour</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sharing economy</li> <li>- Collaborative consumption</li> <li>- Increasing interest in relaxation and healthy life style</li> </ul>	

*Table 6 Trends and developments in today’s society divided per subject*

Overall this overview shows the trends and developments in society which influence the chance of succeeding from collective domestic outsourcing. These developments are related with a) increasing demand for domestic outsourcing or b) influencing the attitude of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing. The trends and development which influence the attitudes of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing are; precious leisure time, increasing interest for collective experiences, increasing interest among individuals to experience and do more, increasing consumption of households, flexible work hours, sharing economy, collaborative consumption, increasing interest in relaxation and healthy life style, individualisation, decrease of social participation, cultural issues. Whereby, the last four developments will have a negative influence on the attitude of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing.

### **3.5 Benefits and drawbacks of (collective) domestic outsourcing**

After researching several influencing factors on the feasibility of (collective) domestic outsourcing, this section investigated the specific benefits and drawbacks for households of collective domestic outsourcing. So, RQ 5 will be answered: *What will be the benefits and drawbacks of collective domestic outsourcing for households?*

#### **3.5.1 Benefits and drawbacks**

Domestic outsourcing will reduce the family's domestic burden (Treas and De Ruijter, 2008), especially for women (Sullivan and Gershuny, 2013). Another benefit of domestic outsourcing is that it is time-saving for households (Van der Lippe et al., 2004). Since collective domestic outsourcing provides the same service for households, but collectively arranged, this will also unburden the households and give them back some leisure time.

A collective arrangement of household activities by merging them may give more insight in the demand of the household services and thereby it improves the transparency of the business-to-consumer market. When supply organisations have a better overview of the demand this might lead to an increase of interest to start operating on the domestic outsourcing market, because a barrier for organisations to operate in the business to consumer market is that they cannot get a good overview of the demand of the consumers (Visser et al., 2014). Tijdens (2000) proved that there is an unfulfilled demand concerning domestic outsourcing, if service companies are more willing to operate in the business-to-consumer market this unfulfilled demand might reduce, because it is easier for households to find appropriate service suppliers.

Another potential benefit of collective domestic outsourcing is the potential to realize economic benefits for households compared to domestic outsourcing. The economic benefit might be achieved by operating on a larger scale thanks to the collective demand, so; the more households participate, the lower the price can be set towards third parties per household service. This strategy is also used in the business and retail market; economies of scale. Economies of scale occurs when products are collectively purchased and people, machines and buildings can be better deployed. However, a critical success factor to realize economies of scale is creating support (Brockhoff and Nienhaus, 2014). The households need to be willing to work together, this means that support concerning collective domestic outsourcing need to be created among the households before arranging the domestic services. Because then there are possibly more participants so the procurement of services can be done collectively and the price might be lower. Since price is the most important barrier concerning domestic outsourcing (Visser et al., 2014) and collective domestic outsourcing might have the potential to reduce this, outsourcing might be more accessible for individuals and families with lower income. This may have benefits for both the suppliers (an increase of the demand) as the households (time saving).

A collective offer of household services will unburden the households because someone else is responsible for fulfilling their demands concerning domestic tasks. This party will merge the demand of household activities in the community in order to find a service supplier. So the recruitment, selection and the administrative tasks related with hiring service suppliers are also done by the representative party. However, there might be a barrier related with this representative party. Because this party, which exists of some active citizens, has the full responsibility to represent the needs of the households in the community. According to Ommes et al. (2014) it is risky to give full responsibility to some active citizens in the community. They have to be able to represent the demand for household activities in the community

and to find appropriate service supplier. Therefore, a possible drawback of collective domestic outsourcing for households is that they have to be able to trust that their demands are represented to the business market the way they want it. So, the households are dependent of the representative party and might be worried about losing control of their internal process in their homes (Oomes et al., 2014). The process of merging activities in order to create a collective demand requires; shared vision, good communication, trust, willingness to engage and an effective information flow. These are one of the most relevant variables to build a community and manage a multi-level relationships according to Reed et al. (2014). In order to successfully merge the demands concerning domestic tasks these variables have to be taken into account.

Besides this trust issues, domestic outsourcing in general also has barrier relating to trust issue with the service supplier. This has to do with the private spheres this employee enters and the trust issues. Households think that the service supplier is less concerned with the welfare of the household than the household members are, and that the supplier may perform household activities unsatisfactorily. Besides, the households are worried of theft of household items (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2008). So, domestic labour is not just work but also an expression of social bonds and this has to do with trust and privacy, which is an important factor for households (De Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2008).

### 3.5.2 Conclusion- RQ 5

*What will be the benefits and drawbacks of collective domestic outsourcing for households?*

Domestic outsourcing in general knows some drawbacks and benefits. Overall, the most important benefits of domestic outsourcing are that it is time-saving for households and it reduces the domestic burden. Both these benefits will give the households some time back to spend on things they actually enjoy. The collective domestic outsourcing will eventually unburden the households more than the domestic outsourcing because of the intermediate who will merge the activities and find service suppliers. Moreover, it might have the potential to have additional benefits, but also drawbacks. These are summarized in table 7.

	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Drawbacks</b>
<b>Collective arrangement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase of supply companies and service employees (decrease of unfulfilled demand)</li> <li>• Potential to decrease the price of household services</li> <li>• Outsourced recruitment and selection of service suppliers</li> <li>• Outsourced administrative tasks</li> <li>• the representative party has the responsibility (unburden the household)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Households are dependent on the representative party</li> <li>• Trust issues concerning the representative party</li> <li>• Less control on household activities</li> </ul>

*Table 7 Benefits and drawbacks of collective domestic outsourcing*

As can be seen in the table collective domestic outsourcing has more benefits compared to the drawbacks for the households. The benefits of collective domestic outsourcing related to the price might cause a bigger demand of domestic outsourcing. Especially because the income of the households is an important factor during the decision making process whether to outsource or not (Berk and Berk, 1979). So, when the price is lower, the outsourcing might be more feasible or beneficial for households with a lower

income. This increase of consumers can lead to a bigger interest of suppliers so this will increase the market.

The trust issue towards the service suppliers is a complicated issue for domestic outsourcing as well as collective domestic outsourcing. According to Ruijter and Van der Lippe (2009) this issue is something which needs time investments. This means that the supply companies need to win the trust of the households, once this has happened the trust issue will vanish. Additionally, the authors showed that greater skills of the service supplier reduce the trust problems.

## 4. CONCLUSION

### General Research Question

**Is there, in today's society, a potential to arrange collective domestic outsourcing in communities?**

In particular, there has been little concern with the question of how the household activities are sequentially organized. So overall, there is not much information about how household chores are organized over a 24-hour period and coordinated with one another (Berk and Berk, 1979). What we do know is that; how household activities are conducted and allocated depends on the structure of the household, for example; the amount of household members and the participation in the workforce of the household members.

This research shows that there are developments in the household structures which contribute to the level of success of the collective arrangement. These developments are related with a) increasing demand for domestic outsourcing or b) influencing the attitude of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing. The increasing demand for domestic outsourcing might be caused by; an increase of dual earners (+), an increase of one-person households (+), an ageing population (+), crowdsourcing (-), an increasing use of household appliances (-) and urbanisation (+/-). The trends and developments which influence the attitude towards (collective) domestic outsourcing are; precious leisure time(+), increasing interest for collective experiences(+), sharing economy(+), collaborative consumption(+), increasing interest in relaxation and healthy life style(+), increasing interest among individuals to experience and do more, flexible work hours(+), increasing consumption of households(+), individualisation(-), decrease of social participation(-) and cultural issues(-). As can be seen there are more trends and developments which positively contribute to collective domestic outsourcing. Besides, literature showed that the income and the time-availability of the households are the most important factors influencing the decision to outsource domestic tasks (Delauney, 2010; Van der Lippe et al., 2004; Tijdens et al. 2000). Since an increase of dual earners and one-person households is increasing, and this influences the time and income of the households in a way that is positive for the demand of domestic outsourcing, this might also positively contribute to the feasibility of collective domestic outsourcing. Overall, it can be concluded that there are more trends and developments in society which increase the demand for domestic outsourcing, and positively influence the attitude of households towards (collective) domestic outsourcing than the inverse. So based on this literature study, it can be concluded that the collective arrangement might be possible in today's society.

However, collective domestic outsourcing also knows some barriers which retain household from outsourcing. If these barriers can be reduced or removed by a collective arrangement, the new concept has a bigger potential to succeed because this might increase the demand. Most of the barriers are

comparable to the domestic outsourcing concept. For example; the price is one of the main barriers (Visser et al., 2014). This research shows that collective domestic outsourcing has the potential to decrease the price; the more participants, the lower the price (Brockhoff and Nienhaus, 2014). Therefore, this barrier might not be applicable for the collective arrangement. When it is possible to lower the price, more households in the Netherlands might be able to start outsourcing household activities. So, as stated in the conclusion of RQ1; domestic outsourcing is interesting for households in the category with little time and a high income. Collective domestic outsourcing might also be interesting for the category; households with little time and low income. However, to achieve this decrease of price the households need to be able to participate in the collective concept in order to have enough participants. So support needs to be created (Brockhoff and Nienhaus, 2014).

Besides the price, there are more barriers for domestic outsourcing. Some early indicators show that these barriers do not always apply because households start using outsourcing options more and more (Tijdens et al., 2000), especially because of the convenience and time-saving they provide (Hermanides, 2016; Berger et al., 2014). For example; the rise of organisations like Blablacar, Peerby and Air-BNB show the willingness of consumers to collaborate in order to fulfil their needs. This mind-set of sharing products and services will grow in the future as consumers become more trusting of relationships tied to social sentiment and communities of users (Bothun et al., 2015). This shows that the concept of collective domestic outsourcing might succeed in today's society, because hereby consumers also have to be able to trust each other in merging, representing and executing the household activities. Therefore, these early indicators show that the trust issue might not be a barrier for collective domestic outsourcing, But, it also shows that the decrease of social participation and individualisation in the society do not influence the mind-set of individuals towards collaborative consumption that much.

Literature showed that there is a rise in child care (Tijdens, 2000) and that individuals are able to use home care when necessary (Honigh-De Vlaming, 2013). The increase of outsourcing these domestic tasks shows that the barriers do not always retain households from outsourcing. However, concerning these services there is mostly an intermediate involved (e.g. mediating organisation) between the household member and the service supplier which unburden households more than by just providing the service. For example; these organisations often take the responsibility concerning administrative tasks related to hiring a service employee. Additionally, thanks to these organisations households know where to go when they are interested in this service. Therefore, these organisations also contribute to a better transparency of the market. But what about; barriers concerning the access of an outsider in the home, the essentialist view of the women and disliking the employer role. A mediating agency is responsible for the execution of the service. So in case of collective domestic outsourcing it is responsible for the execution of the household services. This might reduce the feeling of a 'employer' among households because they are not fully responsible for the supplier anymore (Windebank, 2007). Besides, this mediating agency is also responsible for finding appropriate and reliable people, so they invest in the trust relation with the service suppliers and by doing this reduces a barrier for households to start outsourcing. Ruijter and Van der Lippe (2009) showed that the better the skills of service employees, the higher the trust relationship among people. The better the trust, the easier it is to give someone access in the private spheres. So if the mediating agency makes sure they hire reliable and skilled employees this will also reduce the trust issue. The essentialist view of the women already is decreasing due to the increase of women in the workforce. Women are more focused on their career and therefore take help for granted if this can help them (Houtman, 2002).

All in all, a mediating agency might be a solution for collective domestic outsourcing since it has the potential to reduce or remove barriers which retain household from outsourcing. By doing this it increases the demand towards outsourcing. Additionally, there are also several trends and development which contribute to a positive attitude of households towards collective domestic outsourcing and this makes it able to arrange collective domestic outsourcing in communities.

**If yes, to what extent may it has an added value for household?**

Overall, the most important benefits of domestic outsourcing are the ability for households to save time and to reduce the domestic burden. Collective domestic outsourcing will unburden the households more than just domestic outsourcing. As RQ5 shows, a collective arrangement has several benefits. At first, the recruitment of service suppliers and administrative tasks are merged and the responsibility of the intermediate (e.g. representative party). So this unburdens the households more. Additionally, it may have the potential benefit of lowering the price of services for households and it has the potential to create a bigger and a more transparent market and therefore the amount of service suppliers increases, which makes it easier for households to find an appropriate service supplier. By offering these benefits the collective domestic outsourcing already has more added value than domestic outsourcing.

However, this representative party as an intermediate also has drawbacks like; households are dependent on them to represent their needs. If this intermediate exists of some active citizens it is hard for household to trust them for representing their needs correctly to third parties because there is a chance that they act on self-interest. Therefore, the mediating agency as an intermediate might be a solution. They offer more added value for households since they will be objective, professional and they will have greater skills, which reduces trust issues among people (Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2009). Additionally, the trust issue needs time investments (Ruijter and Van der Lippe, 2009). This means that as well as the mediating agency as the service supplier need to win the trust of the households.

The mediation agency which will unburden the households totally by merging the household activities and providing: 1) service supplier, so the recruitment and selection is also done by them, 2) arranging the administrative tasks related with, among others, hiring service suppliers and 3) offer one point for contact for all household services.

So overall, the collective domestic outsourcing will unburden the households more than just domestic outsourcing and it might have the potential benefit of lowering the price of services for households. Especially a mediating agency which is fully responsible has a positive contribution to the added value of collective domestic outsourcing for households because, they are able to reduce the barriers and offer more convenient by providing one point of contact for all household services. Since household are more interested in convenient nowadays this might also be of added value for them (Tijdens et al., 2000; Hermanides, 2016). So based on this literature study it can be concluded that the benefits outweigh the drawbacks and that collective domestic outsourcing might be helpful and useful for households, so it provides added value for households. Therefore, the formulated hypothesis can be accepted based on this literature study:

H1: Collective domestic outsourcing through a mediating agency has the potential to create added value for households.

## 5. DISCUSSION

In present-day society, households have less available time and more resources at their disposal, both have led to a higher demand for outsourcing. This study shows that collective domestic outsourcing might also have the potential to succeed in today's society, especially via a mediating agency.

However, the reader should bear in mind that this study only researched this subject with existent literature. In order to gather more information about the mind-set and willingness of households it might be interesting to further analyse more recent types of domestic outsourcing in order to research what the attitude of households is towards these services. Additionally, it is interesting to investigate current household structures and their corresponding domestic tasks.

Furthermore, this study shows that for some people the barriers concerning domestic outsourcing do not apply as they make use of child care centres or home care. Since this research is only focused on literature it was out of the scope to gain more in-depth information about this concept. But for further research it might be interesting to investigate when some barriers do not retain household from outsourcing activities anymore.

Although this study has mainly used literature which is focused on the Dutch population, there still might be differences between the willingness and state of mind of households in several regions. The study shows that collective domestic outsourcing might have more chance to be successful in the cities instead of rural areas. This is because there are more households in the cities and therefore the collective concept has the potential to be more beneficial. Because the more households, the more support for the collective concept can be created, the more participants and the lower the price of the household services can be set. That the mediation agency retains the potential to decrease the prices is not found in this study. However, further research can investigate the influence of a mediating agency on the prices of collective arranged household services.

Furthermore, this study only took the service sector of domestic outsourcing into account, so not the industrial sector. The products made in the industrial sector might form a threat for domestic outsourcing (e.g. ready-made meals but also electronic household appliances). In order to know the real influence of these products on the demand for domestic outsourcing this need to be further researched. The same goes for the trend concerning crowdsourcing.

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