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A qualitative exploration of organisational, relational and personally experienced differences between paid public sector work and volunteer third sector work

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WE ARE IN THIS TOGETHER

A QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF ORGANISATIONAL, RELATIONAL
AND PERSONALLY EXPERIENCED DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PAID PUBLIC
SECTOR WORK AND VOLUNTEER THIRD SECTOR WORK

BY
DENNIS JIM FREDERIKSEN

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED 2018



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DISSERTATION SUBMITTED 2018

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SUMMARY

This thesis is the result of exploring differences between doing paid work in a public-sector organisation and volunteer work in a third-sector association.

This is done on the backdrop of a current debate about increased involvement of volunteers in the public sector in Denmark. Part of this debate centres on what the increased involvement of volunteers in public sector work will do to the individuals' *experience* of doing volunteer work. Some have argued that volunteering in the public sector would be unappealing to volunteers as public-sector work takes place under certain sectorial and organisational conditions, which are irreconcilable with the way volunteers prefer to work, and are used to working, in the third sector.

The thesis seeks a broader understanding of differences and similarities between the two types of work by conducting two case studies, where the same person is followed while doing volunteer third-sector work and paid public-sector work concurrently. The aim is to understand how the same person acts in, and responds to - the different types of work, rather than studying two separate groups of people, each doing one of the types of work.

A case study approach has been used, triangulating participant observation, video observation, interviews and documents. In terms of philosophy of science, the thesis is based on a combination of critical realism and philosophical hermeneutics.

Analysis has focused on three levels: 1) the sectorial and organisational level detailing the structural conditions of the work, 2) the situational level detailing the types of tasks and activities the work consisted of, and 3) the relational and communicational level detailing how people in the two types of work interacted with, and related to, each other. Across these three levels, the thesis seeks to involve the experiences of the people doing the work as a way to understand not only how the work can be observed and described, but also how it is experienced.

In terms of findings, the thesis seeks to make three contributions

First, in the analyses chapters, the thesis seeks to contribute with qualitative insight into the numerous and complex ways the two types of work differ from each other in the selected cases. For example describing how the two types of work are structured differently, why that seems to be the case, and how this is

experienced by the person working.

Secondly, in the discussion chapter, the analyses chapters are summarised by asking *what these cases could be examples or cases of* - when distanced somewhat from the details of the specific analyses. This is answered by formulating a number of potential differences between the two types of work, which are placed at each end of a continuum, one relative to the other. One example being that public-sector work takes place in organisations with a long distance between top and bottom (management and workers) - while on the other side of the continuum - third sector work takes place in associations with a shorter distance between top and bottom and less differentiation, if any, between positions of managers and workers. In addition to summarising differences found in the analysis, these potential differences also make up a contribution towards a theory of potentially distinctive features of paid and volunteer work in the two sectors respectively.

Thirdly, a specific finding in the analyses was, that the activities done in the third-sector associations seemed focused on the inherent values of doing these activities, rather than their instrumental value as tools for reaching outcomes separable from these activities. *Doing activities for the inherent value of doing these activities* took place in a third-sector association, which seemed structured around being a *fellowship of people, existing for the sake of this fellowship of people*. In other words, the activities seemed to match the fellowship of the organisation and they focused on the inherent values of doing activities - together in a fellowship. Focusing on these inherent values was made possible by a formalised organisational structure, where positions of authority didn't demand separable outcomes of the activities nor had the authority to actually make this demand if they wanted to. This finding was sought summarised using the metaphorical statement: *"We are in this together"* as a way to describe the third-sector associations studied.

In contrast, the activities done in the paid public-sector work seemed focused on their instrumental value in reaching goals legitimately defined by politicians with the purpose of serving the population. Here, individuals solved tasks for their instrumental value in reaching separable outcomes, and this took place in organisational structures where legitimate top-down authority both required separable outcomes and also exerted top-down control to make sure the desired outcomes were reached. This finding was sought summarised using the metaphorical statement: *"I am here to help you"* as a way to describe the public-sector organisations studied.

DANSK RESUMÉ

Denne afhandling er resultatet af en udforskning af forskellene på betalt arbejde i en organisation i den offentlige sektor og frivillige arbejde i en forening i den tredje sektor.

Afhandlingen er inspireret af en debat om involveringen af flere frivillige i den offentlige sektor i Danmark. En del af denne debat har handlet om hvad involveringen af frivillige i den offentlige sektor, vil gøre ved de individuelle frivilliges *oplevelse* af at lave frivilligt arbejde. Nogle argumenterer for at frivilligt arbejde i den offentlige sektor ikke vil appellere til frivillige, da arbejdet i den offentlige sektor foregår under nogle sektor- og organisationsmæssige betingelser, som er uforenelige med den måde frivillige ønsker at arbejde – og er vant til at arbejde - i den tredje sektor.

Afhandlingen søger at opnå en bredt funderet forståelse af forskelle og ligheder imellem de to typer arbejde ved at lave to case-studier, hvor den samme person følges, både mens hun laver frivilligt arbejde i den tredje sektor og betalt arbejde i den offentlige sektor. Målet er at forstå hvordan denne samme person handler i, og forholder sig til de to forskellige slags arbejde, i modsætning til at undersøge to separate grupper af mennesker, der hver kun lavede den ene af arbejdstyperne.

Som en del af case-studie tilgangen er afhandlingen baseret på en kombination af deltagende observation, video observation, interviews og dokumenter. Videnskabsteoretisk baserer afhandlingen sig på en kombination af kritisk realisme og filosofisk hermeneutik.

Analyserne fokuserer på tre niveauer: 1) det sektorielle og organisatoriske niveau, der fokuserer på de strukturelle betingelser for arbejdet, 2) det situationelle niveau der fokuserer på hvilke typer af opgaver og aktiviteter arbejdet består af og 3) det relationelle og kommunikative niveau, der fokuserer på hvordan folk kommunikerede og relaterede sig til hinanden. På tværs af de tre niveauer søger afhandlingen også at involvere de arbejdendes egne oplevelser af arbejdet, sådan at det kan forstås ikke kun som noget observeret og beskrevet, men også som noget der opleves på en bestemt måde.

Afhandlingen afsluttes med tre hovedbidrag

Det første, i analyseafsnittene er målet at bidrage med kvalitativ indsigt i de mange og komplekse måder hvorpå de to typer arbejde adskiller sig fra hinanden i de to udvalgte cases. Analysen beskriver her f.eks. hvordan de to typer arbejde er struktureret forskelligt, hvorfor det lader til at være tilfældet og hvordan det

opleves af den person der udfører arbejdet.

Det andet, i diskussionsafsnittet, hvor analysekapitlerne bliver opsummeret ud fra spørgsmålet om *hvad de her cases kan være eksempler på* – når de bliver distanceret lidt fra detaljerne i de specifikke analyser. Dette bliver besvaret ved at formulere en række potentielle forskelle imellem de to typer arbejde, som bliver placeret i hver sin ende af et kontinuum. Et eksempel er at arbejdet i den offentligt sektor foregår i en organisation med lang afstand imellem top og bund (ledelse og medarbejdere) – mens der på den anden side af kontinuummet er arbejde i den tredje sektor som foregår i en forening med kortere afstand imellem top og bund og mindre skellen (hvis nogen overhovedet) imellem ledelse og medarbejdere. Udover at opsummere forskellene fundet i analysen, så er det også målet med disse potentielle forskelle, at bidrage til en mere teoretisk forståelse af potentielt distinkte karakteristika ved betalt og frivillige arbejde i de to sektorer.

Det tredje bidrag er en pointe fra analyserne, der handler om at de aktiviteter de lavede i foreningerne i den tredje sektor tilsyneladende fokuserede mest på værdien af disse aktiviteter i sig selv, i modsætning til at fokusere på deres instrumentelle værdi som værktøjer til at opnå et ydre mål. *At lave aktiviteter for den værdi aktiviteterne havde i sig selv* foregik i en tredje-sektor forening som lod til at være struktureret omkring at være *et fællesskab af mennesker, der eksisterede for dette samme fællesskab af menneskers, skyld*. Der var med andre ord sammenhæng imellem aktiviteterne og fællesskabet på en måde og man fokuserede på den iboende værdi ved at lave aktiviteter - ved at lave dem i et fælleskab. Foreningen havde en formaliseret struktur, som gjorde det muligt fokusere på disse iboende værdier, fordi lederne ikke stillede krav om instrumentel nytteværdi af aktiviteterne, og samtidig også fordi de formentligt ikke ville have reel indflydelse nok til at kunne stille et sådant krav, hvis de skulle ønske dette. Denne pointe fra analysen søger afhandlingen at opsummere med den metaforiske sætning: ”Vi er sammen om det her” som en måde at beskrive de tredje-sektor foreninger, der er undersøgt.

I den offentlige sektor udførtes aktiviteter derimod med fokus på deres instrumentelle værdi i forhold til at opnå målsætninger, som er legitimt defineret af politikere med slutformålet at tjene befolkningen. Her var der tale om individer, der udførte aktiviteter fordi de havde en værdi i forhold til at opnå ydre målsætninger, og dette fandt sted i en organisationsstruktur hvor en ledelse legitimt både krævede ydre målsætningerne med aktiviteterne og som samtidig ledte organisationen for at sikre at målsætningerne blev nået. Denne pointe fra analysen søger afhandlingen at opsummere med den metaforiske sætning: ”Jeg er her for at hjælpe dig” som en måde at beskrive organisationer i den offentlige sektor, der er undersøgt.

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Dennis Jim Frederiksen
Aalborg, October 2018

CONTENTS

1	Introduction	13
2	Methodology: Research design	29
3	Methodology: Philosophy of science - Critical realism	35
4	Methodology: Case studies	51
5	Methodology: Philosophy of science - philosophical hermeneutics	67
6	Methodology: The DiaLoop model	75
7	Data sources and data collection	87
8	Theoretical framework of sectorial and organisational analysis	99
9	Review of existing research	113
10	Analysis of situational level - paid & volunteer - Dorthe	135
11	Analysis of sectorial and organisational level - paid & volunteer - Dorthe	169
12	Analysis of situational level - paid - Ditte	207
13	Analysis of sectorial and organisational level - paid - Ditte	221
14	Analysis of situational level - volunteer - Ditte	235
15	Analysis of sectorial and organisational level -volunteer - Ditte	253
16	Theoretical framework for relational and communicational analysis	269
17	Relational and communicational analysis	291
18	Discussion and conclusion	321
19	References	361

[1]

INTRODUCTION

TO BE PAID OR NOT TO BE PAID: IS THAT THE QUESTION?

Are volunteers interested in completing concrete tasks for the public sector in Denmark?

Yes! *say some politicians, while encouraging more volunteers to contribute in the public sector.*

No! *say some third-sector associations, arguing that their members are not interested in completing concrete tasks for the public sector.*

But what is it about working in the public sector that might not appeal to volunteers? How does working in the public sector actually differ from working in the third sector, and how can knowledge of the differences help us support the workings of both volunteer associations in the third sector and volunteer programmes in the public sector? What does looking at paid public-sector work tell us about the nature of unpaid third-sector work (i.e. volunteer work), and vice versa? These are central questions to this thesis, and to answer them, I will start with some more background on the above-mentioned debate, followed by a deeper discussion of the question of differences.

Associations argue volunteers will not work for the public sector

In the years following the start of the financial crisis in 2008, the public sector in Denmark saw some significant changes in terms of staffing. From 2009 to 2014, the number of municipal employees was reduced by 33,000 full-time jobs. The chairman of Local Government Denmark,¹ Martin Damm, was interviewed about this development in 2014. He said he saw this as an expression of a new tendency in the Danish welfare state:

‘In the golden years with lots of money, the public sector was busy drawing all imaginable tasks their way. We are now in the process of delivering those tasks back to civil society, by involving volunteers more and more in helping at care homes and so on. And I actually like that’² (Nielsen, 2014, pp. 6–7)

This statement produced a response from the Danish Youth Council (DUF),³ which started its annual delegate meeting the following day:

‘Did anyone in your associations become volunteers to help the municipality?’ (Scheibel, 2014).

This rhetorical question was asked by Henrik Oversø, vice-chairman of the Danish Youth Council. He went on to assert that DUF volunteers were not to be seen as an extra municipal workforce:

‘The associational volunteers in the DUF member organisations are not to be confused with welfare volunteers. Our volunteers gather around an idea – not to complete concrete tasks for the public sector’⁴ (Scheibel, 2014).

With these quotes I want to illustrate the current debate between politicians and volunteer associations in Denmark. In this debate it seems the politicians typi-

1 Local Government Denmark (Kommunernes Landsforening) is an interest group and member authority of the Danish municipalities. See www.kl.dk

2 This tendency seems to continue, as in 2018 the minister for social affairs, Mai Mercado, called for volunteers to take over some of the tasks currently done by the public sector (Løppenthin, 2018).

3 The Danish Youth Council (Dansk Ungdoms Fællesråd) is an umbrella association for 70 associations working with children and young people in Denmark. See duf.dk

4 The quotations are translated from Danish to English.

cally argue that more volunteers should work to provide welfare services in the public sector. The associations in turn argue that their volunteers are not interested in *completing concrete tasks for the public sector*, but rather *gather around an idea*, as Henrik Oversø puts it. With this remark, he seems to express concern that the people doing volunteer work in associations would lose their motivation to volunteer if the work was like public-sector work. In other words, there would have to be certain aspects of the work being done in the public sector that make it unappealing to volunteers. In his speech, Oversø points towards a specific aspect of public-sector work, namely the completing of concrete tasks. But the whole debate about volunteers in the public sector, points my interest towards the bigger picture of how work actually can actually be said to differ when taking place in the public sector vs. in the third sector. Henriksen (2015, pp. 21–22), for example, argues that there is a more general, on-going tension and discussion between governments' interest in using volunteers as welfare state labour power, on the one hand, and the traditional integrating role membership-based volunteering in democratic associations has played in Denmark, on the other.

This debate was, as mentioned, part of the inspiration for this thesis. Many Danes both have paying jobs and do volunteer work in their spare time. A number of these employed people will be working in the public sector.⁵ If there are significant differences between working voluntarily in a third-sector association and doing paid work in the public sector, then people doing both kinds of work concurrently ought to experience these differences on a day-to-day basis. The debate makes me wonder how people who do both types of work actually differentiate between the two, themselves, and how they might act differently when doing the two types of work. If the associations are correct in their assumption, then there ought to be significant differences between the jobs, because otherwise there would not be a problem with having volunteers work for the municipality. The debate also seems to be taking place on a somewhat general level, e.g. when arguing that working to solve concrete problems in the public sector will not attract volunteers the way *ideas* attract them to the DUF associations. This makes me wonder: what will emerge, if we take a detailed look, and follow individuals doing both types of work?

The merits of eating burned bread?

5 36% of people working between 1 and 40 hours per week for pay in 2012 also did volunteer work (Fridberg, 2014a, pp. 52–54). In 2017 there were more than 700,000 people working in the public sector in Denmark (Statistics Denmark, 2018).

In my personal experience as a public-sector employee who does volunteer work concurrently, there are differences, but specifying what they are is not an easy task. One might think of volunteer work as a 100% freely chosen activity, which by virtue of being the volunteer's own choice, and because no monetary compensation is offered, must necessarily be meaningful and fun. One might ask, why else would the volunteer do it? But as a member of the scout-like association FDF, I sometimes find myself sitting on a wet tree stump eating the burned bread I just over baked over a bonfire, with plenty of smoke in my eyes. This activity is not inherently fun, nor do I find it motivating or meaningful in itself. But as I once heard the chairman of the YMCA-scouts in Denmark say, there is a particular way scouts are *together* when doing an activity like baking bread over a bonfire. This way of being together is not easily weighed or measured, but there is something particular about it – something valuable.⁶ So while smoke gets into my eyes and I feel the wet tree stump progressively soaking my pants, there *is* something I appreciate about being there, in that situation, with those people. But I think it has little to do with the smoke causing pain in my eyes or the water from the tree stump in my pants. I can't tell you exactly what it is, but it has made me curious, and thus forms another part of the motivation behind this thesis.

Contribution -- Who could benefit from this study?

As discussed, there are associations that argue that there are certain aspects of the way paid work in the public sector takes place that will not appeal to volunteers working in third-sector associations. I wish to gain a better understanding of the differences and similarities between the two types of work and the individuals' participation in these. A better understanding of *differences that make a difference to the person working* could help guide future organising of volunteer work in the public sector, as well as give third-sector associations an important understanding of potential pitfalls to avoid in co-operation with the public sector. In other words: if the public sector wants to continue involving volunteers, how can it do so in a way that will appeal to volunteers from traditional third-sector associations? And what could it be about the way work takes place in the public sector that makes it so unappealing to association members? If the associations are afraid that volunteer work in the public sector will look too much like paid work in the public sector (in contrast to volunteer work in the third sector), it becomes important to understand how individuals actually differentiate between doing volunteer work in the third sector and paid work in the public sector. The aim is to gain insight into what it could be that volunteer work should not be turned into, if Oversø is

6 Quoted from memory, Matchpoints Conference, 2014.

correct in his argument. If we understand the differences, it could become easier to organise public volunteering, and it might inform the debate between the associations and politicians.

This thesis will not be able to answer all of the above questions, but the aim is to make a contribution towards them by seeking to establish a sort of case-based *baseline understanding* of how distinctions between sectors *can* be made. I will not try to compare concrete volunteer programmes in the public sector with associations in the third sector, but rather I will try to look at which (defining) characteristics of the two types of work might be important, and which seem not to be. Although many hybrid types of organisations seem to be emerging today, blurring the lines of the traditional division of sectors,⁷ I am working under the assumption that there are still many traditional non-profit associations working in the third sector; these are the subjects of this thesis. Therefore, the aim is to try to understand the two types of work as having relatively stable conditions, rather than seeing them as types of work that are undergoing significant change.

Research Questions

The research questions of the thesis are first presented here, and are described and discussed further in both the current chapter and in the chapters on methodology.

The questions focus on differences between the two kinds of work, and encompass both what can be said to characterise the work *structurally* and how it seems to be *experienced* by the individuals doing it.

What characterises doing volunteer work in the third sector and doing paid work in the public sector respectively? How do people doing these two types of work experience them and differentiate between them? What do the differences and similarities between the two types of work tell us about the particular characteristics of volunteer and paid work respectively and why does that seem to be the case?

Why is this a good, or even interesting, question?

At this point you might be asking yourself: OK, so there is something about baking bread over a fire that appeals to you, Dennis. Good for you. But why does your apparent love of burned bread and its (perhaps somewhat odd) comparison to paid work concern the rest of us? Why is finding these differences interesting?

7 I.e. the public, private and third sector (Klausen, 2001)

Aren't the answers pretty simple?

In the following section I will try to illustrate why I don't think the answers are simple ones. I will do this by presenting and challenging four claims that could be offered as initial explanations of the differences between paid work in the public sector and volunteer work in the third sector.

Claim no. 1: Company time vs. free time

Paid work happens on *company time*, while volunteer work happens in a person's *free* or *spare time*. Volunteer work is then something a person chooses to do with his/her own time – the time left after s/he has finished working for the company. Because volunteer work is done on a person's own time, it is a more freely chosen and enjoyable activity compared to paid work. On a related note, one could also argue that:

Claim no. 2: The necessity of earning a living

Doing paid work is not a free choice. Rather, it is something we all have to do to earn wages and thereby make a living. In contrast, volunteer work is a freely chosen activity, which we are not forced to do, and therefore must be particularly motivating in comparison to the obligatory nature of paid work.

Claim no. 3: You would have to pay me to...

People do the activities that comprise paid work *because they are paid to do so*. This must be the exact opposite of volunteer work, where no payment is offered to make up for unappealing or tedious tasks, which then must not be present, or at least not common, in volunteer work.

Claim no. 4: Different types of activities offer welcome variation

After having done paid work for a 'long day at the mill', the coffee shop, or the bank, it is a welcome change of pace to volunteer as a community fire-fighter or to coach a little league soccer team. The contrast between these volunteer jobs and the paying job tasks of serving espressos or explaining mortgage loans to customers make a very important difference to the people working, and explain why they choose to volunteer. They do so because they enjoy the change of pace that comes from doing something completely different from their paid job.

Challenging the claims

In the following section I will discuss and challenge the four claims above and try to illustrate why I consider them too simplistic and inaccurate to be suitable explanations for the difference between paid work and volunteer work. I will begin by introducing a way of understanding motivation.

Motivation

A central term in this discussion of differences would have to be the idea of motivation or the question of *why people do things*. According to Deci and Ryan, motivation basically refers to being “moved to do something” (2000, p. 54). I consider this relevant to this debate because ‘moved to do something’ is exactly what people are, I would argue, when working in either sector. There are reasons why people are activated towards certain actions. The reasons for being motivated to do something and the level of motivation for doing this something can however, be a complex mixture of different aspects.

People have not only different amounts, but also different kinds of motivation. That is, they vary not only in level of motivation (i.e., how much motivation), but also in the orientation of that motivation (i.e., what type of motivation). Orientation of motivation concerns the underlying attitudes and goals that give rise to action—that is, it concerns the why of actions. As an example, a student can be highly motivated to do homework out of curiosity and interest or, alternatively, because he or she wants to procure the approval of a teacher or parent. A student could be motivated to learn a new set of skills because he or she understands their potential utility or value, or because learning the skills will yield a good grade and the privileges a good grade affords. In these examples the amount of motivation does not necessarily vary, but the nature and focus of the motivation being evidenced certainly does. (Ryan & Deci, 2000, pp. 54–55)

Ryan and Deci make a basic distinction between *intrinsic* and *extrinsic* motivation. When intrinsically motivated, a person does something because of its inherently interesting or enjoyable quality. When extrinsically motivated, a person does something to obtain something separate from the activity itself. In other words, when intrinsically motivated, the activity can be seen as the goal in itself, whereas with extrinsic motivation the activity is the means to another end (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55). On the one hand, this distinction can be applied to *Claim no 3: You would have to pay me to...*, which would then read that paid work is the result of extrinsic motivation, where people do something because they receive something else, namely a salary. Volunteer work would then be the result of intrinsic motivation, because, as no salary exists here, it must be done for the sake of the activity itself.

However, when applying this distinction to the volunteer work example of baking bread over a fire, it becomes difficult to say exactly what is happening in terms of motivation. The activity does not seem enjoyable in itself and hence cannot be said to be intrinsically motivating. Also, it is certainly not for the sake of the extrinsic motivation of getting to eat the half-baked-but-still-burned-on-

the-outside-bread that I find some enjoyment in the situation. There must be some other explanation that can shine a light on that wet and smoky experience. I therefore argue that volunteer work cannot be understood as either only intrinsically or only extrinsically motivated behaviour. It is not clearly the result of one of these ideas of motivation. It should also be mentioned that Ryan and Deci do not treat extrinsic motivation as just one thing, but rather, with their Self-Determination Theory, propose:

that there are varied types of extrinsic motivation, some of which do, indeed, represent impoverished forms of motivation and some of which represent active, agentic states. Students can perform extrinsically motivated actions with resentment, resistance, and disinterest or, alternatively, with an attitude of willingness that reflects an inner acceptance of the value or utility of a task. In the former case—the classic case of extrinsic motivation—one feels externally propelled into action; in the latter case, the extrinsic goal is self-endorsed and thus adopted with a sense of volition. (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55)

Perhaps most importantly, it is not necessarily very clear which particular aspect or quality of a paid or unpaid activity it is that can be said to motivate a person to do this, and in what way this would be the case. As I will get back to, when discussing the role of payment in the following section, I will argue the same will be the case for paid work.

Wage labour and task orientation

Claim no. 1: Company time vs. free time argues that there is a difference between *company time* and *a person's own time*, and that this difference can explain why people would do volunteer work after having done paid work. I will discuss and challenge this idea using Jacobsen (2004, pp. 75–77), who draws a distinction between what he refers to as wage labour and task-oriented work, and uses it to argue that paid work in contemporary society has become task oriented.

Wage labour is with reference to Marx & Engels (as cited in Jacobsen, 2004) understood as work done within a specified time frame in exchange for which the person working receives a specified payment or wage. The wage is paid by a person other than the one doing the work; thus the person working has sold his labour-power to someone else in exchange for payment. Consequently, the labour power of the person working is not her own during the agreed-upon time frame of the work. Instead, this time belongs to the person or company that pays the worker, and this leads to the idea of working on *company time*.

Task oriented work is with reference to Thompson (1967) understood as the state of being oriented towards the task at hand when working. Rather than organising work based on an agreed-upon time frame between worker and employer, task-oriented work is found e.g. in farming communities, where nature demands that farmers work from dusk to dawn during the harvest months, as they need to be finished before the thunderstorms set in. Sheep must be watched when grazing to protect them from predators and cows must be milked at certain intervals. In other words, the nature of the task at hand determines when work needs to be done. In a sense, nature itself decides when work must be done. Thompson outlines three aspects of task-oriented work:

First, there is a sense in which it is more humanly comprehensible than timed labour. The peasant or labourer appears to attend upon what is an observed necessity. Second, a community in which task-orientation is common appears to show least demarcation between “work” and “life”. Social intercourse and labour are intermingled - the working-day lengthens or contracts according to the task- and there is no great sense of conflict between labour and “passing the time of day”. Third, to men accustomed to labour timed by the clock, this attitude to labour appears to be wasteful and lacking in urgency. (Thompson, 1967, p. 60)

It is this understanding of a natural order deciding when work is needed that Jacobsen argues – to a certain degree – can be used to describe how work is seen in today’s (late-modern) society. He first argues that work today is seen as an equally urgent and natural thing to do, and that the requirement to work is seen as natural as well. Just as the risk of naturally occurring thunderstorms would lead farmers to work many hours during the harvest months, we will today understand our work as urgent or as something we need to do. Second, it is similar in the sense that there is no clear distinction between work and free time. The wage labour idea of selling your time to an employer (*company time*), the idea of discriminating between your own time and the time you have sold to someone else, is not found in task-oriented work. Rather, all time is your own, and it is used for different purposes. Today, no clear divide exists between work and spare time, and Jacobsen argues that work is taking up more and more of people’s time. Lastly, the actual work done today is characterised by being task- or project-oriented, hence also making it similar to the original meaning of the term ‘task orientation’ (Jacobsen, 2004, pp. 75–77).

This potentially complicates the question of how people differentiate between

paid work and volunteer work. Jacobsen's thoughts beg the question of how people look at their paid and volunteer work (how task oriented are they?), and what role payment plays in the distinction they make between the two types of work. If the paid work were of the traditional labour wage type, it would be easier to explain the difference between paid and volunteer work. After having sold his wage time to someone else for the entire working day, a person could do another type of work on their own time – a more task-oriented type of work – something they themselves had chosen to do. As an example, it could both feel meaningful to help the local football club by coaching the preschool kids and it could seem necessary to support the community. If this were done after a day of selling your time to someone else, the contrast could easily be seen, and could provide a clear explanation of how people differentiate. But if our paid jobs are (also) characterised by a high degree of task orientation, which brings a sense of meaningfulness, this challenges *Claim no. 1: Company time vs. free time*, and begs the question: how then can we understand why people do volunteer work alongside their paid work?

The role of payment

In task-oriented work, it is also implicitly argued that payment as an extrinsic motivation is in no way the only reason a person chooses to work. If tasks are considered urgent and natural, this also forms part of the extrinsic and/or intrinsic motivation to complete them. This first of all challenges the idea that paid work is something primarily done to obtain a salary, and thereby challenges *Claim no. 2: The necessity of earning a living*, which in turn, thereby calls for a closer look at the possible (types of) motivations for doing both paid and volunteer work. This also seems to be the case, as not every aspect of volunteer work consists of either 'purely' extrinsic or 'purely' intrinsic motivation, as illustrated with the example of eating burned bread.

In the following section I will discuss the importance of payment, as this is perhaps one of the most obvious differences between the two types of work. Herzberg (1968/2003) has argued that aspects of a job that creates *job satisfaction* are different from, and not opposites of, aspects that create *job dissatisfaction*. "The opposite of job satisfaction is not job dissatisfaction but, rather, no job satisfaction; and similarly, the opposite of job dissatisfaction is not job satisfaction, but no job dissatisfaction" (Herzberg, 1968/2003, p. 7).

Herzberg differentiates between *hygiene factors* and *motivator factors*. Hygiene factors are those that must be present in a job to avoid employee dissatisfaction. However, these are not the same as the factors that make people feel satisfied with their jobs and thus perform better. The latter are what he calls *motivator factors*, and he

argues that these are the ones that will make employees move; hygiene factors simply prevent people from becoming dissatisfied with where they are.

Herzberg found that there is a difference between factors that employees report make them dissatisfied, and factors that they report make them satisfied with their jobs. The theory is based on the idea that hygiene factors and motivator factors speak to two different types of human needs:

One set of needs can be thought of as stemming from humankind's animal nature – the built-in drive to avoid pain from the environment, plus all the learned drives that become conditioned to the basic biological needs. For example, hunger, a basic biological drive, makes it necessary to earn money, and then money becomes a specific drive. The other set of needs relates to that unique human characteristic, the ability to achieve and, through achievement, to experience psychological growth. The stimuli for the growth needs are tasks that induce growth; in the industrial setting, they are the job content. Contrariwise, the stimuli inducing pain-avoidance behavior are found in the job environment. (Herzberg, 1968/2003, p. 7)

Herzberg categories a range of factors in each category:

‘The growth or motivator factors that are intrinsic to the job are: achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement. The dissatisfaction avoidance or hygiene (KITA) factors that are extrinsic to the job include: company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security’ (Herzberg, 1968/2003, p. 7).⁸

Herzberg argues that payment is needed to keep people from becoming unsatisfied. He sees it as a way of fulfilling basic, biological hunger, by earning money to pay for basic needs. About increasing wages as a motivation for working, he writes: “Have these motivated people? Yes, to seek the next wage increase.” (Herzberg, 1968/2003, p. 5). Hence, Herzberg considers payment a hygiene factor, and not a motivation factor. In other words, payment is not something that will move people, but merely something that will ‘keep them in place’, meaning they will not become unhappy with their job. Herzberg also argues that many other aspects of (paid) work are important when looking at job satisfaction.

8 Herzberg also uses the terms intrinsic and extrinsic here, but they should not be understood as meaning the same things as they do in Deci and Ryan's usage, when defining different types of motivation.

Turning back to the question of difference between paid work in the public sector and volunteer work in the third sector, one possible conclusion from Herzberg's work is that with an appropriate salary from a paid job in the public sector, *perhaps* payment does not have to play a role in volunteer work in the third sector. Additionally, salary alone cannot explain the difference between working in the two contexts, and it may even play a relatively small role – as long as it is there. To say people do their paid jobs primarily to get paid (*Claim no. 3: You would have to pay me to...*) is too simple an explanation.

As '*Claim no. 4: Different types of activities offer welcome variation*' suggests, another aspect to consider is differences in the actual activities taking place, which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Characteristics of activity versus the individual's understanding of the activity

Another way to look at the possible differences between the two types of work is to examine the actual activities conducted during work time a little more closely. What role do similarities and differences in the actual work activities play, and what role does the working person's own understanding of these activities play?

This question of similarities has always puzzled me when looking at my own volunteer work experience. Why does a pedagogue, after a long working day in a kindergarten, go down to the local FDF group and do activities there that, at least on the surface, seem to be exactly the same as she did as a paid employee a few hours earlier in the day? Could this person not just as well go home and watch TV, spend time with the family, or go out and play some football or a game of bridge with friends?

I myself sometimes run training courses for my volunteer association, which in content and form seem very similar to what I do at my paid job at the university, but I still somehow experience a difference. I see my own role in the situation as different, just as the way I communicate with others seems different somehow. I feel more freedom in trying new things with other association members, and I experience a sense of mutual acceptance among the people there, such that a training course is a kind of playground, where it is okay to act a little out of the ordinary. In contrast, other activities seem very different from each other. There are, for example, very few similarities between baking bread over a poorly lit fire and supervising MA students doing semester projects. And as I wrote initially, the activities of my volunteer work in themselves do not seem enjoyable or motivating to me, but across differences and similarities in content, I still experience the two types work differently somehow.

Activity or attitude

In 1973 Lepper, Greene, and Nisbet conducted a somewhat famous experiment in an American nursery school. A group of children were found who all showed an intrinsic interest in drawing with multi-coloured magic markers when this activity was made available to them. The children were divided into four groups, one being a control group and the other three being an *expected award* group, an *unexpected award* group, and a *no award* group.

The children in the latter three groups were presented to a person *interested in children's drawings* who asked them to draw pictures with magic markers so that he/she could see the pictures. The *expected award group* was told beforehand that they would receive an award if they agreed, and were given one upon finishing the drawing. The *unexpected award group* was not told they would receive an award if they agreed, but was still given one after having finished the drawing. The *no award group* was not presented with the possibility of an award; they were just asked if they would draw the pictures, and received no award at the end of the activity.

The result was that for the expected award group the children showed less interest in drawing pictures during an observation period after the award had been given, while the two other groups showed an interest similar to before the experiment. The children's intrinsic motivation to draw pictures with magic markers seemed to have been undermined by what the authors call *overjustification*. Giving the children an expected reward for drawing pictures – an activity that up until that point had not been rewarded by anything outside the activity itself – had lessened the children's intrinsic motivation to draw pictures in the weeks after the reward was given. The children chose to draw pictures to a lesser degree when this activity was made available to them after the experiment (Lepper et al., 1973) intrinsic interest in an activity may be decreased by inducing him to engage in that activity as an explicit means to some extrinsic goal.

In this case, the activity was exactly the same, but the attitude towards the activity had changed. Members of one of the groups had perhaps come to expect extrinsic motivation for an activity, and hence did not feel the same intrinsic motivation as they had beforehand. So, when discussing the role of differences and similarities in types of activities in the two types of work, it is clear that the person's attitude towards these activities also plays a key role in the equation. In our everyday lives most of us will do many things without expecting or hoping for payment; there could be many reasons why the children chose to draw pictures in the first place. But when payment is introduced into the activity, it would seem that the children's perception of the activity changes from a freely chosen (unpaid) activ-

ity to being what adults might refer to as a form of paid job. In conclusion, one could argue that the question of being paid or not can make a big difference in a person's perception of an activity that is otherwise the same. In this section, I have tried to challenge 'Claim no. 4: Different types of activities offer welcome variation' in saying a) that there are not necessarily big differences between the types of activities done as volunteer and paid work, and b) that across differences and similarities in the actual activities conducted, one must also importantly look at the *attitude* towards doing any given activity.

Back to the beginning – Is the question of payment the (most relevant) question?

This chapter begins with the question: 'To be paid or not to be paid: is that the question?' The short answer would have to be no. It is at least not the most relevant question to ask, if one is trying to understand the complex differences and similarities between paid work and volunteer work in relation to the before-mentioned debate.

Volunteer work is not the opposite of paid work

As mentioned, I would argue that the similarities and differences between volunteer and paid work are many and complex. Volunteer work is not just paid work without payment, just as paid work is not compulsory work solely done for monetary compensation. I have deliberately chosen to use the terms *volunteer work* and *paid work* in this thesis. This is to illustrate that I do not see these two types of work as direct opposites of each other, but rather as different, but in some ways related, concepts. I could have used the term *unpaid work* to describe what volunteers do, but this term puts too much emphasis on the monetary compensation only present in paid work, which, as discussed, leaves little room for the complexity of the situation. I consider the differences and similarities to be much more complex than the question of payment or not. Similarly, the opposite of *volunteer* could be *compulsory work*, but this term puts too much emphasis on the limitations of free choice usually associated with paid work. The differences and similarities between volunteer and paid work, I think, are found somewhere between these opposite concepts.

What I hope to have shown is that the differences, similarities, and relationship between paid work in the public sector and volunteer work in the third sector is a complex mixture of many different aspects. Paid work cannot be reduced to a matter of *company time, the necessity to earn a living, unappealing tasks done only because of payment, or a certain type of activity that leads to a need for variation*. Similarly, volunteer work cannot be reduced to a matter of *one's own time, appealing tasks, or certain types*

of activities offering variation from others. To get closer to an understanding, a closer look must be taken.

This purpose of this initial discussion was to illustrate the complexity of the research questions. This will be followed up with a literature review in chapter 9, where I will seek to contextualise and connect the research questions with the existing research found.

Defining volunteer and paid work

Although I am arguing that differentiating between the two kinds of work can be quite complex, this does not mean there are not differences between them. In the following I will outline an overall definition of the two kinds of work and how they differ from each other.

Volunteer work

I define volunteer work based on the definition used in two large and national representative surveys on volunteering in Denmark from 2004 and 2012, respectively (Fridberg & Henriksen, 2014). In these, volunteer work is defined as being:

- Unpaid (although expenses may be covered)
- Voluntary (i.e. not forced activation of e.g. the unemployed)
- Taking place in an organisational context
- Benefiting someone other than the person doing the work and his/her immediate family
- Active (membership of an organisation alone does not constitute volunteering)
- Volunteer work does not have to be done with the *intention* of helping someone else, but it should indeed benefit someone in order to fit this definition (Fridberg, 2014b, p. 29). In this thesis, I am looking specifically at volunteer work taking place in the *third sector*.

Paid work

The definition of paid work used in the thesis is based on the same characteristics found in the definition of volunteer work. Paid public-sector work is:

- Paid
- Based on a person's own choice to work (not forced activation of e.g. the unemployed, which could include a salary)
- Taking place in an organisational context that is public

- Benefiting someone other than the person doing the work and his/her immediate family
- Active (if we can imagine someone being paid without doing something active in return, this would not constitute paid work by this definition).

[2]

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

As described in the introduction, the aim of this thesis is to gain a better understanding of the differences between paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work, both in terms of how the work differs when looking at it and describing it, and in terms of how an individual doing these two types of work experiences doing this.

My research question is:

What characterises doing volunteer work in the third sector and doing paid work in the public sector respectively? How do people doing these two types of work experience them and differentiate between them? What do the differences and similarities between the two types of work tell us about the particular characteristics of volunteer and paid work respectively and why does that seem to be the case?

In these questions I have made a distinction between the *characteristics* of the work or the work done and the way this work is *experienced* by people doing it. As I have sought to demonstrate in the introduction, the question of what the differences might be is not an easy one to answer, especially when the focus is on understanding the role the sectorial and organisational context plays in shaping what volunteer third-sector work and paid public-sector work can be. As I shall argue

in the following, these structural aspects can influence the way work is done and experienced in ways the people doing the work are not always aware of.

Structure of the methodology chapters

1. This part of the thesis begins with an introduction to my research design, including the different types of data used and the different levels of the work that are described and analysed. This section includes research gap and some existing research.
2. It then focuses on the philosophy of science underlying the thesis, beginning with critical realism, which, among other things, will further explain the choice to use multiple data sources and levels.
3. A case-study approach is introduced as a way of elaborating how studying the two types of work can be done based on critical realism.
4. I then describe how philosophical hermeneutics is a basis for the way I understand the process of analysis.
5. The DiaLoop model detailed at the end further explains this process of analysis, and explains how the researcher and his experiences as a person are involved during analysis.

Overview of research design

First I will briefly introduce my chosen research design as illustrated in figure 2. The reasons for choosing this research design will be explained in detail throughout the rest of this chapter.

In the thesis, I am studying differences between paid and volunteer work done by the same person in two different sectors of society. Although these two types of work could be studied separately, with one group of people in a paid public-sector workplace and another group of people working in a volunteer third-sector association, this could potentially lead to explanations and understandings having more to do with the different types of people in the two groups than with the structural differences between the two sectors and organisations. Instead I have chosen to observe the same people in both contexts, by following two people doing paid work in the public sector and unpaid work in the third sector concurrently.

The first person is a woman whom I will call Dorte.¹ Dorte is a paid librarian

1 All names and other personally identifiable information have been changed or omitted in order to maintain anonymity of the people studied.

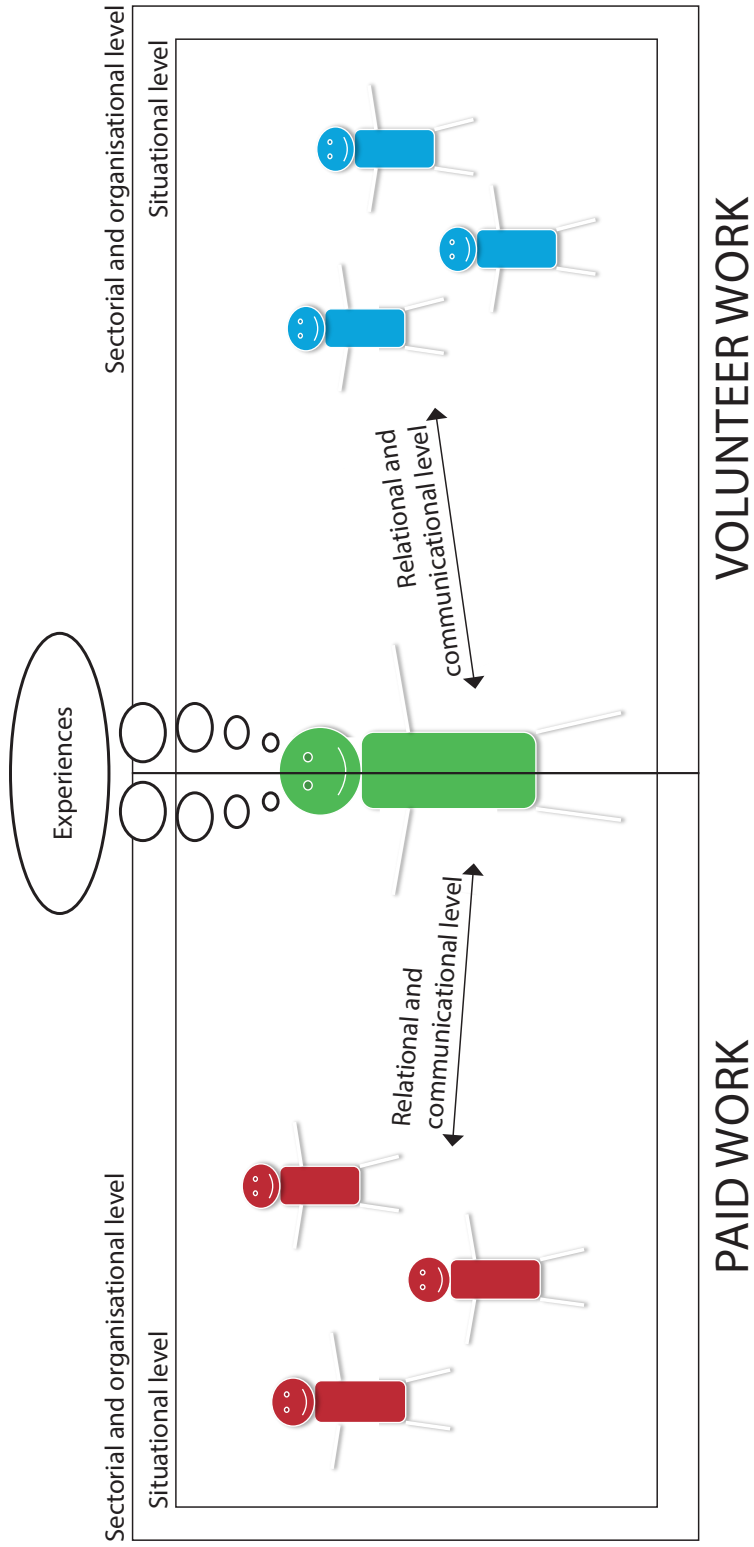


Figure 2. The green person in the middle illustrates Ditte and Dorte. They each do two types of work which brings them into contact with different groups of people, with different types of situations and with different sectorial and organisational conditions. They experience these two types of work in different ways.

at a municipal public library in Denmark and a volunteer scout leader in a local group within one of the larger Danish scout associations (DDS). The second person is a woman whom I will call Ditte. Ditte is a project leader working in a Danish municipality. Ditte is also a volunteer scout leader in a local group of another of the larger Danish scout associations (YMCA-Scouts).

I have followed and observed Ditte and Dorte in their two different types of work, which as illustrated in figure 2, takes place in two different sectors and organisations. By doing this I aimed to gain an understanding of how the same person acts in two different settings and how she understands or experiences doing this. The reason for following the same two people in both types of work was to minimise the risk of finding differences simply having to do with observing different people doing paid work and volunteer work. The idea was that if there were significant differences between the two types of work, Dorte and Ditte's actions and understandings would tell us more about these differences as they moved from one type of work to the other.

At which levels are the different types of work studied?

Below, I will briefly introduce the different levels I will be looking at followed by the specific data sources I will use to do this.

Sectorial and organisational level

As described in the introduction, the two types of work take place in two different sectors of society, namely the public sector and the third sector. These sectors can be seen as macro-level conditions of the work being done by Dorte and Ditte, and I will argue that some of the characteristics of these sectors also influence the ways they (can) work. For example, the tasks of the public sector are often defined by law as a result of a political process. In contrast, the tasks in a third-sector volunteer association can be much more locally defined, e.g. according to members' needs or interests. Differences like these could influence the way work takes place in the two different sectors, just as it could be said that these differences are part of what the work *is*. The sectorial differences will be examined using theoretically based ideal-typical descriptions of the two sectors in combination with descriptions and analyses of the work done by Dorte and Ditte.

Secondly, I also expect the characteristics of the different organisations where the work takes place to influence the workers' actions and understanding of these actions. An example: In the case of Dorte at her paying job, the organisational level involves looking at how work is organised in the public-sector library where she works. Which tasks are done, and how is this work organised? With

whom is Dorte in contact during the workday, what does she do, what are the overall aims of the library, and what goals does Dorte personally consider important? I will argue that all of these aspects can influence the individual's actions and understandings thereof. With this level the aim is to understand the influence these have on the individual, and how the individual understands them.

Situational level

In the course of their work Dorte and Ditte will find themselves in a number of different situations and they will be solving a number of different tasks which will characterise what their jobs seem to consist of. Part of this level is also looking at how Ditte and Dorte seem to know what to do in the two types of work; how they end up doing the tasks they do.

Relational & communicational level

Dorte and Ditte will also find themselves in contact with a number of different people in during the course of their work. The subjects of their conversations, the way they communicate, and the relations between the people communicating may differ depending on the kind of work they are doing and the sector and organisation in which it takes place.

Ditte and Dorte's own experiences

While all of the above may influence a person's actions in different ways, one important remaining aspect to consider is the person's own experiences – how the individual herself sees the differences between the two types of work, whether she considers the sectorial level to play a role or not, and how she thinks about the aims of these different kinds of work.

Returning to my research question, the first three of the above levels are directed at the question of what *characterises* the work, whereas the last level seeks to answer how Ditte and Dorte *experience* their work.

Data sources

The two types of work are studied using a number of different data sources, which have been chosen in order to shed light on their abovementioned aspects. These sources are listed below and will be further detailed in chapter 7 on data collection.

Documents

Range from descriptions of sectorial and organisational characteristics to the half-year activity program of one of the scout groups.

Participant observation

Following Ditte and Dorthe during both their paid public-sector work and their volunteer third-sector work.

Video observation

Video recording the focus persons during both paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work.

Interviews

Talking with Ditte and Dorthe about their work, including discussing the other data sources and work-in-progress analyses.

Literature

Existing studies and theories on public- and third-sector work, volunteering, and communication, among others.

[3]

METHODOLOGY PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE: CRITICAL REALISM

The philosophy of science this thesis is based on is a combination of two approaches: a critical realist and a hermeneutical approach. In the following, I will first present the critical realist approach, using the two classical terms ontology and epistemology as defined by Fuglsang, Olsen og Rasborg (2013, p. 32).

I understand **ontology** as the study of *being* or the study of ‘what there is.’ I will use the term to outline how I see the world and the consequences this has for my chosen field of research.

I understand **epistemology** as the study of *knowledge* or, in research, the assumptions about what we can say something about and how we can do this. The epistemology of the thesis is closely related to my ontological point of departure, as the way I understand the makeup of the world has consequences for what I am able to say about it.

Critical realism

The British philosopher Ray Bhaskar is said to be the founder of critical realism. He sees critical realism as a *realist* philosophy of science, meaning that the critical realist believes the world exists independently from our knowledge about it. This is in opposition to, among others, *empirical* realism, which argues that

reality consists entirely of the things that can be discovered using our senses. In critical realism, ontology cannot be reduced to epistemology – questions about what exists cannot be reduced to our knowledge or discourses about what exists (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 23, 2012, p. 278).

Bhaskar argues that knowledge should be seen both as a product of the person who produced it, and as being about some things in the world:

Any adequate philosophy of science must find a way of grappling with this central paradox of science: that men in their social activity produce knowledge which is a social product much like any other, which is no more independent of its production and the men who produce it than motor cars, armchairs or books, which has its own craftsmen, technicians, publicists, standards and skills and which is no less subject to change than any other commodity. This is one side of 'knowledge.' The other is that knowledge is 'of' things which are not produced by men at all: the specific gravity of mercury, the process of electrolysis, the mechanism of light propagation. None of these 'objects of knowledge' depend upon human activity. If men ceased to exist sound would continue to travel and heavy bodies fall to the earth in exactly the same way, though ex hypothesi there would be no-one to know it. (Bhaskar, 1998, p. 16)

The transitive and intransitive dimensions of research

As a consequence of distinguishing between the world and our knowledge about it, and as a way to move away from putting humans and our sensory experiences at the center of everything, critical realism divides research into two dimensions: the intransitive dimension and the transitive dimension.

The **transitive dimension** consists of our knowledge about the world. This is where theories, paradigms, data, models, descriptions, and research methods are placed, and consequently this also makes up the epistemological part of critical realism. Bhaskar argues that the transitive dimension contains the raw materials for producing new knowledge, as the existing knowledge in the world is indispensable when producing new knowledge (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, pp. 21–22). My observations, field notes, video recordings, and interviews are part of this dimension, and are thus not seen as accurate representations of the world as it is, but rather as observations of some parts of the world, as seen from certain perspectives. The same is the case for the knowledge I produce about this world.

The **intransitive dimension** is the world as it exists, and this is also what the transitive dimension produces knowledge about and makes observations of. The

world as it exists is the object of our research, but ontologically the world and the objects in the world exist independently from our observations and epistemological knowledge about them. Ontologically, Earth did not change its shape because we epistemologically went from a flat Earth theory to a round Earth theory. The relationship between the world and our knowledge about it does however become more complex when discussing social phenomena, as there will be a closer connection between the transitive and intransitive dimensions than in the case of our globe as a physical object. Nevertheless, the main idea is still that things in the world do not automatically change as a direct consequence of a change in our understanding or observation of them. The transitive and intransitive dimension are not the same, and they are also not glued together in one specific way (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 22; Sayer, 2000, pp. 10–11). Bhaskar exemplifies it this way: “Transitive knowledge and intransitive objects, beliefs and beings, thought and things, descriptions and referents, can each now change without a corresponding change ... in the correlative term on the other side of the TD/ID divide.” (1986/2009, p. 35)²

Differences between researchers and people studied

In this thesis, I will be studying Dorthé and Ditte and their ontologically existing paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work. In other words, they along with their work belong to the intransitive dimension, whereas my knowledge and understanding of them and their work belong to the transitive dimension (see table 1). The ontologically existing way Ditte understands her volunteer work will not necessarily change because this thesis epistemologically finds a new way to describe and interpret this work. It could, if she reads the thesis and finds new meaning to her volunteering, or if she gains new insights from being interviewed about her work, but this will not necessarily be the case. Similarly, the organisational structure of Dorthé’s local scout group will not automatically change as a result of the words written on this page. Another way to put it is that different theories could provide different understandings of something Ditte does during her paid work, but this would again not change how the work is done. If Ditte, hypothetically, told a co-worker that she did not like something that person had written, Goffman’s (1955) theory on *facework* could be used to argue that this threatened the co-worker’s social value (her *face*). This would make Ditte appear, to use Goffman’s term, *heartless*. The very same action could, using Carl Rogers’s theory on what constitutes *quality in interpersonal encounters* be seen as *congruent*; this would lead us to understand Ditte as being *genuine* and without

2 TD = transitive dimension; ID = intransitive dimension

façade in her relationship with her co-worker (Rogers, 1962) These opposing epistemological interpretations of Ditte’s comment will not change anything about the ontological reality of what Ditte actually said, did, or thought.

Dimension	In this thesis
<p>Transitive dimension The things we study with – theory and resources of science.</p>	<p>The researcher The knowledge about the intransitive dimension obtained by the researcher through this thesis.</p>
<p>Intransitive dimension The things we study – physical or social.</p>	<p>The people studied The paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work conducted by Ditte and Dorthe respectively.</p>

Table 1. Transitive and intransitive dimensions and their relation to the researcher and the people studied.

Equally, Ditte’s ontologically existing understanding of her work, or the organisational structure of Dorthe’s local group, could change over time, or this study could fail to grasp them properly, such that though these things would exist ontologically and intransitively, they would not be reflected epistemologically and transitively in the findings. Although the latter is naturally not a desirable outcome for this thesis, critical realism tells us that it *could* be the case. It also tells us that ontologically there can be things that research does not epistemologically have access to. In a sense, critical realism instils a certain amount of humility into the researcher in regards to how certain they can be of their conclusions. As I shall explain further later on, one way of seeking likely explanations matching the ontologically existing reality is by using a case-study approach where different data sources and perspectives are triangulated.

Differences between physical and social phenomena

There are, however, differences between the shape of the earth – a physical object – and the understanding of doing volunteer and paid work, a less tangible and more psychological or social phenomenon. While the distinction between the transitive and intransitive dimension seems to focus on research, the same

basic idea of distinguishing between the world and our understanding of it must also apply to the people being studied as part of the research process. For example, in the case of a conflict between two people, it becomes difficult to say that a conflict exists unless at least one of the involved participants understands their relation to each other as being in conflict. Hence, a social collision of people is more concept-dependent than the collision of two asteroids in outer space (Outhwaite, 1987, p. 46). This means that for researchers to study, for example, conflicts between people, they must study something partially concept-dependent, but looking at it as part of the intransitive dimension.

What are the consequences of distinguishing between a transitive and an intransitive dimension? On the one hand, this distinction tells us that Ditte's two types of work exist, regardless of whether I as a researcher write or think anything about them. Ditte will do her work regardless of whether I as a researcher do my work, although the research process itself could, as mentioned, influence what Ditte thinks about her work. This distinction also tells us that we cannot reduce what volunteer work *is* to, for example, the simple, somewhat observable fact that it is *unpaid*.

On the other hand, this distinction tells us that because Dorte and Ditte's work is, at least in part, a social phenomenon, it is not completely independent from concepts, understandings, and descriptions of the transitive dimension. While building a fire requires physical objects like wood, an axe, paper, and some matches - the reasons for building a fire will most likely be dependent on the understanding of this activity that the people doing it have. Thus we cannot argue that the idea of volunteering or being a member of a scout association exists completely independent of our concepts and understandings of it; this idea is made up in part of people's concepts and understandings thereof. Ditte's actions take place in a world that in part exists regardless of what she thinks of it, and in part is made up of what she and others think about it. All of this is the intransitive dimension: it is things we study, and ontologically, some of these things are concept-dependent while others are not.

On an epistemological level, I am studying the ontologically existing world, both the parts that are concept-dependent and the ones that are concept-independent. In table 1 I have outlined how the relationship between the intransitive and transitive changes when looking at these dimensions from the perspective of the people studied versus that of the researchers doing the studying. In both cases, physical objects are concept-independent, while social phenomena can be linked with concepts describing them.

People studied	Researchers
<p>Physical objects, like the Earth will not change shape just because people (studied by researchers) think or write something about them.</p>	<p>Physical objects, like the Earth will not change shape just because researchers think or write something about them.</p>
<p>Social phenomena, like a conflict between two people, can only exist if at least one of them sees themselves as in conflict; in that sense, a conflict is concept-dependent (Outhwaite, 1987, p. 46). Thus, in this case, there has to be a connection between the world and this person's understanding of it in order for part of the world to be what it is here – in conflict.</p> <p>Researchers can think and write whatever they want without changing the nature of this conflict.</p>	<p>Social phenomena, like a conflict between two people, can be studied as part of the intransitive dimension. While one of the two people in conflict must think they have a conflict, this conflict will not necessarily change based on what the researcher thinks or writes about it. In this case, it is still part of the intransitive dimension in relation to the researcher's understanding of it.</p>

Table 2. Relationship between the transitive and intransitive dimensions for people studied and the researchers studying them

In other words, social phenomena can be studied as part of the intransitive dimension, because although they are partially dependent on the concepts and ideas of the people being studied, they are not automatically dependent on the concepts and ideas of the researcher doing the studying.

Looking back

Studying things which have already happened, does not rule out the intransitivity of social phenomena. As an example, World War I happened the way it did independently of how it is described today (Outhwaite, 1987, p. 46), just as the work done by Ditte and Dorte and the conversations they have had with colleagues happened the way they did, regardless of anything written in this thesis at this point.

However, as the case-study approach (see chapter 4) used in this thesis entails studying present-day social phenomena as they unfold, the critical realist researcher must be aware of the influence he has on the reality he is studying. However, this influence should not, according to Sayer, be overestimated:

Things are a little more complicated regarding the social world, for it is socially constructed and includes knowledge itself, and it therefore cannot be said to exist independently of at least some knowledge, though it is more likely to be past knowledge than that of contemporary researchers. When researchers change their minds it is unlikely to produce a significant change in the phenomena they study. For the most part, social scientists are cast in the modest role of construing rather than ‘constructing’ the social world. (Sayer, 2000, p. 11)

I will also argue that regardless of my presence during participant observation, Ditte still has to welcome the young people to her weekly scout meeting and explain to them the plan for the meeting. When there is a conflict in one of the groups, she still has to handle this problem. When she is attending a meeting at work about designing a questionnaire, she still needs to find the information required, regardless of my presence and any transitive dimension thoughts I might have. In this sense, the participating observer could overestimate his impact on the ontologically existing world.

Consequences

What could be the consequences for 1) this distinction between the world and my interpretation of it and 2) the difference between the people studied and me as the researcher studying them?

I am trying to understand the differences between two different kinds of work done by the same person, but I cannot know for sure whether my epistemological understandings will correspond with the ontologically existing world. Because this person being studied will also have limited access to the world (Ditte’s thoughts about her work are not the same as what Ditte’s work ontologically *is*, although the two are related), I cannot rely solely on asking this person about the world, e.g. by interviewing her. This would only grant me access to the aspects of Ditte’s work that she sees and thinks about, and although this perspective is important, I could potentially leave out other important aspects that influence Ditte’s work and how she experiences it without her being aware of them. To further complicate things, my access to Ditte’s experiences of her work are limited by the initially presented idea that my understandings as a researcher will not

necessarily correspond with the world as it is.

One way to illustrate this is by using the Johari window, a model that is based on ideas from psychology (Alrø, Dahl, & Schumann, 2016, p. 25), but which can also illustrate the point I am making here based on critical realism's distinction between reality and our understanding of it. Figure 1 is the model as presented by Luft (1969), slightly adapted to critical realism.

	Known to person being studied	Not known to person being studied
Known to researcher	Open area	Blind area
Not known to researcher	Hidden area	Unknown area

Figure 1. The Johari window adapted to Critical Realism

All four quadrants together illustrate the world as it ontologically and intransitively exists.

1. **The open area** is parts of the world that both the researcher and the person studied knows about; this is also part of the transitive dimension of research.
2. **The blind area** is parts of the world that the researcher knows about and the person being studied does not know about; this is also part of the transitive dimension of research.
3. **The hidden area** is parts of the world that the researcher does not know about, but the person being studied does know about. This could become part of the transitive dimension of research if the researcher manages to uncover it, changing it to the open area.
4. **The unknown area** is parts of the world that neither the researcher nor the person studied knows about. It exists, but none of them are aware of it, making it the most difficult part to uncover.

(Luft, 1969, p. 13)

The Johari window, on the one hand, highlights the fact that there are parts of the world that are hidden or unknown. These can potentially be uncovered by

the researcher together with the people studied by, for example, using several data sources and perspectives, as recommended by the case-study approach, as a way to gain insights into some of these areas. An example would be showing Ditte video recordings of conversations she has had at work, perhaps showing her details and ways of interacting she was not fully aware of. On the other hand, the Johari window also shows that there may be parts of the world that influence our behavior and understanding of this world, but which remain unknown to us. As I will discuss further, I have involved several data sources and perspectives in the study; this is also one of the reasons my research question includes both the characteristics of the two kinds of work and how they are experienced by the worker.

Critical realism also has another way of looking at parts of the world which could be said to be hidden, but where Johari describes the personal (psychological) ability to see certain things, critical realism takes a more structural perspective when distinguishing between observable and non-observable parts of the world.

Critical realist ontology: The three domains of the world

In addition to differentiating between the world and our knowledge about it, critical realism also divides the world into three different domains. The domain of Empirical, of Actual and of Real.

The **domain of Empirical** consists of our observations and our experiences. The **domain of Actual** consists of all events that take place, regardless of whether someone experiences them. (Thus the domain of Actual includes the domain of Empirical) “Events or outcomes are what critical realists investigate, that is the external and visible behaviours of people, systems and things as they occur, or as they have happened.” (Easton, 2010, p. 120) In addition to containing the domain of Empirical and Actual, the **domain of Real** consists of structures and mechanisms that are not directly observable, but which under certain circumstances generate or support events and phenomena in the actual domain. The three domains are different from one another because critical realism understands non-observable structures as real but different from the events they generate in the domain of Actual, and different again from the way these events are experienced or observed in the domain of Empirical. They are also different because to a critical realist appearances are deceptive, in the sense that the way we think the world is made up, is not necessarily the way the world actually is (Bhaskar, 1998, p. 41; Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 24).

The domains of Empirical and Actual, together make up the exact flat earth worldview (or ontology) of empirical realists. Empirical realists believe the world

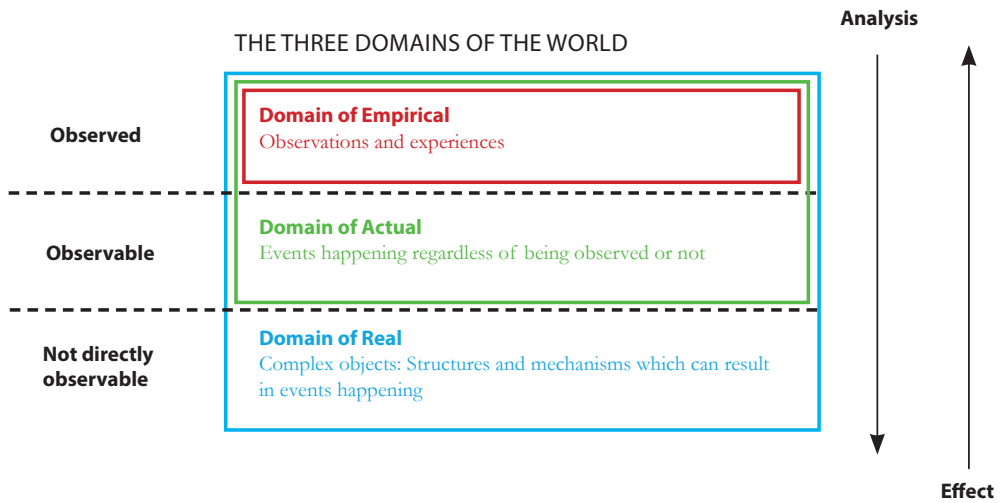


Figure 3. The three domains of the world (Bhaskar, 1998, p. 41; Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 24) including a direction of analysis and effect (Kringelum, 2017, p. 58).

exclusively consists of potentially observable phenomena and events (Actual) along with experiences and observations (Empirical) (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 24). Bhaskar argues against this ontology by saying that for researchers to experience something they must use sense-perception, and that for this idea of sense-perception to be intelligible (to make sense in itself) the object perceived must be intransitive. First, if an object does not exist independently of the researcher's perception of it, how can she then perceive it? And second, how can different people perceive the same object differently? (Bhaskar, 1998, pp. 23–24)

If changing experience of objects is to be possible, objects must have a distinct being in space and time from the experiences of which they are the objects. For Kepler to see the rim of the earth drop away, while Tycho Brahe watches the sun rise, we must suppose that there is something that they both see (in different ways). Similarly, when modern sailors refer to what ancient mariners called a sea-serpent as a school of porpoises, we must suppose that there is something which they are describing in different ways (Bhaskar, 1998, p. 24).

As I shall discuss further in the section concerning philosophical hermeneutics, Gadamer would probably agree with Bhaskar here insofar as the way people perceive or interpret the world is never from a neutral point of view. Gadamer would probably argue that the reason the sailors reach different conclusions is because their interpretation of an object they perceive will always be based on their historically effected consciousness, and this means that any given inter-

pretation of an object is subject to the contemporary historical reality of the interpreter (Højbjerg, 2013, pp. 304–305). Consequently, the object can also, in Gadamer’s view, be the same, but the interpretation of the sense-perception of the object will differ.

Critical realists emphasise the third domain, the domain of Real. Their ambition is to dive down under the observable surface and uncover some of the unobservable structures and mechanisms that generate or cause observable phenomena and events (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 24, 2012, p. 282). This is illustrated by the *analysis arrow* pointing downwards in figure 3, where the *effect arrow* pointing the other way seeks to illustrate how non-observable structures generate events that take place and can be observed (Kringelum, 2017).

Causality: Complex objects in the domain of Real

Critical realism is interested in causality, but not in terms of cause and effect. Critical realists do not believe that one event or object influences another in one specific way based on certain rules (Sayer, 2002, p. 104).

Rather, under the directly observable surface in the domain of Real we find what critical realists call complex objects, which are able to do certain things. These are objects characterised by two things:

1. They have certain causal powers, meaning certain things they can do or certain ways they can act. These causal powers can in turn affect other objects in the domain of Real.
2. This is because all complex objects also have liabilities, meaning certain ways it is possible for them to be affected by the causal powers of other complex objects (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 25).

Sayer presents the following example:

On the realist view, causality concerns not a relationship between discrete events (‘Cause and Effect’), but the ‘causal powers’ or ‘liabilities’ of objects or relations, or more generally their ways-of-acting or ‘mechanisms’. People have the causal powers of being able to work (‘labour power’), speak, reason, walk, reproduce, etc., and a host of causal liabilities, such as susceptibility to group pressure, extremes of temperature, etc. Often the causal powers inhere not simply in single objects or individuals but in the social relations and structures which they form. Thus the powers of a lecturer are not reducible to her characteristics as an individual but derive from her interdependent relations with students, colleagues, administrators, employer, spouse, etc. Powers and liabilities can exist whether or not

they are being exercised or suffered; unemployed workers have the power to work even though they are not doing so now and iron is liable to rust even though some pieces never get the chance to. On this view then, a causal claim is not about a regularity between separate things or events but about what an object is like and what it can do and only derivatively what it will do in any particular situation. (Sayer, 2002, pp. 104–105)

An object cannot be reduced to being something in itself. It is only what it is by virtue of its causal powers and liabilities; these tell us something about what this complex object can do (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 25). In this understanding of causality, the question of whether a causal power or liability of an object is activated or suffered is contingent – it is a possibility, but not a necessity; we cannot predict whether it will happen. It is conditioned by other objects, their causal powers and liabilities, and whether or not these will meet, support, or block each other in potentially complex combinations (Sayer, 2002, p. 107).

With the transitive and intransitive dimensions and the Johari window, I focused on personal experiences, i.e. the access the persons studied and I as the researcher studying them have to the world, and the relationship between our (potentially different) understandings of the world and the world itself.

In contrast to this, the three domains of the world, and the complex objects in the real domain, explain more specifically how the ontologically existing world is, and how the sometimes unobservable and complex interactions between different objects make it difficult to predict the future or to understand the world accurately based on observations of it.

Epistemology

What can we then say about something and how can we do this? When ontologically understanding the observable world as influenced by the complex interaction of non-observable objects with different causal powers and liabilities, it becomes epistemologically impossible to predict the future. Although tomorrow will in crucial ways look a lot like today, we cannot know this for sure, and we cannot predict exactly how it might differ. Among other things, this is the case because we as humans have a creative capacity and make intentional and morally based choices, which are not always in line with our previous behavior or way of thinking. Rather than trying to predict the future, the critical realist puts his emphasis on interpreting and explaining existing phenomena. The ambition of a critical realist researcher is essentially to move from knowledge about observable and observed phenomena to knowledge about the non-observable structures and mechanisms that generate or cause these phenomena (Buch-Hansen &

Nielsen, 2012, pp. 284–285). In this thesis one of my aims is to move from the assumption that paid public-sector work in fact differs from volunteer third-sector work to an understanding of some of the underlying mechanisms that cause this work to be seen and experienced as different on the surface. As we shall see later in the analysis, it seems that the activities conducted in volunteer scout work differ from the activities of the paid work of both Dorthe and Ditte in the sense that the scout activities in some ways do not seem to have an instrumental purpose outside themselves. This interpretation is not based on any single observation, nor will I argue that this phenomenon actually can be directly observed as such. Ditte and Dorthe do not seem to deliberately frame their scouting activities as having no instrumental purpose, but based on, among other things, their actions, their thoughts from interviews, and a structural understanding of the scout associations they take part in - this still seems to be the case - although this interpretation cannot be said to be the result of any (number of) observations.

Critical realist research looks for a special type of causation in terms of *causal mechanisms*:

[C]ausation is not understood on the model of regular successions of events, and hence explanation need not depend on finding them, or searching for putative social laws. The conventional impulse to prove causation by gathering data on regularities, repeated occurrences, is therefore misguided; at best these might suggest where to look for candidates for causal mechanisms. What causes something to happen has nothing to do with the number of times we have observed it happening. Explanation depends instead on identifying causal mechanisms and how they work, and discovering if they have been activated and under what conditions. (Sayer, 2000, p. 14)

Practical methodology: Retroduction

The question now becomes, how we can move from something observable down to the unobservable? A critical realist approach lies in the term *retroduction*.

Retroduction (or retroductive reasoning) is form a logical inference, that according to Buch-Hansen and Nielsen (2012, p. 304) is related to abduction³ and

3 Abduction and retroduction is seemingly by some researchers like Jespersen (2013) used as two terms describing the same concept, while others distinguish between the two as different but related terms. See Kringelum (2017, pp. 67–69) for a discussion of some of these differentiations.

which can perhaps best be explained by contrasting it with the more classic deductive reasoning. Deductive reasoning is a logical movement, which involves reaching a conclusion through logical reasoning based on one or more statements or premises.

It can, as exemplified in Alrø, Dahl, & Schumann (2016, p. 180), consist of matching a specific case or entity to a general rule, thereby reaching a conclusion:

- Premise 1: All men are mortal (the general rule)
- Premise 2: Enok was a man (single case)
- Conclusion: Enok is mortal (result)

In retroductive reasoning, the process begins with the conclusion, which is already given: there are observable phenomena in the domain of Empirical or Actual (e.g. the notion that paid work differs from volunteer work), and the task of the researcher is now to infer which premise(s) in the domain of Real, could lead to this given conclusion. With this type of reasoning, the strict logical approach of deduction (as exemplified above) cannot be used and must be replaced with qualified guessing. Using retroductive reasoning, the task is to point out which necessary conditions (liabilities) and deep causal relations would most likely have to exist for this conclusion to be the case. This way of reasoning involves both creativity and using imagination as a researcher, and at times it includes using analogies or metaphors in explanations (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2012, p. 304).

Sayer explains retroduction this way:

Wherever possible, we try to get beyond the recognition that something produces some change to an understanding of what it is about the object that enables it to do this. In some cases, such as that of gravity or the connection between a person's intentions and actions, we know little about the mechanisms involved. What we would like in these latter cases, and what we already have in cases such as the conductivity of copper or the erosive power of a river, is a knowledge of how the process works. Merely knowing that 'C' has generally been followed by 'E' is not enough: we want to understand the continuous process by which 'C' produced 'E', if it did. This mode of inference in which events are explained by postulating (and identifying) mechanisms which are capable of producing them is called 'retroduction'. In many cases the mechanism so retroduced will already be familiar from other situations, and some will actually be observable. In others, hitherto unidentified mechanisms may be hypothesised. In the history of lay and scientific knowledge there are both cases where

such hypotheses have later been corroborated (e.g. viruses, capillaries) and where they have been rejected (witchcraft, heat as a substance). The philosophy of science cannot, of course, provide guarantees of success! (2002, pp. 106–107)

Easton suggests using the question format: “What caused the events associated with the phenomenon to occur?” (2010, p. 123) when working with retroduction in analysis.

An example of retroduction and triangulation

When Dorthé instructs a group of scout children to make a sword out of duct tape, foam mats and conduit pipes, I can observe that she acts and communicates in certain ways: for example, she seems quite keen to get everyone involved; her actions seem to be mainly reactions to questions and initiatives from the children; and there is nothing in the concrete interaction that points towards whether she is paid to be there or not. When interviewed, Dorthé tells me that she considers this volunteer work because it is unpaid associational work, but this will not lead me to argue that making duct tape swords with a group of children for no money is what volunteer work *is*, nor that volunteering can be reduced to the question of being paid or not. That would be reducing the idea of volunteering to being the same as these concrete observations, i.e. arguing that the transitive and intransitive dimensions are the same. Instead, critical realism tells me that I must treat this as an example of what volunteer work can be (or the observable result of what volunteer work is in deep levels of the domain of Real), and try to infer what could make it be so. It tells me that what I am observing here is the (at least partially) unobservable interaction of a number of complex objects, where, for example, the intentions, understandings, abilities, and actions of the children interact with Dorthé’s intentions, understandings, abilities, and actions in complex ways. When Dorthé introduces the activity, she draws on her own structurally influenced background as a scout and her understanding of how a scout leader should act. This is not necessarily a conscious choice she makes, but as I shall argue in the following section on hermeneutics, she will inevitably draw on her own historical background when deciding what to do in the now. Thus, as one example of understanding volunteer associational work as a scout, I must both include aspects of not being paid as well as the implicit understanding of how scouts act, which will be partially observable in the way Dorthé acts and communicates with the children. What causes this situation to happen the way it does is a lot more than the somewhat observable fact that Dorthé is not paid money to be there; this is also the case for what makes this volunteering, as I will argue

that any incidence of volunteering will be the result of a number of aspects combined, some of which are not accessible to the people doing the volunteer work. After this introduction to critical realism as one of the two philosophies of science this thesis is based on, I will now move on to describing in more detail how the two types of work will be studied using a case-study approach based on the epistemology and ontology of critical realism. After this, we shall return to the philosophy of science of this thesis with Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, which I use to describe the process of understanding or interpreting.

[4]

METHODOLOGY

CASE STUDIES

In the following section I will explain how case studies are used in this thesis. The approach is a combination of thoughts from Gary Thomas (2011), Erik Maaløe (1996), and Bent Flyvbjerg (2006). The section is structured around 10 characteristics of case studies that serve the purpose of describing both what a case study is and how this understanding of it applies to this thesis.

#1 Case studies answer the questions of how and why

One way to explain what a case study is and what it does is in terms of which questions the approach is suitable for answering. Thomas contrasts case studies with quantitative studies and argues that the aim of a case study is to answer the questions of *how* and *why* something happens:

What we are talking about with a case study, though, is a different kind of inquiry from those where generalisation is expected to follow. Here we are talking about understanding how and why something might have happened or why it might be the case. The assumption in a case study is that, with a great deal of intricate study, looking at our subject from many and varied angles, we can get closer to the ‘why’ and the ‘how.’ (Thomas, 2011, p. 4)

When asking why something happens we must also be talking about causality, and the case-study approach for finding this causality (which critical realism tells us is very complex, not always directly observable, and difficult to predict) is to look at the subject of interest in great detail from many different perspectives. In this thesis one of the ways these different perspectives are sought is by combining the sectorial, organisational, situational, and relational levels.

This way of understanding case studies, Thomas argues, should also be reflected in the research question chosen: “Your question – if it leads to a case study – will be about something in its completeness, looking at a process within your choice of focus and at the *how* and *why* of the process” (Thomas, 2011, p. 75).

Once more, my research question is:

What characterises doing volunteer work in the third sector and doing paid work in the public sector respectively? How do people doing these two types of work experience them and differentiate between them? What do the differences and similarities between the two types of work tell us about the particular characteristics of volunteer and paid work respectively and why does that seem to be the case?

Based on the assumption that most people do in fact differ between doing paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work, I am trying to explain how and why this could be the case. When I ask about what people do and what characterises their work, I am looking at the *how* aspect. When I focus on the relationship between contextual factors of the work, and relate this to the work taking place and the way people think about doing this work, I am looking at the *why* aspect. While a number of approaches could shed light on the *how* of a given phenomenon, case studies are particularly suitable for also understanding the *why*. A shorter version of the research question, using words closer to the ones Thomas suggests, could read: *How do people work voluntarily and paid, why do they work that way, and what does that tell us about the differences between these two types of work?*

Answering why: Connecting the dots but not finding causality

Arguing that case studies are suitable for answering the question of *why* implies a focus on connections between different elements found during the study (causality). As a study that is able to give answers to *why* differs from one looking only at *what* happens, or from one primarily looking for correlations between different *whats*.

An old joke about two friends meeting illustrates a basic idea in statistics:

- I used to think correlation implied causation. Then I took at statistics class, and

now I don't think that anymore.

- Sounds like the class helped?

- Well, maybe....

The joke is used as a way of illustrating the idea that *correlation does not imply causation*, or in other words, that because two things happen at the same time, this does not automatically mean that one was caused by the other, or that they are actually connected at all. The same can be said about the idea that because one thing happens after another thing, the first thing must have caused the second to happen.

Case studies are not able to show causation as such. As critical realism tells us, we cannot from a case study definitively prove a connection between one thing and another (Easton, 2010, p. 119). A case study cannot prove definitively that the fact that volunteer work is unpaid, specifically has the influence that volunteers spend their time differently, than if the work were paid. But while this type of proven causation cannot be found, the case study still seeks to find connections between different things, and through these connections to find explanations – answers to the *why* questions. Critical realism argues this should be done using retrodution, and although he describes it differently, Thomas seems to argue the same:

[A] case study involves the rationale of one thing, relating to another or possibly causing another. It involves your train of reasoning about the interrelationships between the elements of your study. It involves you justifying your reasoning and the conclusions with which you emerge, using evidence drawn from your empirical work. It is essentially about the arguments that you make to connect the elements of your observations. The arguments that you pose are like the fibres and ropes that hold all of the disparate elements together. (Thomas, 2011, pp. 13–14)

As can be seen here, Thomas uses the term *possibly* about causation. The case study can say it is probable that there is a certain connection, but cannot promise it is there. One way these connections are found is by looking at circumstances: “A case study is a set of circumstances in its completeness and the case is described – marked out – by those circumstances. It is the circumstances of the instance that are being studied.” (Thomas, 2011, p. 13)

Characteristic 1: Case studies answer questions of how and why something happens. In answering why, they seek to understand the interrelatedness of, or connections between, different aspects of the phenomena being studied.

#2: Studying a phenomenon in the uncontrollable realm of everyday life

Maaløe offers the following definition of a case study:

A case study is an empirical study, which studies a current phenomenon within the frame of its own life, when the borderline between phenomenon and context isn't self-evident, and where many data sources are used. (Maaløe, 1996, p. 27, my translation)

This definition includes at least two characteristics: Maaløe refers to case studies as a) focusing on a *current phenomenon within the frame of its own life* and b) studies where *the borders between phenomenon and context are not self-evident*. The second characteristic will be discussed in #3 below.

The aim of this thesis is to study a current phenomenon empirically; i.e. the phenomenon I am interested in is current and on-going, in the sense that people are doing the types of volunteer and paid work I am interested in as I am writing many of these sentences and during the time I have followed them in their work. This is in contrast to, for example, a historically based study of paid work and volunteer work, and it means that an understanding of this current phenomenon can best be found by pursuing the phenomenon where and when it takes place, in my case by, among other things, doing fieldwork (see chapter 7). As I do not consider it clear from the outset which aspects of paid and volunteer work make a difference to the people doing their work, and as part of this is likely hidden to them (cf. the Johari window), this means that I need an approach that allows me to explore this during the research process. This also rules out doing experiments, as they would require that the environment surrounding the people working be controlled as a variable. The researcher has no command over the environment or the circumstances in case studies (Maaløe, 1996, p. 32). In a case study, the aim is to study what happens in the uncontrolled realm of everyday life. Maaløe argues that there are things or circumstances that can only be brought to light by directly following and noticing what people do and how they interact, and by talking with them on their own terms about this in their daily life (Maaløe, 1996, p. 48). To understand how a person actually acts in their paid job, and to be able to talk with them about this, it would not make sense to try to control the environment of this job. The natural choice in this situation is to study the work being done where it actually takes place.

Experiments would seek to control the many and complex influences of the environment on the people working as well as their interrelatedness with and

influence on this environment. Rather than treating the complex environment as a problem, the case study tries to understand the complexity of this environment by including a number of different data sources and theoretical perspectives to better grasp this complexity (Maaløe, 1996, p. 32). Where experiments show what can happen in a certain controlled environment, case studies can show what actually happens (Maaløe, 1996, p. 72).

Characteristic 2: Case studies allow me to study a current ongoing phenomenon in the uncontrollable realm of everyday life where it takes place. Case studies use multiple data sources to cope with the many complex influences of the environment studied.

#3: Unclear borderline between phenomenon and context

In relation to the second part of Maaløe's definition, concerning the borderline between phenomenon and context, the work Ditte and Dorthe do takes place in different sectors, organisations, and situations. It also takes place while they are in contact with two different sets of people. While I expect these characteristics all to play a role for the person working, it is not clear beforehand whether this will actually be the case, and if it is, in what way this might be the case. This means that *the borderline between phenomenon and context is not self-evident*. Where the borderline between the context and the individual is drawn is unclear; this is also part of what I wish to study. I don't know what role the context plays in people's understanding of their own actions, and I don't know which parts of the context are important and which are not. Having approached the study in an explorative fashion, I have been able to understand more and more about the role of the context during the study (Maaløe, 1996, pp. 130–131). By looking empirically at individuals' behaviour in the actual context in which it took place, and by following the same person in both contexts, it was possible to explore the phenomenon's borders while studying it. At this point, however, it should also be noted that the explorative nature of the study does not come with a *carte blanche* to not define what is part of my case and what is not. I will discuss this point further later on in this section.

Characteristic 3: Case studies allow me to study a phenomenon with unclear borderlines between the phenomenon and its context. This is done through an ongoing explorative approach to the field.

#4: Many data sources

Maaløe's definition also points towards the use of *many data sources* in a case study. This key characteristic of case studies is one I will come back to several times

in the following, as there are several reasons for using many data sources. The first one I will present has to do with an ontological understanding of human behavior.

My understanding of what influences human behavior and understanding, plays a significant role in choosing the case-study approach, and in particular the approach of using several data sources. Erik Maaløe explains this from an ontological point of view, i.e. one that is in line with the idea that the domains of Empirical, Actual and Real differ from each other.

To have reason to believe that we know why others do as we see they do is not necessarily the same as to know the reason behind the behaviour of a single person. To understand requires that we gain insight into which circumstances others find themselves in, and what the things they do mean to themselves. (Maaløe, 1996, p. 15, my translation)

According to Maaløe, several things are needed to understand human behaviour in its context. He argues that we cannot rely solely on the researcher's observations, as we cannot see what the observed person is thinking, and as we are limited by our own perceptions. He also argues that we cannot rely solely on asking the person what they do and what this means to them, as we as humans do not always know why we do the things we do. We may promise ourselves to only eat healthy food from now on, but then buy yet another chocolate bar while grocery shopping the next day. Therefore, to understand human behavior in its context we need to combine several data sources, because a single source will not give us an adequate understanding of the phenomenon: "In that sense, a clarification will consist of a number of details we put together piece by piece to form inter-related patterns." (Maaløe, 1996, p. 16, my translation)

Explained using the terms from critical realism, it could be said that in the domain of Empirical I might say one thing (no more chocolate this week), in the domain of Actual I will buy more chocolate and eat it anyway, and that part of the reason for this is hidden from me as part of the unobservable parts of the domain of Real.

Characteristic 4: One argument for using several data sources is that looking at a phenomenon from only one individual's perspective (be it researcher, focus person, or someone else) means there are significant aspects that we do not see.

#5: Certain phenomena are more than the sum of their parts

Another argument comes from Thomas, who emphasises how the different data

sources add an extra layer of explanatory power. He argues against what he calls a reductionist point of view, wherein a phenomenon is seen as nothing more than the sum of its parts. “The starting point taken in the case study, by contrast, is that certain phenomena are more than the sum of their parts, and have to be understood as a whole, rather than as a set of interrelating variables” (Thomas, 2011, p. 46). A case study can be very illustrative, making a topic more real to the reader. It can have the quality of “making a major difference understandable” (Thomas, 2011, p. 118). Thomas uses the example of a cat and a dog, which when described in detail could sound very similar. Fur, pointy ears, eyes, etc. are all details that can be used to describe both dog and cat, but when looking at a picture of the two, we as humans see and understand the difference instantaneously. The illustrative case study potentially has the same power, as it can convey this complete idea of something in a way that a description of individual parts of something cannot (Thomas, 2011, p. 118). This ideal has been an aim of the analysis in this thesis: to give an overall picture of something that adds up to more than the sum of its parts; to try to find some answers to the question of what the nature of volunteering might be *between the lines of the data*.

Characteristic 5: Case studies seek to illustrate how a phenomenon can be more than the sum of its parts.

#6: Case studies are about the particular, not the general

Gary Thomas refers to the case study as not a specific method in itself, but rather as a *focus*. When doing a case study, the researcher focuses on something specific (a case) and studies it in depth and from many different angles (2011, p. 9). In a case study, the *uniqueness* of the thing being studied is the main interest of the researcher. In other words, a case study is about the *particular* rather than the *general* (Thomas, 2011).

Finding potential explanations based on depth of understanding

I could try to find answers to my research interest in a number of ways. A quantitatively based study could point me in the direction of what generally seems to be the case, and it could give me valuable insights into the general picture of a certain population in terms of, for example, whether people conduct similar or different types of tasks in their paid and volunteer work. I could have taken a more psychological and quantitative point of view and looked at whether there is consistency between self-reported motivations for doing the two types of work, and what other types of survey questions might reveal about the attitudes or motivations of this selected group. But while these types of quantitative stud-

ies seeking generalisation can tell me what generally seems to be the case, and thereby give me an indication of what *could happen*, the case study can show me what *actually does happen*; it can help get closer to a detailed potential explanation (Maaløe, 1996).

Thomas argues, “potential explanations based on depth of understanding are what a case study does best relative to other kinds of research,” and he refers to case studies as “the most powerful engine of potential explanations.” He goes on to say, “Remember that, in a case study, you are trading breadth of coverage for depth of understanding, and potential explanations based on depth of understanding are what a case study does best relative to other kinds of research” (Thomas, 2011, p. 101).

Following Thomas’ idea of case studies being a powerful engine of potential explanations, I argue that the case-study approach is the most suitable approach for this thesis. My aim is to gain deeper insight into how we as individuals differentiate between doing paid and volunteer work, and to place this within and as part of sectorial and organisational circumstances or contexts. In other words, I am seeking potential explanations and connections between different parts of a chosen case that are best found by going out and taking a detailed look at the practices of the people doing these types of work, *as* they do this work, in its real-life context.

Bent Flyvbjerg discusses the positions of case studies and large quantitative studies in an article describing what he calls five misunderstandings about case-study research. I will let his words conclude this part:

Let me reiterate, however, that the revision of the five misunderstandings about case-study research described above should not be interpreted as a rejection of research that focuses on large random samples or entire populations, for example, questionnaire surveys with related quantitative analysis. This type of research is also essential for the development of social science, for example, in understanding the degree to which certain phenomena are present in a given group or how they vary across cases. The advantage of large samples is breadth, whereas their problem is one of depth. For the case study, the situation is the reverse. Both approaches are necessary for a sound development of social science. (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 241)

Characteristic 6: Case studies allow me to find detailed and specific potential explanations as opposed to quantitative studies’ findings of what generally seems to be the case.

7: Case studies use triangulation

So far we have heard how several data sources, theories, and vantage points offer a more detailed and more complete understanding of a phenomenon than one perspective is able to. Thomas offers another argument for this multiplicity with the term *triangulation*. Triangulation is a way of looking critically at the conclusions you have arrived at by trying to find arguments that point towards other conclusions and interpretations. First of all, as Brinkman (2007) argues, any researcher should take a critical look at his/her analysis and conclusions. In analysing an interview I could challenge my own analysis by looking at what points in direction A, but also what points in direction B, K, or U. This could (and should) also be done as part of the interview itself and in other types of inquiry. In a case study, both these approaches can be used, but here they are supplemented by a third, which is asking different people, different data sources and perhaps different levels of context.

In these one can easily look for competing conclusions and signs of other explanations than the one reached in the first place. But Thomas refers to triangulation as also a way of achieving the same critical look on one's own work. He describes how the term originated from geometry and surveying, but is used as a metaphor in case studies. He writes:

What the term means here is that viewing from several points is better than viewing from one. Given the critical awareness that should be the trademark of good social science researchers, another viewpoint or another analytical method may make us decide to reject initial explanations (Thomas, 2011, p. 68).

Bøllingtoft argues that triangulation is a way to get closer to the actual reality the researcher seeks to understand:

Triangulation plays a major role when dealing with observation studies from the perspective of critical realism. Empirical observation within critical realism is part of the transitive object of science (that is, our created knowledge of science), as the observation contains an interpretive element (Danermark et al. 2002).¹⁵ Thus, empirical observation can never be the same as an actual reality, which is independent of the cognitive subject/individual (Danermark et al. 2002). However, it is possible to get closer to the actual reality by triangulating different perceptions (Healy and Perry 2000). "Stripped to its basics, triangulation is supposed to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or,

at least, do not contradict it' (Miles and Huberman 1994). Triangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation (Denzin and Lincoln 1994). The combination of, for example, multiple methods and observers in a single study is best understood, then, as a strategy that in general adds rigour, breadth and depth to any investigation. (Bøllingtoft, 2007, pp. 426–427)

Characteristic 7: Case studies uses triangulation to achieve a critical look at the initial conclusions and interpretations taken from one point of view and to support findings by showing them from several different vantage points.

#8: Case studies produce context-dependent knowledge

Bent Flyvbjerg opens his often-cited article: 'Five Misunderstandings About Case-Study Research' with the following anecdote:

When I first became interested in in-depth case-study research, I was trying to understand how power and rationality shape each other and form the urban environments in which we live (Flyvbjerg, 1998). It was clear to me that to understand a complex issue such as this, in-depth case-study research was necessary. It was equally clear, however, that my teachers and colleagues kept dissuading me from employing this particular research methodology.

“You cannot generalise from a single case,” some would say, “and social science is about generalising.” Others would argue that the case study may be well suited for pilot studies but not for full-fledged research schemes. Others again would comment that the case study is subjective, giving too much scope for the researcher’s own interpretations. Thus, the validity of case studies would be wanting, they argued. (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 219)

Although generalisation is not seen as a classic virtue of the humanities in the same way, I would still like to address this potential critique briefly. Gary Thomas introduces the idea of anecdotal evidence in his discussion about the non-generalisability of case studies: “You may, after all, have heard people being snooty about ‘anecdotal evidence’ (...) Social science is about getting beyond what is merely anecdotal, some would say” (Thomas, 2011, p. 4).

If someone were to be snooty in regards to this thesis, they could ask how two seemingly random cases of paid work and two equally random cases of volunteer work could be anything more than an anecdote?

You can't generalise from case studies, but you can learn

Flyvbjerg argues that case studies make an important contribution because they produce *context-dependent knowledge*. He contrasts this type of knowledge with *context-independent knowledge*, which he argues is how beginners learn. Knowledge not put in relation to a context are e.g. basic overall rules (of thumb), which can form the basis of textbooks. These rules can be helpful at the beginner's level, but will not take the learner beyond the beginner's stage of a learning process. Flyvbjerg writes:

Phenomenological studies of human learning indicate that for adults, there exists a qualitative leap in their learning process from the rule-governed use of analytical rationality in beginners to the fluid performance of tacit skills in what Pierre Bourdieu (1977) called virtuosos and Hubert Dreyfus and Stuart Dreyfus (1986) called true human experts. (...) Common to all experts, however, is that they operate on the basis of intimate knowledge of several thousand concrete cases in their areas of expertise. Context-dependent knowledge and experience are at the very heart of expert activity. Such knowledge and expertise also lie at the center of the case study as a research and teaching method, or to put it more generally still, as a method of learning. (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 222)

He continues by offering a shorter and perhaps more poignant description of the virtue of case studies by quoting Hans Eysenck: "Sometimes we simply have to keep our eyes open and look carefully at individual cases – not in the hope of proving anything, but rather in the hope of learning something!" (Eysenck, 1976 p. 9 in Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 224) Flyvbjerg also argues that the context-dependent type of knowledge case studies can potentially offer is best presented to the reader in relatively open descriptions of a case:

"If we return briefly to the phenomenology for human learning, we may understand why summarising case studies is not always useful and may sometimes be counterproductive. Knowledge at the beginner's level consists precisely in the reduced formulas that characterise theories, whereas true expertise is based on intimate experience with thousands of individual cases and on the ability to discriminate between situations, with all their nuances of difference, without distilling them into formulas or standard cases." (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 239)

Inspired by this, I have sought to find a balance between somewhat open descriptions on the one hand and a sense of direction, interpretations that add some-

thing to the data, and a focus on my research question, on the other.

Characteristic 8: Case studies produce context-dependent knowledge about individual cases, which is needed for humans to move beyond rule-based knowledge.

#9 Case studies should be a case of something

So how does the case study go beyond just producing knowledge relevant specifically to situations or people very similar to the ones studied?

Thomas argues that when choosing a focus and a case for a case study, it is important that the thing to be studied have some specificity to it. He also cautions that simply describing as much as possible does not constitute a case study. A doctor can be studied as a subject, but to use *methods of doctoring* as a subject will make a difficult case study, as it is more general than it is specific. So a *particular doctor* can be the subject of a case study, but *doctoring* cannot be the subject of a case study – at least not a very interesting one. The doctor has to be a case of something, just as the Korean War could be a case of a war, and perhaps a remarkable or particular kind of war. It could be a case of a border dispute that was blown out of proportion. Simply describing the history of the Korean war would not be a case study. But if a person studied the Korean war in order to understand how something that began as a border dispute could escalate into an all-out war, that would be a specific case study (Thomas, 2011, p. 14).

A case “becomes a case of something, ... when you can explain the analytical frame through which you might be viewing it. It might:

- Be a good example of that analytical frame
- Demonstrate something interesting in terms of your analysis because of its peculiarity
- Be an example of an analytical focus that arises by virtue of your personal experience.” (Thomas, 2011, p. 15)

The analytical frame is a sort of purpose or direction for a case study (Thomas, 2011, p. 17). This is also where the case study demonstrates its particular usefulness: when the researcher can say with some specificity what it is they are trying to understand. This is where the case study excels at answering the questions of how and why, as it can give useful exemplary knowledge of how something can actually happen. It can provide an answer to questions like *but how did that happen, and why?* or *I wonder how that actually works?*

A case of?

My case is **the same person doing paid and volunteer work in the public and third sectors, respectively.**

I am arguing that this as a case, becomes *a case of distinctive (and possibly different) characteristics of paid and volunteer work.* This is my analytical frame, and serves as the analytical focus with which I will look at the case. I am not simply studying volunteer work or paid work. I am studying volunteer work as something that differs from paid work and vice versa.

I have aimed to keep this focus during the analysis, but have at the same time considered Flyvbjerg's advice in regards to thinking about a case study as being a case of something specific:

Lisa Peattie (2001) explicitly warned against summarizing dense case studies: "It is simply that the very value of the case study, the contextual and interpenetrating nature of forces, is lost when one tries to sum up in large and mutually exclusive concepts" (p. 260). The dense case study, according to Peattie, is more useful for the practitioner and more interesting for social theory than either factual "findings" or the high-level generalizations of theory. The opposite of summing up and "closing" a case study is to keep it open. ... The goal is not to make the case study be all things to all people. The goal is to allow the study to be different things to different people. I try to achieve this by describing the case with so many facets—like life itself—that different readers may be attracted, or repelled, by different things in the case. Readers are not pointed down any one theoretical path or given the impression that truth might lie at the end of such a path. Readers will have to discover their own path and truth inside the case. Thus, in addition to the interpretations of case actors and case narrators, readers are invited to decide the meaning of the case and to interrogate actors' and narrators' interpretations to answer that categorical question of any case study, "What is this case a case of?" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 238)

While I have attempted not to use the above as an excuse for presenting a focused and pointed analysis, I have tried to keep a certain openness in the presentation and interpretation of data, leaving some of the work to the reader.

Characteristic 9: Case studies should be an example of something or a case of something. In this thesis it is the same person doing paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work as a case of distinctive (and possibly different) characteristics of paid and volunteer work.

#10: The type of case

Thomas describes different types of cases one can choose for a given study. I see my type of case as what he refers to as a *key case*: “A good example of something; a classic or exemplary case” (Thomas, 2011, p. 77). The aim has been to find a case that is a particularly good example of paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work.

It should be noted that a *key* or *exemplary* case, according to Thomas, is not the same as a *representative* or *typical* case, the latter two terms coming from Yin (2009, p. 48). Thomas argues that typicality of a case is not a reason for studying it in a case study, as we still cannot generalise what happens in this typical case to others because they will be typical in another way. On the contrary, it makes sense to talk about the exemplary case, as this is an example of something specific.

One Multi case design

The study is also what Maaløe refers to as a One Multi case design, which he defines as a study where a bigger (holistic) picture is sought by looking across a number of single cases, while maintaining a respectful appreciation of the differences and similarities among them (Maaløe, 1996, p. 70).

Due to the complexity of the cases chosen, including the large amount of data collected, I have limited the number of cases to two.

Characteristic 10: The aim of this thesis is to present a key case – a good example of something – and to do so using a “one multi case design,” where two single cases are included to gain a more holistic picture.

#11: The borders of my case

Thomas underlines the importance of marking out the borders of the chosen case. He cites Ragin “Boundaries around places and time periods define cases (e.g. Italy after World War II)” (Ragin 1992, p. 5 in Thomas, 2011, p. 11).

In terms of the current study, the overall boundary would be the actions (and the understandings of these actions) taken by a person working both paid in the public sector and voluntarily in the third sector during 2016 and 2017. In the beginning of this chapter I listed areas that I argue are circumstances or characteristics of my chosen case. These also mark out boundaries of what I consider

to be the chosen case.

- Sectorial and organisation level
- Situational level
- Relational and communicational level
- The focus person's own experiences.

An important criterion for deciding if a given aspect falls within or outside the case is whether it is somehow related to doing these two kinds of work. So aspects that can be said to be part of the sector, organisation, or work, but which are not related to actually doing the work, were excluded from the case. Deciding what to exclude was not done beforehand, but rather was evaluated both during the analysis and indeed throughout the entire explorative part of the case study.

Summing up

I have listed the 10 case-study characteristics here as a way to sum up the chapter.

- Characteristic 1: Case studies answer questions of how and why something happens. In answering why, they seek to understand the inter-relatedness of, or connections among, different aspects of the phenomena being studied.
- Characteristic 2: Case studies allow me to study a current, ongoing phenomenon in the uncontrollable realm of everyday life, where it takes place. Case studies use multiple data sources to cope with the many complex influences of the environment studied.
- Characteristic 3: Case studies allow me to study a phenomenon with unclear borderlines between the phenomenon and its context. This is done through an ongoing explorative approach to the field.
- Characteristic 4: One argument for using several data sources is that looking at a phenomenon from only one individual's perspective (be it researcher, focus person, or someone else) necessarily means there will be significant aspects that we do not see.
- Characteristic 5: Case studies seek to illustrate how a phenomenon can be more than the sum of its parts.
- Characteristic 6: Case studies allow me to find detailed and specific potential explanations, as opposed to the findings of quantitative studies, which tell us what generally seems to be the case.

- Characteristic 7: Case studies use triangulation to achieve a critical look at the initial conclusions and interpretations taken from one point of view, and to support findings by showing them from several different vantage points.
- Characteristic 8: Case studies produce context-dependent knowledge about individual cases, which is needed for humans to move beyond rule-based knowledge.
- Characteristic 9: Case studies should be an example of something or a case of something. In this thesis, the case is of the same person doing paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work as a case of the distinctive (and possibly different) characteristics of paid and volunteer work.
- Characteristic 10: The aim of this thesis is to present a key case – a good example of something – and to do so using a “One Multi case design” where two single cases are included to present a more holistic picture.

With this description of case studies and their relationship to critical realism as the first part of the philosophy of science, it is now time to take a closer look at the process of understanding and interpreting as described by Gadamer in his philosophical hermeneutics.

[5]

METHODOLOGY PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE: PHILOSOPHICAL HERMENEUTICS

The key point I take away from critical realism, as the first part of my philosophy of science, is the idea of the domain of Real and how non-observable objects can influence the observable phenomena in the domains of Empirical and Actual. What I will try to show with philosophical hermeneutics is how we as humans and researchers are able to understand and interpret the world on a more basic level. The retroductive methodology argues that we should infer which premises could lead to certain conclusions; in the following, I will argue that this process of inferring is a process of interpretation, as described by Gadamer.

In opposition to methodological hermeneutics, Gadamer and his philosophical hermeneutics sees interpretation and understanding as an ontological and fundamental part of being human, rather than something certain research methods epistemologically can lead us to. As human beings we are always already in the process of understanding, and this means that any method used for obtaining understanding is, in a sense, always too late, and only can be seen as a secondary approach after understanding has already started. Understanding always takes place under conditions set by the conscious and unconscious expectations of the person who is understanding something. In other words, it is not possible to observe and understand the world from a neutral point of view, as the expecta-

tions of every person understanding something will always guide that person's understandings (Riis, 2006, pp. 16–17). This is also the case in research: where a researcher wishes to analyse and interpret data: The researcher himself always plays an active role in any given understanding or interpretation (Højbjerg, 2013, p. 293). An important consequence of Gadamer's hermeneutics, then, is that it is not possible to completely rule out the researcher as part of the research process. One cannot argue that research takes place completely detached from the researcher as a person, nor that it is possible to obtain a neutral understanding of something.

So while critical realism tells us that the world exists independently of our knowledge about it, Gadamer's hermeneutics tells us about what actually happens when we start to look at this independently existing world, and how we can understand it and create knowledge about it.

Prejudice and the historically effected consciousness

When I as a researcher understand or interpret an interview, for example, I will have conscious and unconscious expectations, which will guide my understanding of that interview. Gadamer calls these expectations prejudices, fore-conceptions, or fore-understandings.⁴ Here, the term prejudice should not be understood as something problematic (e.g. negative stereotypes about minority groups), but rather as an inescapable prerequisite for understanding anything. These prejudices or fore-conceptions come from our history and tradition. Gadamer argues that we have a historically effected consciousness (Højbjerg, 2013, pp. 304–305). This means that when we understand something, history delivers the framework through which we understand it, on the background of. As an example, when Danes automatically react with collective disgust to a dictator's use of military force on his own population, Riis (2006, p. 18) argues that this is because we are historically conditioned to do so, coming from a country with a different traditional relationship between state and citizen than that of dictatorships. According to Gadamer, our history and tradition are based in our "cultural heritage, tradition and history. They are in other words founded in our society, family, state, etc. and form a natural part of our understanding of the world" (Højbjerg, 2013, p. 301 my translation).

A consequence of a philosophical hermeneutical approach is that, for example, the way work takes place in the public sector for Ditte or Dorthe is historically shaped by aspects outside of Ditte and Dorthe's reach. The way they understand their work, what their roles and tasks are, and how they should fulfill these, will

4 Going forward, I will use the term prejudice.

be based on a historically founded way of understanding their work, and thereby their understanding of how they should conduct this work. At the same time, critical realism tells us that part of what makes up and influences their public- and third-sector work could be hidden from Ditte and Dorte – it is in the domain of Real, and it is unobservable.

Hence, both philosophies of science point towards the need to go further than just asking Ditte and Dorte what they experience and what their understanding of their work is.

The hermeneutic circle

A way of explaining the process of understanding further is through the anticipation of completeness and the hermeneutic circle.

In addition to arguing that any human understanding will always be based on our existing prejudices, Gadamer argues that some prejudices are more prevalent than others. One prevalent prejudice is the *prejudice (or anticipation) of completeness*. This is the idea that whenever we meet something in the world, we expect this something to make sense to us in a coherent way that we can match up with our existing expectations or prejudices. We expect a text in itself to not be self-contradictory, and we try to match our understanding of this text with our existing understandings of the world. If something seems self-contradictory, and thus does not offer us an understanding coherent with our prejudices, we look for ways to interpret it that give us a coherent understanding of it (Riis, 2006, p. 19, 2006, p. 43).

This principle shows itself in the hermeneutic circle (see figure 4), which describes the interrelationship between *parts of something* and *something as a whole*. Each part of something can only be understood by referencing it to an understanding of this something as a whole. Equally, the whole can only be understood with reference to the parts that make up this whole. It is the connection between the parts and the whole that gives rise to meaning. It is the relationship between the individual parts and the whole that makes it possible for us to understand and interpret (Højbjerg, 2013, p. 292).

The hermeneutic circle between the parts and the whole of a text

On one hand, the hermeneutic circle describes the process of understanding a text. So in the above-mentioned example, when I as a researcher analyse an interview and seek to understand and interpret it, I start with some expectations about what I will find in the data. I analyse the data bit by bit, continually reach-

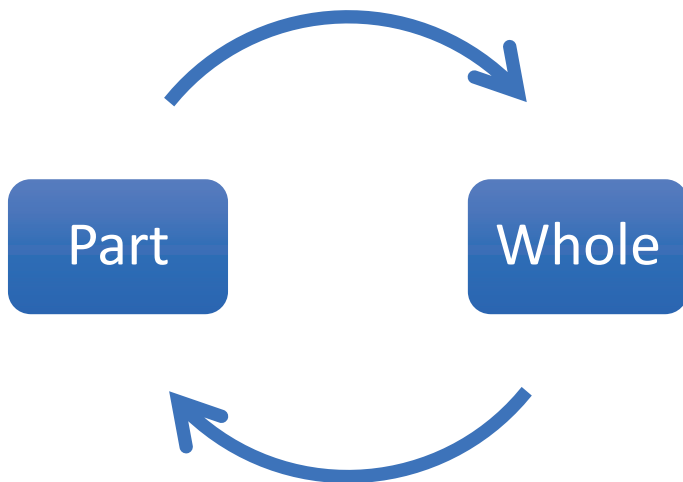


Figure 4. The hermeneutic circle.

ing a new understanding of both the interview as a whole based on the parts, and the parts based on my new understanding of the interview as a whole. One important point here is that I as a researcher am also changed by this process of understanding. I am not only reaching a certain understanding of a text as a whole; rather, the text also changes who I am, as it leaves me with a new understanding of the world and hence some changed expectations and prejudices. This circular process of going back and forth between the parts and the whole can be illustrated by the hermeneutic circle. It is sometimes also illustrated as a spiral, to illustrate that the understanding of both the parts and the whole are changing throughout the process (Højbjerg, 2013, pp. 299–300; Riis, 2006, pp. 16–17, 2006, pp. 42–43).

The hermeneutic circle and the historically effected consciousness

Another way the hermeneutic circle illustrates the process of understanding is when looking at the role of the historically effected consciousness. In this perspective, the circle illustrates the process between the researcher as a part and history and tradition as the whole.

History and tradition should not be seen as the individual background of each person understanding something in the world, as this would lead to a kind of subjectivism where each of our individual backgrounds could lead to our own private understanding of the world, with no common denominators. On the other hand, history should not be seen as specific knowledge *out there*, just waiting to

be understood by an individual. Gadamer says:

The circle, then, is not formal in nature. It is neither subjective nor objective, but describes understanding as the interplay of the movement of tradition and the movement of the interpreter. The anticipation of meaning that governs our understanding of a text is not an act of subjectivity, but proceeds from the commonality that binds us to the tradition. But this commonality is constantly being formed in our relation to tradition. Tradition is not simply a permanent precondition; rather, we produce it ourselves inasmuch as we understand, participate in the evolution of tradition, and hence further determine it ourselves. Thus the circle of understanding is not a “methodological” circle, but describes an element of the ontological structure of understanding. (Gadamer, 2004, pp. 293–294)

Gadamer seems to argue that history and tradition are shared between us, and that they at the same time are entities that we as humans all take part in shaping with our understandings and actions in the present.

Truth

How do we differentiate between good and bad interpretations or good or bad prejudices? Gadamer argues that *the Principle of History of Effect* helps us in this endeavor. This is the idea that history rules out bad or unproductive interpretations of a text. Our prejudices are shaped by the history we share, to a certain extent, with others. We cannot ourselves decide what our history is, and this means that our background for understanding things will have some common denominators. If we are to understand something in a coherent and not self-contradictory way, history in a sense *forces our hand* to the extent that some interpretations are more likely than others (Højbjerg, 2013, pp. 305–306). Riis uses the example that it would be difficult to argue that the Gospel of Luke encourages murder, as this goes against the way text has historically been understood (2006, pp. 37–38).

Whether we have understood or misunderstood something, we will not know until we compare new knowledge with what we already know. First then, will we have a benchmark of true and false: my understanding must always fit into an already existing coherence. History becomes the stable (and yet changing) basis of Gadamer’s hermeneutics. (Riis, 2006, p. 127, my translation)

Criteria of truth

Although I with Gadamer cannot argue that any given interpretation will hold an absolute truth (this will always be subject to changing history as the frame for understanding), I still need a way to work out how to reach suitable conclusions or good interpretations of an interview, for example.

Alrø, Dahl, and Schumann (2016, p. 166) makes a distinction two types of understanding. *Spontaneous interpretations* are described as initial interpretations, which need to be qualified through analysis in the research process for them to obtain the status of the other type of understanding – the *scholarly qualified understanding*. They suggest that their DiaLoop model is one way to understand the process of analysis and to reach these more scholarly qualified understandings. The model will also be used in this thesis, and I will introduce it in the following section.

Riis argues that the concept of understanding needs to be scaled, going from *immediate understandings* (which seem to correspond with spontaneous interpretations) to *reflected understandings*. She considers Gadamer's notion of understanding as applicable to both types of understandings, and argues that discriminating between immediate and reflected understanding does not change the fundamental Gadamerian idea that we are always in the process of understanding, but that this differentiation merely sees understanding as something that can take place on different levels. In line with Alrø, Dahl, and Schumann, Riis argues that the reflected understandings are understandings to which we add more than in the understandings found in the immediate understanding. The immediate understandings are what most people in a given cultural and/or historical context can agree on, while the more reflected understandings (interpretations) add more than is immediately obvious to most people. Such an interpretation requires more explanation and argumentation in order to become an interpretation that can be more commonly accepted as not self-contradictory, i.e. in coherence with the Principle of History of Effect (Riis, 2006, pp. 39–40).

I will, in line with Riis, argue that any interpretation or understanding undertaken in research can be understood using Gadamer's idea of understanding. I agree with Alrø, Dahl, Schumann that our immediate understandings of something and the hermeneutic circle alone cannot lead us to scholarly knowledge, and I will argue that any given scholarly argumentation also must live up to the historically conditioned but still current requirements for scholarly work. Scientific interpretations are not above or beyond history (think again of the flat earth theory), but must live up to the current commonly accepted standards and understandings of the world, including an important requirement of explicating

the researcher's chosen theoretical framework, as this will affect which interpretations it is possible to make.

While Gadamer says the goal of philosophical hermeneutics "is not to develop a procedure of understanding, but to clarify the conditions in which understanding takes place" (Gadamer, 2004, p. 295), this does, according to Riis, not mean he is against the use of methods as such. We cannot use the fundamental conditions of our understanding as a certain approach for reaching suitable interpretations. But we can use his insights into the basis of understanding to develop methods and methodology in which the researcher is aware of these fundamental conditions of understanding. When we as researchers know that we cannot leave our historically conditioned prejudices at the door (or in the car on our way home from fieldwork, for that matter), this will influence how we argue and what we claim to have interpreted (Riis, 2006, pp. 129–130).

Should we abandon all use of method?

If Gadamer argues that any method is in a sense too late, as understanding is a fundamental part of being human, should we then abandon all method? Riis argues that we should not confuse Gadamer's interest in the conditions of understanding with an outright abandonment of scientific or scholarly method. She does not consider it possible to deduct one correct method of reaching suitable interpretations based on Gadamer's thoughts, but argues that if methods are used in consideration of the human conditions of understanding and interpreting they can still lead to scholarly qualified interpretations. What Riis does seem to take issue with is methods based on the notion that one objective truth can be found if the method is followed precisely (Riis, 2006, pp. 129–131).

One such method for reaching good interpretations is the DiaLoop model (Alrø et al., 2016), which also refers to Gadamer's notion of understanding. I will argue that the process and model can be understood as a continuation of Gadamer's thinking if we see it as respecting the notion of understanding as a basic human condition.

[6]

METHODOLOGY

PROCESS OF ANALYSIS: THE DIALOOP MODEL

Where Gadamer explained the basis of how humans understand the world and how good interpretations are separated from bad ones, the DiaLoop model details and elaborates on how the process of analysis as a concrete activity done by me as a researcher can occur, and which steps need to be taken for it to have scholarly value or indeed truth in it.

The DiaLoop model

The DiaLoop model was originally developed by Helle Alrø in cooperation with Marianne Kristiansen, with the aim of describing the process of analysing interpersonal communication (conversations) (Alrø & Kristiansen, 1997). In Alrø, Dahl, and Schumann (2016) the model was further developed, and an extra step (problem) was added to it. Although the model is still focused on analysing conversations, the authors argue that it is not limited to describing this particular process of analysis, but can also apply to other types of analyses. In the following I will present the model and discuss how I have used it to describe and understand the analysis process in this thesis.

Analysis

The model is based on understanding analysis as characterised by being a process that takes a phenomenon, separates it into pieces, studies these pieces, and puts

them back together again, reaching a new understanding of the phenomenon in the process. One of the ideas behind the model is to make the process of analysis transparent, in the sense of illustrating how an analysis goes all the way from raw data to making its conclusions (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 43–46). My description of critical realism, philosophical hermeneutics, and case studies could be criticised for “black boxing” how the actual process of analysis takes place, with its focus on the underlying ideals and assumptions of the process, and the lack of explanation as to how this would translate into concrete analysis. Thus, my aim is to let DiaLoop be a detailed way of approaching the question of epistemology in this thesis.

The model is made up of the following eight steps (see also figure 5), which are all considered parts of the process of analysis as a whole. Although presented in a specific order here, the idea of the model is not to go through the steps one at a time from top to bottom. Rather, the steps should all be seen as parts of the process, through which the researcher will move back and forth numerous times. This movement is the “loop” part of the title of the model (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 51–55). Several of these terms are also used in everyday language, but it should be noted that when used in this thesis, they refer to the specific meaning they are given as described below.

1. Intuition
An impulse or sudden realisation
2. Problem
Working your way towards one or more (research) questions
3. Observation
Observed parts of the data
4. Experience
The researcher’s own experiences or reactions when analysing
5. Identification
Theoretical terms identified in the data
6. Argumentation
The researcher’s line of reasoning – describing, explaining and discussing
7. Interpretation
Overall interpretations based on synthesis of a systematic and thorough analysis
8. Patterns
Patterns found in the interpretations made

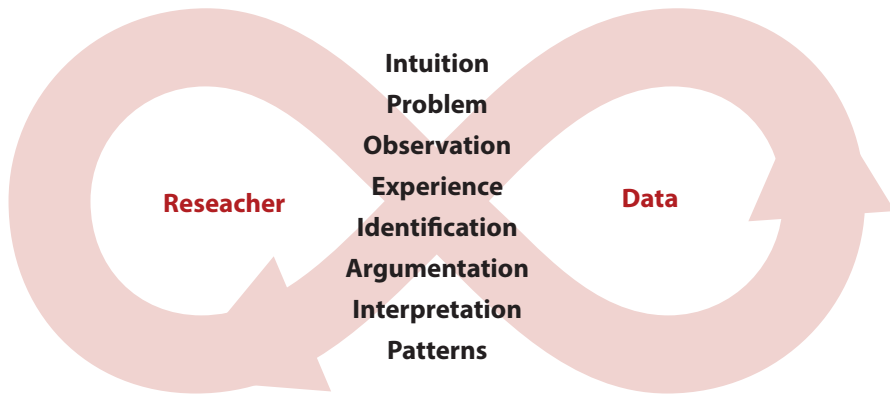


Figure 5. The model depicted on the backdrop of the infinity symbol demonstrating the continuous movement or Dialogue between data and the analyst, while at the same time moving between the eight steps of the model in a continuous LOOP. (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 45–46)

In the following, each step will be described in more detail, with examples from the process of analysis in this thesis. Four different kinds of data are involved in these steps: field notes from participant observations, video observations, interviews, and documents.

1. Intuition

Intuition is described as an impulse, a revelation, or a sudden realisation in the DiaLoop model. It is the “aha moments” of the process of analysis, where the researcher looks at the data and gets a feeling there is something interesting going on, but without perhaps being able to put a finger on what it is, just yet. According to Alrø, Dahl, Schumann, these impulses happen when the researcher lets go of a perhaps distanced contact with the data (observing and registering), and immerses himself in the data (2016, pp. 61–62).

These impulses cannot be explained or predicted, but are made up of ideas for what to focus on in the analysis and/or an idea about where in the data it makes sense to begin looking. This makes intuition a good line of approach to beginning analysis even if it later proves to be mistaken or distracts the researcher from answering the research question.

In the current study, which has very rich and multi-faceted data material, there is an inherent risk of asking a question similar to the one Steinar Kvale argues should never be asked: “How shall I find a method to analyze the 1,000 pages of interview transcripts I have collected?” (Kvale, 1996, p. 275). Intuition offers one way of making a preliminary sorting of a large and complex amount of quali-

tative data, thereby avoiding the 1,000-page question. While intuition can be a helpful sorting mechanism, it should also be noted that, according to Alrø, Dahl, and Schumann, intuition alone will not lead to a transparent and well-argued analysis in the end. If analysis is done primarily based on intuition, there is a high risk of making the above-mentioned spontaneous interpretations, which, they argue, need to be qualified further by other steps in the DiaLoop model (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 62–63).

Example

During a weekend scout camp where I observed Dorthe, she spent the afternoon standing outside in the cold rain in a situation that at first glance did not seem enjoyable or worthwhile at all. As I stood out there with Dorthe, it struck me how odd or counterintuitive it was that someone would be doing this voluntarily. That initial thought made its way into my field notes, and when selecting situations for further analysis I ended up choosing it, in part based on this initial intuitive feeling that something interesting was going on there. Intuition here occurred during data collection, so I do not consider it to be limited to the situation of sitting in the office and looking the data.

2. Problem

According to Alrø, Dahl, and Schumann, analysis should have a certain direction or purpose. Although any research project will likely start out with a certain direction, in DiaLoop the direction is seen as part of the continued process, as it will likely change during the course of the analytical work. In DiaLoop, a good research question will also be based on a problem, in this case a *theoretical problem*. Having a theoretical problem means there is something the researcher does not understand or is unable to explain. The authors also explain this by saying that a theoretical problem is when *the actual is different from the expected*. When something deviates from our expectations it poses a problem for us, and this problem constitutes a motivation to find answers (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 77–78).

Example

The analysis done in this thesis started with a very open wondering about what it is that makes paid work different from volunteer work. Because I have experience with both types of work myself, and found it difficult to answer the question in a satisfactory way, this posed a problem for me. I could clearly differentiate between the two, but I found it difficult to actually explain what made them different. During the process of analysis and through reading other studies and theories, this problem became more specific, and was, among other things,

developed into a focus on the influence the sectorial context seems to have, as well as the influence of the individual attitude of the person doing the work. On a smaller scale, the intuitive feeling that arose while standing outside in the rain with Dorte has also played a role in my working my way towards a direction of the analysis and of this thesis as a whole. As described with the hermeneutic circle, every small part I have understood and interpreted in different ways has at the same time influenced my overall idea of what the direction of the thesis has been. In that sense, working with the direction or problem posed by the thesis has been an ongoing process throughout the PhD project.

3. Observation

Observation consists of everything directly observable in the data, and when referring to the actual process of analysis in DiaLoop, it seems to refer to actually observed data, i.e. data belonging to the domain of Empirical as opposed to potentially observable data belong to the domain of Actual. For analysis of data to take place, it must first have been observed. Observations are characterised by being shareable with other observers; what DiaLoop considers an observation must be potentially available to everyone looking or listening. Observation is also referred to as *external sensing*, illustrating that it is the result of human sensing directed outwards towards the surrounding world. Its opposite is internal sensing, which will be described further in the next section, about the experience part of the DiaLoop model (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 81–82).

While observation has to do with everything potentially observable, this does not mean that a) as much as possible should be observed or b) that everything observed holds equal value for finding answers to the chosen questions. Where intuition can lead to an idea about what to focus on in the analysis by insisting that the researcher immerse himself in the data, it cannot document or explain exactly what happens in the data (the situation observed), thus it is ultimately unable to explain more precisely what is going on. The external sensing used when observing allows me to gain some distance from the subject researched and to answer questions about what concretely is happening at those places in the data where my intuition tells me something is going on. In that sense, observation can also be a stepping-stone for going deeper into the analysis. Where intuition may direct my attention to a certain situation or action, observation can move the analysis forward by starting to connect the intuition with what actually seems to be going on. Observations are examples from the data that can answer questions like, “How do you see that?”, “How does that show itself?”, or “What is that based on?” The answers to these questions are in DiaLoop partly made up of

actual observations (Alrø et al., 2016, p. 82).

Example

When outside in the rain with Dorte and the scout children, observation has to do with registering what is happening, trying to mentally take a step back from my “intuitive idea of the counterintuitive” in the situation, and focusing more on seeing and listening as a way to gain a better understanding of what is going on.

4. Experience

Experience has to do with the above-mentioned *internal sensing*. Experience in the DiaLoop model refers to the researcher’s own experiences. It is the way he reacts when confronted with the externally sensed observations. In DiaLoop, experience is a collective term for four different ways something can be experienced by an individual, listed below with examples:⁵

Body sensing

I feel heavy, my stomach hurts, I get chills

Emotional reactions

I am angry, I feel sad, I am happy, I am relieved, I am proud

Inner impulse toward action

I want, I need, I have a sudden impulse to

Mental reactions

I feel alert, I become interested, I am bored, I have doubts, I become curious.

These four different ways of experiencing share the same basic trait of starting with “I,” meaning that they all belong to the researcher himself. It is the researcher who feels heavy, has a sudden impulse, or feels bored. The question now, of course, is what these experiences have to do with conducting analysis in an academic and transparent fashion. Alrø, Dahl, and Schumann argue that our experiences as researchers can be an intriguing opening into the analysis. Our experiences are the result of us reacting to something in our data. We are triggered by something, which might make us curious, making us look more closely at what it was that caused us to react in this way. While both experiences and intuition can bring us into closer contact with our data, experience differs by being only about the researcher’s own reactions, whereas intuition also can be related to ideas about what is happening “out there” in the data or situation. (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 93–95).

5 The first three are inspired by the BodyKnot model. See (Jarlnæs & Marcher, 2004, p. 211).

In addition to opening up the analysis, experiences are also an important part of the process of analysis, as they can help the researcher understand how he has reached a certain conclusion. In DiaLoop, it is argued that the researcher's own reactions to other peoples' actions will have a tendency to tint his interpretations of these actions. Becoming aware of your subjective influence on the interpretations made can help you see different possible interpretations of a given piece of data. If the researcher becomes annoyed or sympathises with a person who is part of situation they are analysing, this may influence (tint) their interpretation of the situation in ways the researcher is unaware of and lead to misinterpretations (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 94–105). What I consider misinterpretations here are interpretations that cf. philosophical hermeneutics are incoherent or self-contradictory.

Example

If I interpret Dorte's contact with a user of the library as being conflictual or tense, this could have to do with the fact that I am feeling discomfort when observing the conversation. But if I neither Dorte nor the user felt any tension, and if a subsequent analysis of the conversation shows no signs of tension or conflict between the two of them based on the way they communicated, then it would most likely be my experience of discomfort that led me to this incoherent or self-contradictory interpretation. I like to think of my experiences as a critical ally or teammate when doing analysis work, something I as a researcher can check in with and "say out loud" to myself. If I was feeling discomfort when the situation happened during fieldwork, or if I feel discomfort when analysing the video later, this is something I try to be aware of during the process of analysis.

Using Gadamer, I have argued that it is not possible to rule out the researcher as part of the research process, and that there is no such thing as a neutral understanding of something. Thus the point here is not to say that if I just become aware of my own experiences I can reach neutral conclusions about the world and other people in it. The point is, that to make interpretations that are likely to hold some truth based on the Principle of History of Effect, I need to be aware of my own experiences, as they can lead me to interpretations that would likely not be deemed true by this principle. In other words, I am arguing that being aware of my own experiences helps me reach conclusions that are more coherent and not self-contradictory with the present-day historically based, somewhat common criteria for interpretation.

5. Identification

DiaLoop operates with two ways of using theory in the process of analysis:

5. Identification and 7. Interpretation, which I will argue match the previously mentioned distinction between immediate understandings and more reflected understandings. Rather than seeing them as two distinctly different terms, I understand them as related to each other at each end of a continuum between directly observable and a more reflected understanding. See figure 6.



Figure 6. Use of theory in the DiaLoop model - Identification

Identification refers to connecting theoretical terms to empirical data in a way that requires little explanation to be understood and agreed upon by others. The identification of these theoretical terms in the data is close to being directly observable or immediately understandable.

Example

When analysing the conversation Dorte had with the scout children while standing outside in the rain during the camp, I began by identifying some patterns in Dorte's way of communicating; most of the things she said direct the children to act in certain ways. I found this pattern by identifying a theoretical term: a number of *directive speech acts* (Searle, 1969; Vagle, Sandvik, & Svennevig, 1993) in Dorte's communication. Having found many of these, I argue that there is a localised pattern in the data.

DiaLoop is based on the idea that identifying the more observable theoretical terms is a pathway to finding patterns in the data and to reaching the more reflected understandings. The identified terms make up the systematic groundwork of well-argued broader interpretations (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 107–123). The theoretical terms used in the analyses will be presented in connection to the analysis where they are used.

6. Argumentation

Argumentation, or line of reasoning, is the systematic, analytical work of describing, explaining, and discussing different interpretations of the data. It is the process of explicitly, systematically, and fairly answering the question of, "How do I reach the conclusions that I reach?", and it plays the important role of showing others how the conclusion reached is a likely, durable, and relevant interpretation of your data (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 126–127).

In DiaLoop, argumentation is not seen only as the text written in final version of a text, but also as the process leading up to being able to write this text. Analysis

as a process is described as a movement between, on the one hand, proposing a certain interpretation of something in your data, and on the other hand doubting, asking questions, and requesting further explanation and justification. This movement can happen among several researchers analysing the same data, and it can happen within one researcher as an inner dialogue. In this way, argumentation becomes a continuous process of inquiry and explanation, and should not just be seen as presenting finished thoughts, but rather as part of building up suitable and non-self-contradictory explanations. In this sense, DiaLoop offers a way to enter into a dialogue with my own understandings of something in my data, helping me explore the data and challenge my initial understandings of it (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 125–131).

Example

One initial interpretation of why Dorthé chose to stand outside in the rain voluntarily is that this is an inescapable part of being a scout leader, something Dorthé has to get through. Perhaps she endures the rain because she loves sitting in the evening with the other leaders talking until late at night, but to run a camp, she knows, you also need to have activities for the children. This interpretation could be based on *observing* the weather, and might be influenced by my own *experience* of discomfort from standing outside in this weather. However, as part of the process of argumentation, I need to challenge this initial interpretation. As I stood there with Dorthé, I could already see that she smiled, seemed quite content, acted patiently towards the children, and said nothing about being cold. These further observations already point me away from my initial interpretation and towards starting to look at what could be enjoyable or meaningful about this activity. I thought about it while standing there and made a few mental notes, and later continued this work as I interviewed Dorthé about this situation, then followed up with a more systematic analysis of her communication in the situation, which was video recorded. Through each of these steps different details arose that either supported, challenged, or supplemented the overall interpretation I had of this situation, and the argumentation process helped me make sense of these and continually seek a coherent understanding or indeed interpretation.

7. Interpretation

Interpretation, in DiaLoop, refers to a summary or synthesis of the results of a systematic, well-documented, and well-argued analysis. It refers to involving theoretical terms or ideas, which on a more general level are used to understand, describe, and put the phenomena studied into a broader perspective than what the immediate and less reflected understanding requires. The more explanation

and argumentation is needed, the more likely it is that we are dealing with an interpretation or a more reflected understanding than we find in 5. Identification



Figure 7. Use of theory in DiaLoop model - Interpretation

(see figure 7). I do not consider the specific distinction itself important for the analysis, but the idea that theory can be used both to identify and to interpret I do consider relevant.

Making interpretations in a DiaLoop understanding of analysis often means involving theory relevant to answering your research question(s) on a more general as this helps the analysis move to the more reflected understanding found in 7. Interpretations and 8. Patterns. An important part of reaching overall interpretations of the data is to both look across the data for points that support the hypothesis you are working with and to look for details that could contradict or falsify it. Equally, different (theoretical) perspectives on the data can lead to parallel interpretations, which differ from but do not contradict each other and thus can coexist (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 139–145).

8. Patterns

In DiaLoop, patterns are closely connected with interpretation. It seems that patterns are included in the model to draw attention to the fact that patterns found in the data and interpreted or identified a certain way can be the basis for involving theory, leading to the previously mentioned more reflected understandings. These patterns are often the basis for involving theory to lift the understanding of the data to a more reflected and perhaps abstract level (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 147–149).

Example

The theory of sociability (Simmel, 1911/1949) which will be presented later in the thesis, is one example of how a pattern combined with a theory leads to new insights. Sociability does not seem very directly observable in a conversation, but upon closer inspection of the actual pattern of communicating and in combination with some perhaps unobservable connections, a pattern and an overall interpretation is inferred in the analysis.

Where to begin?

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, these eight points are all seen

as part of the process of analysis, but the model should not be mistaken for a recipe to be followed one step at a time, from one to eight (Alrø et al., 2016). To illustrate how each point plays a role in the process of analysis, I have exemplified part of the process of analysing the situation with Dorthe standing outside in the rain on the scout camp.

In this example, the process of analysis that I go through goes from (3) observing the weather to (1) an intuitive thought about the counter-intuitiveness of the situation. Then, along with my own (4) experienced discomfort in the situation, I am led to the (7) initial interpretation of the situation as undesirable for Dorthe, but when I (3) look closer at the situation, both while standing there and during analysis of the video recording later, this initial idea is challenged partly because I (5) identify how Dorthe acts and communicates, find (8) a pattern in this, and start working my way towards a new (7) interpretation of the situation, now helped by the theory of sociability. The process began with one (2) direction of the analysis, but although the overall direction of the thesis has remained the same (comparing the two kinds of work), the specific direction of this analysis has changed as a result of leaving behind my first idea of direction.

[7]

DATA SOURCES AND DATA COLLECTION

In this chapter, I will begin by outlining which data sources are used in the analysis of the different levels of Ditte and Dorthe's work. This is followed by the criteria and procedure for finding cases, after which the use of different data collection methods will be detailed further.

As in mentioned in chapter 2, the thesis is based on the following data sources:

Documents

Range from descriptions of sectorial and organisational characteristics to the half-year activity program of one of the scout groups.

Participant observation

Following Ditte and Dorthe during both their paid public-sector work and their volunteer third-sector work.

Video observation

Video recording the focus persons during both paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work.

Interviews

Talking with Ditte and Dorthe about their work, including discussing the other data sources and work-in-progress analyses.

Literature

Existing studies and theories on public- and third-sector work, volunteering, and communication, among others.

Analytical levels and data sources

	Documents	Participant observation	Video observation	Interviews	Literature
Sectorial and organisational level	X	X	X	X	X
Situational level	X	X	X	X	X
Relational and communicational level		X	X	X	X
The focus person's own experiences		X		X	X

Table 3. Relationship between data sources and analytical levels

In table 3 I have marked which data sources are used in the analysis of which analytical levels.

Literature contributes at all levels, but importantly, the same literature is not used on all levels. *Documents* are used as sources detailing formalised structures at the sectorial and organisational levels, e.g. through organisational charts.

Participant observation is used primarily at the situational and relational level (sensing and experiencing what takes place by being part of the situations stud-

ied), but also as an extra source for understanding the sectorial and organisational levels, and in particular how it seems to seem to influence the actual work done. The same is the case with **video observation**, which additionally is used as a basis for studying the relational level through the way Ditte and Dorthe communicate with others during their work.

Lastly, **interviews and questions asked during participant observation** are used in two different ways. On the one hand, I ask Ditte and Dorthe questions in order to understand what *characterises* their work, e.g. when using Ditte as an information source about how the municipality where she works is organised. This kind of inquiry focuses on the top three levels of analysis and sees Ditte and Dorthe as sources of relatively uncontested and stable information as e.g. who is the leader of a library or which office is formally in charge of a certain aspect of their work. On the other hand, I ask them questions about how they *experience* their work in order to probe their personal subjective understandings of what it is they are doing and why they are doing it.

Finding suitable cases

Before any field work and data collection could begin, I needed to find people (cases) who matched the focus of the thesis, and who were interested in letting me follow and observe them. The aim was to find cases that were a good example of public and third sector organisations which would give interesting and useful results when compared. While both the public and third sectors consist of a large number of different types of entities, the aim was still to find cases which would resonate with the sectors. Before selecting cases, I established the following criteria:

Case selection criteria

- The work had to be done by persons doing both paid work in the public sector and volunteer work in the third sector.
- Their work had to live up to the basic distinction made in in my definition of paid and volunteer work (see chapter 1)
- The volunteer work had to be completely unpaid. Some sports organisations pay their volunteers token amounts, and to avoid both jobs being (somewhat) paid, these were excluded.
- The paid work had to be regularly paid work, and not for example subsidised reduced-hour jobs or internships.
- In trying to ensure that the work was a good example of the two types

of work, an ideal-typical description of the public and third sectors (Klausen, 2001) was used as an additional checklist to match the work up against. See the full list (table 5). Importantly the organisations were sought to be examples of the two sectors, and not examples of a combination of the two sectors (a hybrid organisation crossing the sector boundaries).

- The third sector associations had to rely almost completely on volunteer workers and the public sector organisation almost completely on paid workers.
- The people studied had been doing the two types work for at least 2 years to avoid comparing work they knew very well with work they were unfamiliar with.
- The organisations they worked in had to have existed for a longer period of time (10+ years). This was chosen to avoid comparing a new and unestablished organisation doing most of their work for the first time, with an older and established organisation with routines.

Finding cases

Out of practical considerations, I decided to start with volunteer work, as I could contact an association and ask them to spread information to their members – something I considered more difficult for a municipal or governmental organisation to do. Based on the above criteria, I found that the scout associations in Denmark could match what I was looking for. Also, they have around 68,000 members in Denmark (“Om Spejderne,” 2018) and over 40 million members worldwide (“National Scout Organizations,” 2018) meaning that as a case it had the potential of being exemplary of a type of volunteer work that did not seem to be a niche¹.

In order to find people interested in letting me follow them, I made a one-page notice, which said I was looking for scouts who also had a job in the public sector. It went into some detail to explain that I would like to follow them around in their jobs without disturbing them too much, and that I, at a later date, would like to video record some of their work and interview them. I posted this notice on my own Facebook wall, asking people to share it, and I posted it in a number of Facebook groups for scouts. I also e-mailed the national offices of larger Danish

1 Although there are scouts in most parts of the world, I would expect that the way the organisations are structured and the way the scout work takes place differentiates quite a bit.

scout organisations, asking them to share the notice. Approximately 15 people answered the notice. Based on the case selection criteria, Ditte and Dorte were finally selected as the most suitable. After a meeting with each of them, where I provided more details and they asked some questions, they both agreed to take part in the project.

Negotiating access

After having discussed the project with Ditte and Dorte, they both went back to their paid and volunteer work places and asked if I could be allowed to go there and observe their work. Everyone accepted and this was followed by the beginning of field work. Observation and video observation was planned some time ahead in a continuous process over the course of the almost two years it spanned.

Both Ditte and Dorte did the groundwork in gaining the formal acceptance of their workplaces, their scout groups, and from a lot of the people they would be in contact with during my time as observer. They were the ones who made sure people were okay with me being present e.g. at meetings, sometimes with the help of a little descriptive text from me about the project, and at other times completely on their own. Ditte and Dorte have both been extremely helpful and forthcoming in this, and after having made an agreement with them about the project, almost all subsequent negotiation of access was done by them.

Why participant observation?

As mentioned under characteristic #3 of case studies, my epistemological starting point is that I cannot rely solely on asking people about their behaviour because we as humans are not always aware of how we act or why we do so. Accordingly, Lofland, Snow, Andersen, and Lofland describe participant observation and the reasons for choosing this method in the following way:

Qualitative fieldstudy differs itself from other research in that it features researchers themselves as observers and participants in the lives of the people being studied. The researcher strives to be a participant in and a witness to the lives of others. (...) The central reason for observing and/or participating in the lives of others is that a great many aspects of social life can be seen, felt and analytically articulated in this manner. In subjecting him- or herself to the lives of others and living and feeling those lives along with them, the researcher becomes the primary instrument or medium through which the research is conducted. The researcher seeks to witness how those studied perceive, feel, and act in order to understand

their perceptions, feelings and behavior more fully and intimately. The epistemological foundation of fieldstudies is indeed the proposition that only through direct observation and/or participation can one get close to apprehending those studied and the character of their social worlds and lives. (Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006, p. 3)

They go on to argue that, epistemologically speaking, face-to-face interaction offers the best possibility for intimately understanding the actions and orientations of other humans, compared to other, indirect approaches to observation and understanding (Lofland et al., 2006, pp. 15–16). This thinking also seems to align with the Dialoop model's inclusion of the researcher's own experiences (Alrø, Dahl, & Schumann, 2016), and both sets of authors also mention the movement or tension between the distance and closeness of the researcher. Finally, they argue that while the researchers presence in the field can potentially influence what he is observing, this concern should not be overestimated – especially when considering the lack of access inherent in the more distantly observed alternatives (Lofland et al., 2006, p. 16).

Selecting where to observe

According to Lofland, Snow, Anderson, and Lofland (2006, p. 19) fieldwork is particularly fruitful as a method when the researcher's questions or interests point towards things, which are physically located at a certain place, as was the case with Ditte and Dorte's two types of work. To understand what their work consisted of and how it took place, it seemed natural to join them at their workplaces. I initially asked Dorte and Ditte where their work would take place most of the time, and where it would occasionally take them. The different places could mean different situations, settings, and people they were in contact with, which would help me in gaining an overview of their work. I wanted my observation to reflect their normal work in the sense that I prioritised locations and situations where most of their time was spent.

Observing during both regular (paid) working hours and 'volunteer working hours' during evenings and weekends proved to be quite a scheduling challenge for me, in terms of balancing fieldwork with my family life and my teaching obligations. I benefited greatly from Ditte and Dorte being very flexible and forthcoming.

How much observation was done and where?

The process of data collection through interviews, participant observation and video observation spanned almost two years as it had to fit the schedules of both

Ditte, Dorthe and myself, and because some analytical work was required before the last interviews.

Below is an overview of the data collection done in the project.

Dorthe volunteer work

- 6 evening meetings with children
- 1 full weekend camp (with video recording)
- 1 Christmas weekend event
- 2 Meetings in group supervisory board (1 with video recording)

Dorthe paid work

- 8 Desk duties, (4 with video recording) in Library A and Library B
- 1 User event in Library A
- 1 Meeting with colleagues in Library A (with video recording)

Ditte volunteer work

- 1 weekend camp
- 1 planning meeting (with video recording)
- 1 meeting between leaders
- 6 evening meetings with children (4 with video recording)

Paid work

- 9 days in the office including 6 meetings with colleagues (6 days with video recording)
- 1 meeting with contractors outside the office

Ditte and Dorthe

- 3 interviews each

My observer role: The Martian and the convert

When understanding the relationship between the researcher and the setting he is in, two opposing metaphors can be used to describe each end of a continuum. These are *the Martian* and *the Convert*, and they can be used to capture what Lofland et al. call *the dilemma of distance*. They explain, “The Martian see distance as a passageway to knowing; the Convert views it as a barrier” (Lofland et al., 2006, p. 22).

They argue that the process of fieldwork should consist of a movement between these two roles or metaphors, just as the DiaLoop model describes the process of analysis as the movement between closeness and distance.

To ask questions of, to “make problematic”, to “bracket” social life requires distance (Martian). To acquire familiarity with social life from the vantage point of those studied (...) requires closeness (Convert). The sensitive investigator wishes not to be one or the other, but to be both or either, as the research demands. This, of course, implies experiencing the contrasting tensions of surrender on the one hand and distance on the other (Lofland et al., 2006, p. 22).

I worked with a version of these two positions during the actual fieldwork, in my immediate recording or writing of field notes, and in the subsequent, more detailed process of analysis.

During fieldwork

During the fieldwork, while I spent time with Ditte and Dorte, I tried to think in both ways: to just be there, to freely interpret and empathise with others there, but also to focus on seeing, sensing, and describing to myself what I saw taking place, in a way as removed from my interpretation of it as possible. Sometimes, when playing a game at a scout meeting, I would just join in the activity, and would even momentarily forget I was there to do research; or I would focus on trying to understand and spontaneously interpret what it was like for Dorte to be there in that situation. At other times I would try to step back mentally from a game in order to be more observant, noticing who did what, looking at how they reacted and acted towards each other and the situation they were in, and seeking to mentally differentiate between my own experiences and their actions and reactions.

My initial familiarity with the types of work done

Lofland et al. go on to argue that as a prospective investigator I should consider my initial familiarity with the sites I would observe and the situations that occur there. The more familiar I am with a certain setting, the more my natural starting point there will be as Convert. Conversely, if I am unfamiliar with a setting, and feel like a guest or an outsider, my natural starting point will be as Martian.

Convert in the scouts

As I am an active member of a youth organisation that in activities, structure, and even uniform seems quite similar to the scouts in Denmark, my initial contact

with the scout world felt very familiar. Indeed some of the activities conducted by Dorthé or Ditte when working with their scout children during an evening meeting seemed very similar to what I myself would do later that same week with the children in my association's local group.

The authors argue that this initial Convert stance gives easy access to understanding, but requires that I actively pursue distance, as this will not come on its own (Lofland et al., 2006, p. 22).

Martian in the library and the municipality

Observing Dorthé in the library and Ditte in the municipality was a very different experience, as I had no existing familiarity with this kind of work

I was allowed to just stand next to Dorthé when she was working behind the desk in the library, and I otherwise just followed her around as she help users who came in to the library. This seemed to be accepted by these users. In my own understanding, I was most likely considered another librarian, and in some cases, I think, also a sort of intern – it seemed I was looked upon as someone who could not answer questions.

In meetings, Dorthé had told people beforehand that I would be present, and I was politely welcomed, and then otherwise seemingly not really taken into account. Thus, my initial stance in the library was that of the Martian, and the challenge became to also open up to be more of a Convert. The same was the case with Ditte in the municipality. This setting was completely new to me, and Ditte had made sure everyone knew I was coming, so I was usually welcomed briefly, and then just sat in her office engaging briefly in small conversations, but trying to stay quiet and be aware of what Ditte and her colleague were doing. In meetings I would sit at the table and just listen to what was happening.

In some ways, my approach to being both Martian and Convert were the same: to question as much as possible (sometimes just in my head). I tried to appear *socially acceptably incompetent*, as someone who did not know or understand what was going on, and hence someone it would be natural for the people around me to explain things to (Lofland et al., 2006, pp. 69–70). While there was some strategic forethought put into trying to make sure I would appear this way, it was also very much consistent with my inner state. I felt very aware of not knowing what Ditte and Dorthé's two kinds of work actually consisted of, and especially not what their thoughts on the work would be. I tried to let a combination of awareness of not knowing and a curiosity and desire to explore guide me in the fieldwork. During the scout fieldwork, however, I did often mention that I had a background in an organisation similar to the scouts, and this seemed to gain me

a certain amount of recognition as not a complete stranger, but as someone who would fit in there (selective competence).

Given the difference in my familiarity with the contexts observed, this is one way to consider challenges in my fieldwork and subsequent analysis and write-up. There is a real risk that I have not asked questions in the scout context that it would be obvious for an outsider to ask, and there is the additional risk that I may *think* I know what is going on, but that I am missing subtle differences between my organisational background and the scout context. This is something I have tried to be constantly aware of.

Field notes

Notes were usually made in the car on my way home from fieldwork, as I would speak aloud as I recalled all my observations and interpretations, recording my voice on my cell phone. I would mention and detail all the things I could remember from the observation, and did this as soon as possible after having finished fieldwork to avoid forgetting too many things. I tried not to filter my notes at this point. During observation, I tried to avoid making written (analogue or digital) notes visible to the people being observed, as I thought this might make them too aware of being observed and thereby uncomfortable with my presence (Lofland et al., 2006, pp. 109–110). I did carry around a pen and a small piece of paper in my pocket, and would occasionally step out to make a note if a thought or a situation struck me as particularly interesting. I would also sometimes step out to record audio notes on my phone, as if making a phone call, when I thought too many things had happened to remember them all at the end of a day. Some audio field notes were turned into written ones when I was back in my office, and others were used as audio data sources. During Ditte's office work I brought my own computer with me, and was given a table in the corner of the office where I could make field notes directly, and would sometimes do short non-research tasks if Ditte were sitting quietly and working for a while. The same was the case for some days when Dorthé was working at the library. I would sit with my computer some metres away from Dorthé's desk, where the library users came to ask for help, and make written field notes during the working day. Other times I would stand next to Dorthé at her desk and make my field notes after the working day had finished.

Inspired by Billund's use of terms from the DiaLoop model in her fieldwork (2016, pp. 81–82), my field notes were divided into three categories:

- **Observation:** As close to what I could see and sense as possible. From the specific, e.g. my recollection of what someone actually said, to the

broader, more condensed descriptions of a situation.

- **Experience or interpretation:** My own experiences being in a situation and my interpretations of the way people acted, thought, and spoke. Also notes and concerns on the process of doing observation.
- **Theoretical take – Further thoughts:** Ideas for further analysis, which theories might be interesting to include here, and other whims.

While my notes are divided into these categories in the spreadsheet they are written in (one column for each), for practical reasons, they are not strictly divided; i.e. at times an interpretation may be found in the observation column. While I would tend to use an observation to explain a given interpretation, I have striven to always be aware of which level of the DiaLoop model I am on, to maintain transparency towards myself in the process of analysis, which I could then carry on into the finished analysis presented in this thesis. Field notes also include a date (written or recorded) and the date they are about, usually meaning the date the actual observation took place.

Video observation

Video observation was done alongside with participant observation, meaning I was present during the situations video recorded and often also took part in the situation as a participant observer. Using video observation was done with the primary goal of capturing conversations to enable subsequent transcription and detailed analysis of these. Due to the speed and complexity of conversations, video is the best choice for fixating the conversation so that some of its details are kept and it can be replayed any number of times (Alrø et al., 2016, pp. 82–83).

Video observing was always accompanied by a request to sign a consent form. This was done because video observation created data, which quite directly would be referable back to the person being observed – it would make them identifiable, and the treatment of such data is subject to “The Act on Processing of Personal Data” (Persondataloven) which requires consent from the people involved.

Interview

Ditte and Dorthé were both interviewed three times. The first was before beginning any field work. Here I focused on understanding the kind of work they were doing, who they were in contact with during a working day and what their typical tasks were. This first interview was followed by more than one year where field work took place at different times, during which, I also asked a number of more

specific questions when I deemed it appropriate. Ditte and Dorthe were both very helpful as they were good at ‘thinking out loud’ when I was around, and this gave me a good insight into their thoughts on their work.

After the end of field work, two more interviews were done with Ditte and Dorthe each. In the first, focus was on understanding the two organisations they were working in both in terms of its formal structure and in terms of how they experienced working in this structure. In the second interview, focus was on their thoughts on specific situations taking place in their paid and volunteer work, as *examples* of the kind of work they were doing.

Some of the situations I interviewed them about, happened more than a year before the interview, and so we could not rely on memory alone to discuss them. Before discussing each situation, we saw video clips of it, and used this as a the basis for talking about it.

Interviews were semi-structured (Tinggaard & Brinkmann, 2010, pp. 37–42) with the goal of allowing Ditte and Dorthe’s answers to also influence the direction of the interview, while at the same time making sure questions central to my research questions were asked. In order to maintain transparency, I have sought to include the questions asked in the analyses of interviews.

[8]

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

SECTORIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL ANALYSIS

As mentioned previously, I will argue that there are differences between sectors and among organisations within sectors that may influence both the way people act and communicate in the work they do and their experience of doing it. In this chapter, I will look more closely at how the different sectors can be said to differ from each other and discuss how this can influence the actions and experiences of people in the sectors. These distinctions between sectors will act as framework for the subsequent analysis of Ditte and Dorthe's paid public-sector and volunteer third-sector work. In a continuation of this, I will introduce what I will argue is a key element in understanding how organisations may influence the people working in them, using the concept of *tensions* from Jaffe (2001).

A society sector model - The third sector and the public sector

A fundamental distinction between sectors comes from Pestoff (1992), who presents an overall societal model in which he distinguishes among private, public, third, and fourth sectors, with each sector containing different types of institutions. The private sector is comprised of private companies, the public sector of public institutions, the third sector of associations and non-profit organisations, and the fourth sector of families and households.

Pestoff's distinctions between sectors are based on whether the institutions with-

in a sector are:

- Formal or informal
- Private or public
- For-profit or non-profit.

When distinguishing between public- and third-sector institutions, the main difference would be that *the public sector is public* and *the third sector is private*. Both sectors are non-profit based, and both consist of formal institutions rather than the more informal institution of, for example, the family (Pestoff, 1992). See illustration in table 4

Type of institution	Sector	Formal/ Informal	Private/ Public	For-profit/ Non-profit
Private companies	Private sector	Formal	Private	For-profit
Public institutions	Public sector	Formal	Public	Non-profit
Associations and other non-profit organisations	Third sector	Formal	Private	Non-profit
Families and households	Fourth sector	Informal	Private	Non-profit

Table 4. Pestoff's sector distinction

This basic distinction, however, does not help much in understanding how different sectors can lead to different ways of working. What do the differences between being *public* and being *private* mean to an individual working in one of these sectors, if anything? And what other differences are there? Klausen (2001) begins by discussing where these distinctions and sector borders take their departure from. He argues that ever since Adam Smith and Karl Marx, respectively, wrote their ground-breaking principal works *The Wealth of Nations* and *Das Kapital*, there has been a distinction between the public and private *sectors*, as well as a distinction between state and market as two different *regulation mechanisms* underpinning the sectors. The public sector has been considered synonymous with the *state* as a regulation mechanism, and the private sector with the *market* as a regulation mechanism. These distinctions have also been at the centre of a debate amongst

researchers and politicians about the relative sizes and roles of state and market as regulation mechanisms in society, and about which parts of society they should encompass, in terms of what belongs to a given sector and what does not.

Regulation mechanisms

State and market are both seen as *regulation mechanisms*. The market in the Adam Smith tradition was considered an almost unnoticeable mechanism or *invisible hand*, which would ensure development, growth, and wealth if it was kept as free as possible, meaning that the state should play a very small role in society in order to not interfere with the free market. The state, in a tradition derived from Marx, was considered a necessary regulation mechanism that should play a large role in society in order to preserve it, as the market would otherwise exploit and oppress the workers. In both cases, we find the idea that state and market are mechanisms that regulate aspects of a society; hence Klausen refers to them as regulation mechanisms.

Considering this debate it becomes quite clear that when dividing society into sectors and regulation mechanisms and describing characteristics of these sectors, as well as trying to place some things within a sector and other things outside it, sectors are an abstraction that relies on an understanding of ideal typical traits within them. It is argued that a certain regulation mechanism is synonymous with a certain sector, and this sets some borders for what will belong in a sector and what will not. On the one hand, this understanding divides society into entities that can be placed in a specific sector. On the other, there is also the argument that state and market as *regulation mechanisms* can influence entities in both sectors (Klausen, 2001, pp. 92–93).

Going into further detail: Characteristics of four sectors in Denmark

Moving on from the initial background discussion above, Klausen adds a third and fourth sector to his model, and makes an overarching differentiation among the sectors in the following way:

- The public sector has a particular public law (in Denmark, e.g., the Public Administration Law and the Consolidation Act on Social Services) and is governed politically and bureaucratically.
- The private sector has its own private law (in Denmark, e.g., the Sale of Goods Act, the Companies Act and the Financial Business Act) and is governed by the market, with weight on competition and personal incentives.

- The third sector has typically been defined negatively as a consequence of so-called failures of market or government, and thus by definition is not part of these sectors, and is non-profit. It has also positively been defined as characterised by voluntariness, idealistic values, and network orientation. The third sector also has a few laws specifically about it (in Denmark, e.g., the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity).
- The fourth sector consists of family and social networks, which Klausen argues are also underpinned by their own set of rules and ways of working that distinguish them from the other sectors (Klausen, 2001, p. 94).

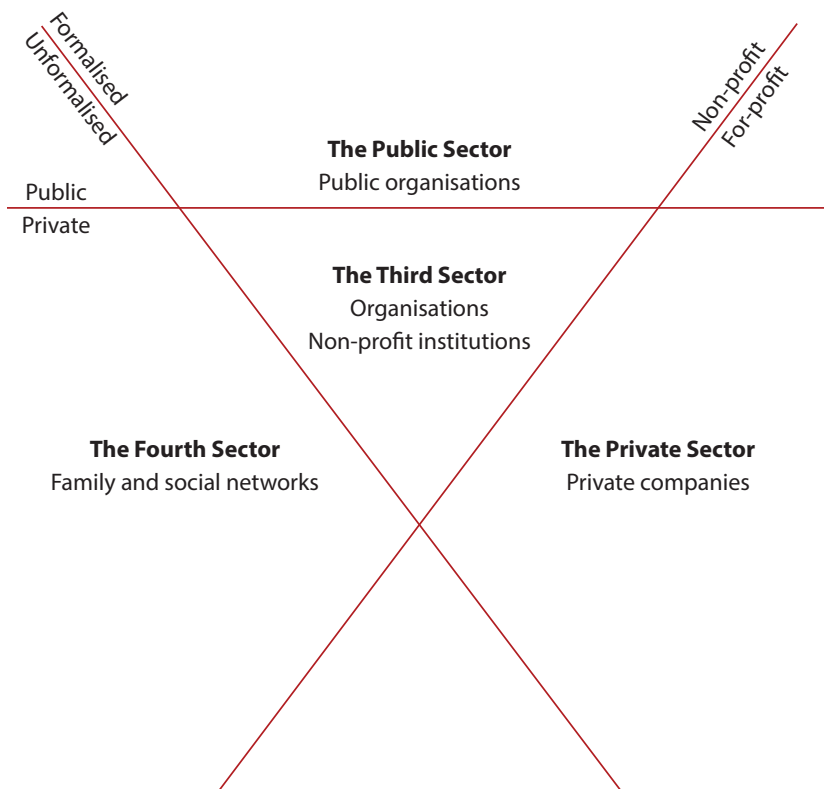


Figure 8. Klausen's sector model dividing the four sectors among the three overall characteristics (Klausen, 2001, p. 96, my translation).

Sectors and regulation mechanisms

Klausen argues that what makes the sectors different from an organisational and management point of view is not the three characteristics of private/public, for-profit/non-profit, and formalised/non-formalised, but rather more specific traits of each sector. These are – again, ideal-typically – defined by Klausen in Table 5.¹ For the reader to get the overall picture, they are included here in full (translated from Danish), although my focus will be on the public and third sectors.

1 Although this is not specified by Klausen, the table seems tailored to the Danish system.

Dimension/ sector	Public sector	Private sector	Third sector	Fourth sector
Objectives	Broad, ambiguous, the result of political process	Well defined	Broad, idealistic (defined by members, clients, or society)	Selective, person-bound
Tasks	Ensuring order, democracy, health, education, infrastructure, social welfare; 'wicked problems'	Everything which money can be made from, 'tame problems'	Selected based on members', clients', or societal orientation and also 'distant others'	Mutual protection of and help for family, friends, and also 'distant others'
Funding	Taxes and levies (now also sale of services, to a limited extent)	Commerce, fishery, production, speculation (now also, to a large extent, public subsidies)	Member contributions, public and private donations (now also sponsorships and sales of services)	Gifts (one service is worth the other)
Legal basis	Among other things, public law, municipal governing law, worker-protection law	Among other things, tax law, stock-exchange regulation law, limited company, competition, environment, worker- and consumer-protection law	Among other things, foundation law	Civil law (family and inheritance law, and law of property and purchase, etc.)

Dimension/ sector	Public sector	Private sector	Third sector	Fourth sector
Workforce	Hiring and collective labour agreements, few selective incentives	Hiring and collective labour agreements, numerous selective incentives	Volunteer work force as well as hiring, few selective salary-based incentives, process and participation most important	Volunteer, process and participation most important
Evaluation criteria	Efficiency and productivity (taxpayers' money), political legitimacy, transparency in administration	Profit for owners and shareholders (not necessarily efficiency and productivity)	Accordance with basic values (not necessarily profit, productivity, and efficiency)	Can you vouch for your own actions? (stå inde for!)
Basic values/rationale behind actions	Democracy, welfare state, rational action towards objectives	Profit, rational action towards objectives	Idea-based aims, norm- and value-based rational action towards objectives, and also, to a certain extent, emotional rationality	Social bonds, norm- and value-based rational action towards objectives, and a great deal of emotional/affective rationality

Table 5. Characteristics of the four sectors, compared (Klausen, 2001, p. 97)

Looking back at my initial question of what makes working in the public sector different from working in the third sector, I will now discuss some of the categories in Klausen's model, while others will be included later in the thesis as parts of the analysis.

Tasks

The public sector has a large set of given tasks it has to fulfil by law and other based on the results of political processes. It is a particular trait of the public sector that its services must be available for everyone in society, whereas there is legitimate differential treatment in the private and third sectors (Klausen, 2001, pp. 122–123). Klausen also argues that many of the tasks in the public sector are so-called wicked problems, i.e. particularly complicated and complex tasks that (unlike tame problems), cannot easily be defined or solved, as both definition and solution criteria are subject to political disagreement and a high level of complexity. Tame problems can readily be solved, as they are clearly delimited in a way that makes solving them more straightforward (Klausen, 2001, pp. 113–114). Here the third sector differs in that ideal-typically speaking, organisations are able to choose whom and what to work for and to benefit, based on their members, clients, or the societal orientation of the association. This again indicates that third-sector work is oriented more specifically towards a chosen (tame problem) task, while laws and a number of (ambiguous) requirements govern public-sector work to a larger extent, and may lead to more wicked problems.

Funding

The public sector is primarily funded by taxes and levies, which are distributed based on political decisions. The third sector relies on member contributions along with public and private donations. How money is acquired and what is needed to procure it also influence the organisations.

Workforce

The public sector is (traditionally) primarily based on hiring paid staff, and there are few selective incentives directed at the individual employee. The third sector is (unsurprisingly) based on volunteer (i.e. unpaid) work, supplemented by only a small amount of paid staff. My focal point is the volunteer who has no salary-based incentives in the third sector and few when working for pay in the public sector. For this type of person, the difference experienced would come from shifting between being paid to do a job in the public sector and not being paid to do a job in the third sector, and potentially instead enjoy the before mentioned process and participation as an associational member. As discussed in the introduction, the significance of payment may not be very big, as long as payment is there.

Evaluation criteria

Here we also see substantial differences between the sectors. The public sector is required to use taxpayer money efficiently and productively. Furthermore, it is important to have political legitimacy and transparency in the way the sector is administered. A third-sector association primarily needs to live up to its own basic values. It does not necessarily have to make a profit, be productive, or be efficient, although this will depend on the basic values of the given association or other entity in the sector. So while public-sector work is underpinned by requirements for how the work should be done that are not necessarily directly related to the work being done, third-sector work must first and foremost live up to the basic values of the entity the person is working in.

Basic values/rationale behind actions

For the public sector, the basic values are democracy and (upholding) the welfare state, while the third sector has somewhat more complex idea-based aims, leading to norm- and value-based actions, coupled with a certain amount of emotional rationality, as well. One could argue that it should then be expected that the third sector is ruled by more person-based and individual ideas and values, whereas public-sector goals are broad and common to many organisations.

With this overview of some of the aspects of the sector model, we will move on to looking at the organisations inside these sectors.

Understanding organisations using tensions

Where the sector model defines certain ideal-typical traits that differentiate one sector from another, Jaffee's idea of *tensions* does not involve an a priori notion of societal sectors and what differentiates them from each other, but instead focuses on two tensions, which, he argues, are central to most of the work done in the field of organisational theory and management practices:

- Tension 1: Controlling the human factor
- Tension 2: Differentiation and integration.

Jaffee does not seem to differentiate among sectors when using these terms. While the sector model is introduced as a framework of possible differences, Jaffee's tensions will be used as an analytical tool to look at how organisations seem to function inside these sectors. Common to both tensions is the idea that organisations will not automatically reach their goals, and that both tensions 1 and 2 will need to be addressed somehow for the organisation to reach its goals. First the tensions will be described; then I will provide a perspective on how or-

organisational goals can be understood not as neutrally existing entities, but rather as the goals of humans.

Tension 1: Controlling the Human Factor

How to control and manage human beings poses a perpetual organizational problem. As conscious, reflective, and reactive creatures, humans are able - and often willing—to resist organizational pressures. (Jaffee, 2001, p. xvii)

Based on the idea that organisations need to move in a certain direction to achieve certain goals, Jaffee argues that in contrast to technology or raw materials used for production, labour power cannot be purchased or owned. Not only can humans resist organisational pressures, but humans are also different from one another, and will respond differently to the organisational conditions they encounter. This makes the process of dealing with this resource, and the inherent tension between humans and organisational goals, a central focus of organisation theory.

First, people are different because of their distinct backgrounds, experiences, perceptions, and expectations. ... This means that humans within an organization, even if they share the same job title, represent a very heterogeneous factor of production. Further, all people will not respond in the same way to the same stimuli or managerial techniques. Humans are not standardized but rather highly distinct entities. (Jaffee, 2001, p. 23)

Tension 2: Differentiation and integration

A second tension is generated by the organizational decision to differentiate activities in terms of jobs, occupations, departments, and units. This differentiation is an attempt to rationally structure organizational processes and thus gain the benefits of specialization. At the same time, however, organizations must also make sure that people, jobs, and production units fit well together. They must be coordinated, and they must be connected to the larger mission of the organization. This constitutes the problem of integration. (Jaffee, 2001, p. xvii)

Differentiation happens because in most cases everyone will not be able to take on responsibility for everything that goes on within an organisation. For this reason, activities and labour are differentiated, divided, and specialised. Divisions of labour can be seen *horizontally*, with people on the same level in an organi-

sation completing different sets of tasks, and *vertically*, with people on different levels having differentiated power in decision-making, authority, and influence. For both types of differentiation, the challenge for the organisation is to create social integration among workers, so that they still work towards the same goals of the organisation. (Jaffee, 2001, pp. 28–29)

Almost all organizations are structured around a division of activities. There is differentiation and specialization, which are often viewed as fundamental prerequisites for organizational efficiency. However, these divisions can prove problematic when they undermine a common mission by promoting particularistic identification with an occupation, a department, or a social class. People in a single organization can begin to pursue very different interests and objectives that defeat collective organizational goals. Thus, in all organizations there is a constant balancing act between divisions of labor and differentiation, on the one hand, and building community and integration, on the other. (Jaffee, 2001, p. 12)

Goals

Central to both tensions are the goals of the organisation: tension 1 relates to how to make humans in organisations work towards organisational goals, and tension 2 relates to how to make different parts of the organisation work towards the same goals.

Dorthe and Ditte, along with their colleagues, can be described as human factors in the organisations in which they work. They also both belong to a certain area within their differentiated organisations. Consequently, we can expect that they will be subject to control and management in order for the organisation to reach its goals. By studying the control and management approaches in the two kinds of work they do, we can gain a better understanding of the differences between them.

But first, let us take a closer look at how we can understand what organisational goals are.

The goals of the organization are the “conceptions of desired ends” (Scott 1987:18); that is, what is the organization trying to achieve? This could be the production of a reliable product, high-quality customer service, or the efficient distribution of social services. We often speak of these as “the goals of the organization.” This phrase is so widely used by organizational and management theorists, and anyone who talks about

organizations, that it is rarely scrutinized. However, organizations do not have goals, purpose, or intent. Rather, “organizational goals” are human goals. The goals of the organization are usually the goals of those who own or control the organization. Once we acknowledge this fact, we begin to see the more problematic aspects of this concept. Since goals are formulated by humans, organizational participants may not share the same goals. The goals of owners may not be the goals of managers, production workers, or support staff. The fact that humans will have different goals, and that goal conflict will take place, is further evidence of the challenge posed by organizational participants.” (Jaffee, 2001, p. 3)

We can understand goals as being what the organisations are trying to do or to achieve. Here, Jaffe argues that goals usually come from the people who own or control the organisation. But for a third-sector association or public-sector organisation the question arises, who might that be? Who sets which goals for the organisation, and how does that happen? Klausen offers the following sector-specific perspective on this question.

Goals in the public and third sectors

Klausen refers to the objectives of both the public and third sectors as being *broad*, whereas they are well defined in the private sector.

In the public sector, broad goals are identified through a political process, where numerous and opposing interests sometimes result in ambiguous objectives. Klausen argues that because of the democratic nature of the public sector, it is necessarily comprised of people who disagree. While elected boards in the private sector and the third sector will tend to seek agreement, this is not the goal in the public sector, which is based on representing the opposing interests and needs present in society. Consequently, the objectives of the public sector become broad and ambiguous as a result of compromises, and they often change arbitrarily as a result of changing majorities (Klausen, 2001, pp. 104–105).

The third sector also has broad objectives, and although they can also be the result of a democratic and somewhat political process, Klausen specifies that they are idealistic, and defined by members, clients, and society rather than the established political system of the public sector and state. Salamon (1992) argues that (the appearance of) agreement among members in Danish third-sector associations is very important for the survival of these associations, as they are bound together not only by an activity or common goal, but also by the very idea of agreeing with each other. If there are continued disagreements, the result will likely be that the association will be split into two associations, not because the

activities or goals of the two necessarily are different, but because a degree of formal agreement is needed for the association to uphold itself (Salamon, 1992). This also indicates a difference from the political reality of the public sector, where disagreement is to be expected.

Klausen tell us that theoretically, goals are reached in different ways in the public and third sectors, and as a result of this, they differ in how broad they are, and in how ambiguous or clear they are. Taken together, Klausen and Salamon indicate that we should expect more agreement and clearer objectives in the third-sector Danish Guide and Scout Association than we find at the public-sector municipal library. To gain deeper insight into this, we need to take a closer look at how goals are made and treated in the two types of organisations.

Top-down perspective

One way to understand Jaffee's tensions is that it is the task of the owners or controllers of an organisation to control the human factor and to ensure integration in their organisation, so that everyone is working towards the same goals.

This could also be understood as the result of a vertically differentiated organisation where people with power reside at the top of a hierarchy, exercise their power to define the goals of the entire organisation, and take measures to manage tensions 1 and 2 in the direction of the goals they have defined. From this perspective, which is somewhat inspired by Marxist thinking, there is a clear distinction between owners/controllers on the one hand and workers on the other, the former being the ones making the decisions (Jaffee, 2001, pp. 10–11). I will refer to this as a *top-down* perspective.

I will argue that it is also relevant to consider this perspective both in paid public-sector work and in volunteer third-sector work. Although volunteer labour power is, by definition, not paid, and although the question of who owns an association can be quite complex, volunteer associations still have goals and the need to work towards achieving these goals. This also means that Dorthe, as a member of a third-sector organisation, will also be subject to the organisation working towards achieving its goals, and hence this perspective becomes an important part of understanding Dorthe's volunteer, and later paid, work. Regardless of whether it pays the people that populate it, the organisation must still deal with the human factor described in this tension.

Along with Klausen's sector model, I will therefore use Jaffee's tensions and the top-down perspective as analytical framework(s) in the following description and analysis of the structural make up of the public- and third-sector organisations in which Dorthe and Ditte work. But first, existing research relevant to the thesis will be reviewed in the following chapter.

REVIEW OF EXISTING RESEARCH

Having presented the theoretical framework of the analysis in the previous chapter, this chapter will contain a systematic review of existing literature. This is done in order to contextualise the thesis with the work of other scholars and to connect the research questions with existing debates in relevant fields. I will begin the chapter with the methodology of the review, followed by a thematic presentation of the selected articles.

Methodology of systematic review

I have based the review on the RQ of the thesis:

What characterises doing volunteer work in the third sector and doing paid work in the public sector respectively? How do people doing these two types of work experience them and differentiate between them? What do the differences and similarities between the two types of work tell us about the particular characteristics of volunteer and paid work respectively and why does that seem to be the case?

This was translated into an overall focus on studies comparing work in the public and third sectors, without adding any further specifications to the searches out of a concern that relevant results would be excluded.

The review was conducted by proceeding systematically through the following

six steps, which are presented here for transparency:

1. Scoping study
2. Selection of databases
3. Selecting and refining search string
4. Selection of relevant literature I – titles and abstracts
5. Selection of relevant literature II – full text
6. Thematic categorisation and writing

1. Scoping study

In order to find suitable search terms, a scoping study was done in which literature involving either the public or the third sector was consulted to find terms describing both the sectors and the organisations within them. All literature in my personal Zotero library was searched, along with journals such as *VOLUNTAS*, *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly* and *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*.¹ Whereas the public and private sectors seemed to be described using a relatively narrow range of terms, the third sector was found to be described in a multitude of ways (as noted by Knutsen & Brock, 2014, pp. 1115–1117). See the final list of selected terms in table 9

2. Selection of databases

The thesis is based on comparing paid and volunteer work that takes place in the public and third sectors, respectively. I am studying these types of work across organisational, relational and personally experienced differences, which also means that relevant existing studies could come from a number of different disciplines and perspectives. Consequently, the search for literature was done in a number of different databases (see table 6) in an effort to include all potentially relevant studies. Out of 558 articles found across 7 databases, only 27 were duplicates, which indicated that none of the databases searched was redundant. Scopus and ProQuest are collections of databases that contain large numbers of databases, and to narrow down the results inside these collections, databases concerning areas deemed clearly irrelevant were excluded before searching, meaning that medical research, for example, was not searched.

1 Although focused on the third sector, these journals include a number of articles looking at, for example, cooperation among the public, private and third sectors, and on the blurring of the lines between the sectors (sometimes referred to as hybridisation). For this reason, the articles were deemed suitable for finding terminology describing all three sectors.

Database	Results
Scopus	245
ProQuest	239
Academic Search Premier	45
Business Source Premier	23
International Political Science Abstracts	6
MLA International Bibliography	
Public Administration Abstracts	
Total	558

Table 6. Databases searched

3. Selecting and refining search terms

The search terms used for the review are listed in table 9. Although the aim was to find only studies comparing the third and public sectors, the private sector was also included in an effort to increase the chance of finding more potentially relevant sector-comparison studies. This was deemed necessary because the scoping study found widely varying terminology used in titles, abstracts and keywords. The terms inside each block were all separated by OR Boolean operators, meaning just one of the terms had to appear for the literature to be included. The search was limited to peer-reviewed literature and to text in titles, keywords and abstracts.

It proved challenging to narrow the search to a workable number of results. The first strategy tested was to search for all literature including at least one term from block 1 AND at least one term from block 3, thinking this would lead to all studies comparing the third sector to either the public or private sector. This produced more than 18,000 results in ProQuest alone; when sampling the results, it was found that the vast majority were not sector comparisons, many having nothing to do with work in the sectors.

After a series of iterations, two strategies were found to work. First, to include block 5 with the terms *comparison* or *comparative*, and second, to include terms describing work in what could be called a double AND construction. Thus the

Block 1	Block 2	Block 3	Block 4	Block 5
civil society association civil society organi* civil-society association civil-society organi* CSO NGO non governmental organi* non profit organi* non-governmental organi* non-profit organi* not for profit association not for profit organi* not-for-profit association not-for-profit organi* NPO third sector association third sector organi* volunt* association volunt* organi*	unpaid unpaid work volunt*	public sector public sector work welfare state private sector for-profit for profit for-profit organi* for profit organi*	paid work wage labour work	compara- tive compari- son

Table 9. Search terms used.

search structure became:

(Block 1 AND Block 2) AND (Block 3 AND Block 4) AND Block 5

The effect of this structure was that only if both the setting (some form of sector or entity inside a sector) and a term describing work (what people would be doing inside the sector) were found would the citation be included in the results.² This search structure returned 558 articles.

Although the search string was composed to find studies comparing unpaid

² In SCOPUS a variation of this search was made using the operator W20, which looked for terms within 20 words of each other: (Block 1 W20 Block 2) AND (Block 3 W20 Block 4) AND Block 5).

third-sector work with paid public- (or private-) sector work, what it actually found was mostly comparisons of paid work in different sectors. While this could be seen as a problem with the search strategy, this does not seem likely, as the terms *unpaid*, *unpaid work* and *volunt** were included; hence studies involving this type of work should have been captured. Consequently, it seems more likely that few comparisons of paid and unpaid work have been done across sectors.

Finally, duplicates were removed using reference management software (Zotero), leaving 529 articles. Sixteen articles³ were added based on peer recommendations, my own archive and articles found through backward and forward snowballing (using reference lists and Google Scholar searches of publications citing a given article, as explained by Maier, Meyer, & Steinbereithner, 2014). This resulted in a total of 545 articles.

4. Selection of relevant literature I – Titles and abstracts

Titles and abstracts of the 545 articles were read, and 470 articles were excluded based on the following criteria:

- Sources must be written in English.
- Sources must involve some form of comparison of the third and public sectors (or paid and unpaid work) in terms of e.g. structure, the experiences of people working there or the conditions under which people work.
- In an effort to find studies comparable to Denmark and Scandinavia, sources must be based on data from Western countries.
- Studies excluded based on topic alone included articles on corruption, legal studies, public-private sector comparisons where the third sector was not included, accounting practises, partnerships between public and third sectors where the focus was on the influence one had on the other (sometimes referred to as hybridisation), terrorism and development aid.

Selection based on these criteria produced a total of 75 remaining articles.

5. Selection of relevant literature II – Full text

Full-text versions of the remaining 75 articles were obtained. All were surveyed, and articles that were found to match the exclusion criteria were again removed. This step resulted in a total of 26 articles, which was the final number reviewed.

3 Out of these 16 articles, 5 were included in the final review.

Selection step	Number of articles
Total results of searches	558
After removal of duplicates	529
Other sources (own archive & recommendations)	18
Total before selection of relevant literature	545
After relevance check I (read all titles and abstracts)	77
After relevance check II (surveying full text versions of articles)	26

Table 10. Overview of selection proces

Types of research	Number of articles	
Quantitative	16	64%
Qualitative	8 (7)	28%
Quantitative and qualitative	1	4%
N/A (review)	1	4%
Total	26	100%

Table 12. Two-thirds of the studies found were quantitative.

Year of publication	Number of articles
2001	1
2002	1
2005	2
2006	1
2007	2
2008	2
2009	1
2012	2
2013	2
2014	2
2015	4
2016	3
2017	2
2018	1
Total	26

Table 11. The articles' publication years were quite evenly dispersed between the earliest, 2001, and latest, 2018.

All studies selected were a form of what Chen (2012, p. 452) calls a *public–nonprofit comparison*. The articles added as either contrasts or supplements to the search results did not all match the inclusion criteria (the search terms), but were still found relevant and included.

See table 10 for an overview.

6. Thematic categorisation and writing

Finally, the 26 articles were read and categorised using the qualitative data analysis software NVIVO, the mindmapping tool MindNode and a lot of post-its. This was followed by writing the actual review of the research found.

Overview of the research found

Before the content of the research is presented and discussed, I will briefly give a quantified overview, followed by an overall discussion of where this thesis seeks to make a contribution in terms of geography, qualitative/quantitative approach and focus on paid or unpaid workers.

Year of publication and journal

See table 11

The studies were published in 15 different journals: 6 in VOLUNTAS: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations, 4 in Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly, 2 in Public Personnel Management and the remaining 12 articles in 12 other journals.

Qualitative contribution

See table 12

The majority of the reviewed studies (with Knutsen, 2013; Overgaard, 2016; Steimel, 2018; von Essen, 2008; 2015 being noteworthy exceptions) are quantitative survey-based studies. Consequently, they find what generally seems to be the case concerning the specific hypotheses tested using their data. While this gives valuable insights into tendencies in populations, the studies are often only able to speculate about the reasons for these tendencies and the consequences these tendencies could have. As mentioned, Maaløe (1996) argues that while quantitative studies give an indication of what could happen, the case-study approach is able to show what actually does happen. Thus, with this thesis the aim is to contribute to research in public-third sector comparisons with a qualitative study seeking to show how work in the two sectors can be differentiated from each other in practice.

Geographical contribution

Countries studied	Number of articles	
USA	12	48%
United Kingdom	3	12%
Canada	2	8%
90 different countries (World Values Survey)	1	4%
Australia and Denmark	1	4%
Belgium	1	4%
Israel	1	4%
Italy	1	4%
Sweden	2 (1)	4%
The Netherlands	1	4%
N/A (review)	1	4%
Total	26	100%

Table 7. Of the studies included, 56% were based on data from North America.

Half of the reviewed studies are based on data from North America (14 studies), 4 are based on other European countries, with only 1 specifically looking at data from Denmark and 2 at data from Sweden (though both of these are based on the same data) – providing data from the wider context of the Scandinavian countries. While there are a number of similarities between Denmark and the Western countries where these studies were conducted, there are also potential differences (see e.g. Henriksen, Smith, & Zimmer, 2012; Overgaard, 2016; Torpe, 2003). The thesis will seek to contribute geographically with a public-third sector comparison from Denmark.

Volunteer and paid work contributions

Type of staff	Number of articles	
Paid staff only	13	52%
Volunteers only	5 (4)	16%
Paid staff and volunteers	4	16%
Unspecified	4	16%
Total	26	100%

Table 8. 52% of the studies only used data on paid staff in both the public and third sectors compared, 16% on only volunteers and 16% combined paid staff and volunteers.

Half of the reviewed studies compare paid work in the two sectors, and in a number of cases only the paid work of managers. This thesis will seek to contribute by also looking at people working frontline jobs, and will compare paid work in one sector with volunteer work in another sector – a combination not found in the reviewed studies.

Research design contribution

All studies comparing work in the two sectors compare them by either only using data from one sector or by comparing *different* people working in each sector. As some of the studies mention, this means they could be finding differences having to do with the self-selection of people choosing to work in each sector rather than with the sectorial and organisational circumstances under which the work takes place. This thesis will seek to reduce this risk by studying the same persons working in both sectors concurrently.

Review of existing literature

A number of scholars argue that the public and private sectors have been compared extensively, whereas public-third sector comparisons are underexplored (Chen, 2012; Lee, 2016; Miller-Stevens, Taylor, & Morris, 2015; Word & Park, 2009). Below is a review of the studies found comparing the sectors and/or paid and unpaid work.

The review is structured around two overall themes: 1) sectorial and organisational perspectives and 2) the significance of payment.

Theme 1 – Sectorial and organisational perspectives

Taken together, the studies under this theme seem to focus on what the organisations they examine are trying to do in terms of the nature of their goals, where these goals come from, who works towards them and how. For example, some studies look at the level of top-down influence exerted by boards and how clearly or unclearly goals are defined. At the same time, the studies consider how different types of goals and different ways of working towards them influence the experiences and well-being of people working in these organisations, just as these people have different levels of influence on these goals and the work they do.

The significance of being publicly or privately owned

One area of comparison has to do with whether public vs. private ownership of public- and third-sector associations is an important distinction to make, and whether the factors that distinguish the third sector from the public sector could actually be better explained using other characteristics.

One way the third and public sectors can be understood as separate and distinct from each other is by looking at the defining characteristics of private/public, for-profit/non-profit and formalised/non-formalised, as presented in the previous chapter. But as mentioned there, Klausen (2001) argues that these characteristics are perhaps not the key to understanding what makes these sectors different from each other. As both the public and third sectors share the characteristics of being non-profit and formalised, only the question of private or public ownership is left as a difference between the sectors – making it even more difficult to understand differences based on this aspect alone. Along similar lines, Knutsen and Brock (2014) criticise what they refer to as a Closed-System View of differences between sectors as unintentionally putting too much focus on *ownership* of the organisation as a defining characteristic of what belongs in each sector. They argue that the difference between being publicly or privately owned is not necessarily a particularly defining characteristic of what makes a third-sector association different from a public-sector organisation and say that: “an open and multidimensional approach is needed for future theoretical exploration.” (Knutsen & Brock, 2014, p. 1115).

In using interviews, participant observation and archival documents in a single case study of a senior service association in Canada, Knutsen (2013) found three aspects that she argues makes this third-sector association distinct from a public-sector organisation. These differences were seemingly not merely consequences

of the association being privately owned as opposed to the public sector. First, she found that the way the association gained its resources, was closely linked to its charitable nature and the values this represented to both association volunteers and the surrounding community. As a consequence of the charitable value perception of the association and the work it did, volunteers put in more labour than they had initially expected, paid staff would sometimes work beyond their expected roles and the association gained free access to a number of resources in the community. When the organisation starting offering footcare to seniors, it was allowed to use facilities in a local church and community centre free of charge, just as a dentist agreed to sanitise the equipment used, free of charge (Knutsen, 2013, pp. 993–994). Knutsen calls this a *value-based resource-generating mechanism*, something a public-sector organisation would likely not be able to have. Although both sectors are *non-profit*, the public perception of their values differentiate in a way, which does not give them access to the same resources in the same ways. Second, whereas the association gains its resources based on its values, the source of these resources is a local community that the association is part of. This makes the association *community-based* – the local community is the source of the resources the association is able to access, and this arrangement can be seen as the third-sector equivalent of the private-sector market and public-sector jurisdiction (Knutsen, 2013) Third, the association is non-profit not just in the sense of not seeking to make a profit for its owners or shareholders (this is also the case for the public sector), but also as a distinctive organisational identity. The organisation makes a point of not competing with anyone. Staff members in the organisation will refuse to support businesses and avoid any business-related activities. For example, they avoid making referrals to businesses and refuse to display brochures from businesses supporting the organisation financially (Knutsen, 2013). Along similar lines, a qualitative case study of 16 Canadian associations⁴ found that the theories of state and market alone could not properly explain the characteristics of these associations, which were found to be characterised by the institutional logics of democracy, family, religion and professions (Knutsen, 2012).

Public or private ownership and board roles

In contrast with seeking to move *beyond* ownership as a way of finding distinctive differences between sectors, Ben-Ner and Ren (2015) studied the influence ownership has on the ways boards act in the two sectors and the level of deci-

4 The associations studied were, according to the author, perceived as ‘Chinese’ associations; a significant portion of their clients were members of an ethnic Chinese population.

sion-making discretion front-line staff experience. They compared the structural design of third-sector, private-sector and public-sector⁵ nursing homes in Minnesota (US), arguing that these were comparable, as their services were similar and subject to the same legal and regulatory frameworks across sectors. Their quantitative survey-based study found that nurses in third- and public-sector nursing homes experienced a significantly higher degree of decision-making discretion in their work than nurses in the private-sector homes across a sample of 105 nursing homes. Although they did not investigate potential explanations empirically, the authors argue there could be two reasons for this: first, public- and third-sector nursing homes may have quality of care (and not profit) as an overriding goal. Because this goal is directly related to the knowledge and judgement of the nurses on the floor, these organisations will tend to give these staff groups a lot of discretion. Second, more discretion on the floor could be the result of a higher degree of what the authors refer to as *agency problems* found in public- and third-sector organisations relative to their private-sector counterparts. Agency problems have to do with the ability of the owners or controllers of an organisation to exercise authority over the rest of the organisation, and they seem to be based on a top-down perspective taken on all three sectors – one that is based on the notion of *ownership*. The authors argue that members of private-sector boards, as the supreme authority of an organisation, often have a personal economic interest in the profitability of the organisation, and will at the same time have the easily quantifiable goal of profit against which to measure the organisation's success. This enables board members to ask clearly for a specific outcome of the work done in the organisation, and gives them reason to be personally motivated to do so. In contrast, although third-sector board members likely feel a sense of dedication to the overall goals of the organisation, these goals are often multiple and much harder to specify and quantify. A diversity of goals among board members, along with differing degrees of dedication to these different goals, further complicates the matter of exercising authority downwards in the organisation. Finally, if third-sector board members were to experience resistance against their ideas from managers in the organisation, they might feel that they would not gain enough by pushing their own agenda(s) to outweigh the emotional costs of challenging the managers. Some would likely owe their place on the board to these managers, making confrontation even more difficult (Ben-Ner & Ren, 2015). All of these aspects could lead to less involved boards, making

5 The authors use the terms Non-profits, For-profits and Local Government to describe the three types of organisations, but for clarity across the dissertation I have used the sector-based descriptions.

it possible for managers and staff in general to have a higher degree of influence on their work. In public-sector organisations, the supreme authority over organisations like nursing homes is ultimately the citizens of the jurisdiction. They elect officials who act on their behalf and are accountable to them, but the citizens have ‘extremely limited mechanisms to enforce their individual views’ (Ben-Ner & Ren, 2015, p. 343), just as elected officials have very limited direct influence on the inner workings of specific organisations in the public sector. The boards directly in charge of particular public-sector organisations are made up of appointees, and thus are not directly accountable to the public, and are less likely to push specific agendas compared with board members of for-profit organisations (Ben-Ner & Ren, 2015).

Gap and contribution of thesis

Knutsen (2012; 2013) found that ownership was not a particularly distinctive characteristic in terms of differentiating public- from third-sector organisations. She presented interesting findings offering qualitative insights that clearly move beyond the notion of ownership. While demonstrating the qualities this perspective offers, the studies were based solely on data from Canada and seemed primarily based on empirical studies of third-sector associations, making the comparison with the public sector mostly theoretically based. The aim of this thesis is to contribute with further qualitative insight into differences using data from both sectors.

In contrast to Knutsen’s perspective, Ben-Ner and Ren (2015) compared the third, public and private sectors in the US, and argued that ownership does make a difference. While finding that both the public- and third-sector organisations studied were characterised by a higher degree of discretion on the floor compared with private-sector counterparts, Ben-Ner and Ren argue this could be the result of two quite different sets of organisational conditions (as explained above). However, these explanations are not based on data from their study, but are rather offered as potential explanations of the tendency they found. In other words, while their explanations for the differences found seem plausible, they are not studied empirically. This thesis will seek to contribute further to this understanding by empirically exploring the experienced discretion of front-line workers in the public and third sectors, as well as the organisational conditions (including board roles) that seem to make this level of discretion possible. In doing so, this thesis will explore both whether ownership could be a distinctive characteristic differentiating third- and public-sector organisations in Denmark (in terms of e.g. agency problems) and whether other distinctive characteristics can be found when comparing the empirical data from both contexts.

Level of hierarchy and its influence on worker well-being, involvement and values

Lee (2016) compared job satisfaction among paid managers in the public and third sectors in the US, finding similarities between the sectors in that perceived job flexibility, for example, increased job satisfaction in both sectors. She also found three aspects that differentiated the sectors from each other: perceived manager-level decision-making discretion,⁶ a higher level of task clarity and a lower level of role ambiguity were all found to increase the level of job satisfaction only in the third sector. Although not empirically studied, Lee argues that a number of differences in governance, clientele and organisational imperatives could lead to differences in what affects job satisfaction among managers in the two sectors. Public-sector work is seen as defined by a number of rules and procedures. The organisations are governed by electoral control and are based on equity, meaning they must supply elaborate rationales for only aiding certain groups and not others. The organisations are seen as hierarchical and with a clear chain of command, which consequently gives workers relatively clear tasks and roles to fulfil. In contrast, third-sector associations do not have the same public electoral control and can legitimately aid only specific groups. These associations are seen as less hierarchy-based, which could be the reason why decision-making discretion was only found to be associated with job satisfaction in the third sector. The third-sector managers could be seen as appreciating the discretion they might be experiencing as a consequence of working in non-hierarchical associations. However, a possible other effect of the less hierarchical and rule-based nature of these associations is that it can lead to task and role ambiguity. The study found that a higher degree of task clarity and a lower level of role ambiguity both increase the likelihood of job satisfaction in third-sector associations, but not in public sector organisations (Lee, 2016). Using the same dataset,⁷ another quantitative sector-comparison study by Work and Park (2009) also found a number of similar results in the two sectors. One of the similar results was that perceived red tape and a hierarchical culture had a strong negative impact on job involvement in both sectors, and as a consequence the authors argue public organisations should be careful not to transfer bureaucratic constraints to the third sector when cooperating. Their study did, however, also find differences in that third-sector managers had a higher level of job involvement than their public-sector counterparts (a finding echoed in Goulet & Frank, 2002). This indicates that differences exist between the experiences and motivations of people

6 Referred to as 'authority over tasks' in the study.

7 The National Administrative Studies Project-III (NASP-III)

in these sectors, but the study does not pinpoint what they are. As the study was unable to explain the differences in job involvement it found, the authors call for further exploration of job involvement and its causes. Also using the same dataset, Chen (2012) found that paid third-sector managers were more likely to experience a higher degree of both job involvement, job satisfaction and organisational commitment compared with their public-sector counterparts, and that a higher degree of job constraints in the form of red tape and personal inflexibility were perceived among managers in the public sector than in the third. He argues that the higher levels of involvement, satisfaction and commitment found could be explained by the third-sector associations having fewer job constraints, thereby frustrating the workers less. Job satisfaction across the two sectors has also been studied using data from Israel, where a quantitative study found similar levels of job satisfaction among social workers in the public and third sectors, and consequently did not point to any possible differences between the sectors in this regard (Freund, 2005). A study using data from Italy found that job satisfaction among paid third-sector staff was generally higher than that of public-sector staff (Borzaga & Tortia, 2006).

Peng, Pandey and Pandey (2015) found that differences in the level of external control in the public and third sectors seemed to influence the level of individual-organisational value congruence. Although part of the value-congruence was found to be the result of self-selection among the staff (they joined public- or third-sector organisations that matched their values), another part seemed to be the result of organisational influence over time. Public-sector organisations were found to have higher levels of centralised decision-making authority than their third-sector counterparts, and this could 'thwart employees' internalization of organizational values, as centralized decision-making authority reduces the experiential learning opportunities for employees in witnessing how organizational values are advanced in decision making' (Peng et al., 2015, p. 592). Their study found a higher level of person-organisation value-congruence in third-sector organisations than in the public sector.

Gap and contribution of thesis

The above studies offer a number of perspectives on, among other things, the consequences a higher or lower level of top-down management could have on worker well-being and motivation, both directly and as a consequence of e.g. high task and role ambiguity, which may arise from work with a low level of top-down management. To summarise, the studies find:

- Both public and third-sector managers' job involvement was decreased

by perceived red tape and a hierarchical culture.

- Job satisfaction was only found to be associated with decision-making discretion, high task clarity and low role ambiguity for third-sector managers, whereas these factors did not seem to affect public-sector managers' satisfaction.
- Third-sector managers had a higher level of decision-making discretion, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement than public-sector managers.
- Workers in the third sector had a higher level of person–organisation value congruence than public-sector workers.

The level of hierarchy, decision-making discretion and red tape is argued could influence these aspects of worker well-being, involvement and value congruence. However, most of the reviewed studies only discuss these as potential explanations, and have not studied these connections empirically; thus empirical research is needed. With this thesis, I will seek to contribute qualitative insights that can be used to complement and challenge the above studies. If there is, for example, a higher level of task clarity in the public-sector work studied, is it then possible to see this as caused by the organisation being quite hierarchical and the worker having little decision-making discretion? If so, how is that experienced by the worker?

Theme 2 – The significance of payment

The second overall theme of this review focuses on what role being paid or not might play in distinguishing between volunteer third-sector work and paid public-sector work. Some studies are based on how being paid to work results in feeling obligated to do this work, while others argue that payment is not always what makes the (most distinctive) difference. Finally, this section includes studies looking at how payment or profit can be seen as problematic for volunteers and third-sector associations, thereby adding a third perspective to this theme.

Seeing payment as a possible obligation

Vuuren, Jong and Seydel (2008) compared different dimensions of organisational commitment among paid and volunteer workers in a Dutch non-profit organisation providing services to the blind. They argued that unpaid volunteers might have particular reasons for being part of an organisation, as they were not subject to the same 'stick of a paid contract' (p. 315) as their paid colleagues. This could also mean that it would be easier for volunteers to leave an organisation, as leaving would have no financial consequences for them. Therefore, the authors com-

pared the levels of three different aspects of organisational commitment among paid workers and volunteers. *Normative commitment* was understood as a sense of feeling obligated and loyal to the organisation, *affective commitment* as emotional attachment to the organisation (similar to person–organisation value congruence) and *continuance commitment* as an awareness of the costs of leaving an organisation, losing e.g. income, benefits, prestige or side benefits. The authors expected paid staff to have a higher degree of normative commitment than volunteer workers, as the paid workers were in a paid contractual agreement with the organisation. However, the volunteers reported a much higher level of normative commitment than the paid staff. Volunteer workers also showed higher levels of affective commitment than paid workers in answering six questions, one being: ‘I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization’ (Vuuren et al., 2008, p. 319). Finally, the study found no significant differences in the continuance commitment of volunteers and paid staff. In other words, their study indicated that while we might expect payment and contractual obligation to increase organisational commitment, including reducing willingness to leave an organisation, this will not necessarily be the case. These higher levels of commitment found in volunteers seem to challenge the argument sometimes proposed that ‘volunteer labor is free to leave’ (Iverson, 2013, p. 48).

Kelemen, Mangan and Moffat (2017) studied the degree of commitment or even compulsion to work unpaid and discussed whether all unpaid work is by definition volunteer. Their article advanced a typology of four different interrelated types of volunteer work as a contribution towards a theory of ‘volunteering as unpaid work’ (p. 1239): *altruistic*, *instrumental*, *militant* and *forced*. These four types were based on actual volunteer experiences and were found through interviews with 30 volunteers in the UK. Altruistic volunteers saw it as part of their nature to do work for the common good (and not their own benefit). They were meeting needs in the community that they thought would otherwise not be fulfilled. In contrast, instrumental volunteers worked for their own benefit or for other instrumental benefits, e.g. personal learning, increased chances of getting a job or specifically benefiting immediate friends or family. Militant volunteering was based on the feeling of being a collective force responding to something the volunteers collectively considered it important to address. This could be discrimination or, as in an example used in this study, the threat of closure, where a group of volunteers turned activist in an effort to save a museum. Forced volunteering refers to e.g. corporate volunteering, where paid workers were obliged to volunteer without being able to choose where. It can also refer to people receiving public benefits on the condition that they do volunteer work or , to be doing

obligatory ‘workfare volunteering’ designed to reintegrate citizens into the paid labour market (for a critical discussion, see also De Waele & Hustinx, 2018). Kelemen et. al. refer to this last type as actually being *involunteer* or indeed forced work.

A third perspective on the significance of payment comes from Johan von Essen (2008; 2015). Based on interviews with 40 Swedish volunteers, he argued that a key to understanding what makes volunteer work volunteer is the absence of payment. It was particularly important to the volunteers he interviewed that their efforts were unpaid. Being paid would make their work something they *had to do*, and not something they had freely chosen to do. They all recognised a need to earn a living by having a paid job, and the absence of this requirement in their volunteer work seemed to make a difference to them. They didn’t need volunteering to be able to pay the bills, and that made it a freer choice to them. Likewise, as there was no contractual obligation, they saw their work as something they could leave if they wanted to. That volunteer work was unpaid and a free choice made it a more genuine expression of authentic personal involvement in something, and this seemed to render the work more meaningful to the volunteers in the end. I would argue that one way of understanding this is that it was the *possibility* of being able to leave, or the experience of having that potential freedom that made a difference to these volunteers. One volunteer interviewed said that although she wanted the freedom to leave, she did not consider it likely she would be leaving the volunteer work. In other words, while payment was found to be associated with an obligation to work, the more important point for the volunteers was that being unpaid allowed them to feel genuine and sincere in their work, as opposed to seeing work as a necessity, making it more instrumental. Similarly, Knutsen (2013) observed how a third sector Canadian senior service organisation made sure to have clear boundaries between the organisation and any businesses or market-like behaviour. Just as von Essen found that volunteers attached importance to being unpaid, the organisation here attached importance to separating itself from business-like behaviours.

Payment as not significant

Overgaard (2016) studied how care workers in Australia and Denmark distinguished between their current volunteer work in comparison with their present or former paid work in a similar type of profession. She found that the question of being paid or not was of much less importance to the care workers than the nature of the care work itself, and she consequently argues that studies of volunteering should avoid assuming that people doing volunteer work first and foremost define themselves as volunteers. In other words, being paid or not was

not the most important aspect for this group; it was the task itself.

Steimel (2018) studied skills-based volunteering, where volunteers would use knowledge or skills related to their paid work for free in a volunteer setting, thereby in a sense combining aspects of paid and unpaid work. She argues that volunteer work is often understood in terms of what it is not, where *not being paid work* represents a traditional perspective. In the case of skills-based volunteering, however, this binary type of definition could be seen as lacking depth. When using paid-work skills or when performing services for free that the non-profit would otherwise have to pay for, the volunteer work will, by definition, share certain characteristics with the volunteer's paid work. Based on 19 interviews with skills-based volunteers in the US, Steimel proposes an alternative to this perspective in the form of three tensions, which she argues characterise volunteering. The first tension is based on volunteering being both *Work and Not Work*. Whereas some volunteering will differ substantially from paid or professional work, other types of volunteering may be exact replicas of work otherwise done paid – the only difference being that it takes place in a volunteer context. The second tension is that volunteering is *Professional and Not Professional*. This illustrates how volunteer work can be based on everything from specific professional knowledge at one end of the spectrum, to no previous experience with or understanding of the work at the other end of the spectrum. The third tension is that volunteering is *Voluntary and Not Voluntary*. This describes how volunteering can be both the result of actively seeking out volunteer opportunities oneself or, at the other end of the spectrum, being drawn into volunteering as a result of direct requests from immediate family or professional colleagues. In other words, Steimel is also arguing against putting too much emphasis on whether work is paid or not when understanding what characterises a certain type of work.

Liao-Troth (2001) compared job attitudes of paid staff and volunteers doing similar jobs in the same hospital setting. He found that 'volunteers and paid employees in the same location, performing similar work, and subject to similar work rules, procedures, contracts, expectations, discipline, and evaluations have job attitudes similar to one another for psychological contracts (except regarding benefits), affective commitment, and organizational justice' (Liao-Troth, 2001, p. 436). His study was of paid and volunteer workers working side-by-side performing similar tasks. As we saw above, his study indicates that payment or lack thereof does not always play a pivotal role in understanding differences between paid and volunteer work, with specifics and conditions of the workplace meaning more in this case.

Contribution of thesis

On the one hand, payment does not necessarily mean a higher degree of commitment than unpaid volunteer work represents, but this could be the case. This begs the question of what role payment plays in relation to commitment when comparing paid work in one sector with unpaid work in another sector; this thesis will seek to contribute with an answer. The question becomes particularly interesting in light of also being able to understand payment as making the work instrumental, as this adds another potential perspective to the comparison.

Other studies

The studies below are public–third sector comparisons that were not found to match the two overall themes of the review. Several of these found quite similar results in the two sectors, and some also focused mostly on comparing working conditions of paid staff in both sectors, making them less relevant for the current study.

In an international study using survey data from 90 different countries, Jaskyte (2014) distinguished between individual values and work values as two different constructs, and found that people working in public- and third-sector associations had very similar individual values, and that their work values differed only slightly. In both sectors doing an important job was most valued, followed by earning a good income and having a low-risk job. Along similar lines, Miller-Stevens, Taylor and Morris (2015) found that employees' rating of 20 different values across the two sectors was very much alike. Chen and Bozeman (2013) found that public-sector employees seemed less motivated by their work requirements than their third-sector counterparts. This was attributed to public-sector organisations being more likely to attract people with little interest in the work, and with a high regard for external rewards like security and benefits, i.e. aspects having to do with the job being paid. Bright (2016) found that people with high levels of Public Service Motivation (among other things, a desire to serve one's community) preferred to work in the third sector, but that this result seemed to have more to do with the gender of the respondent than the sector in which the work took place. Jaskyte (2017) studied the effects volunteering had on the well-being of employees and found that while voluntary membership predicted the well-being of public-sector employees, it did not seem to have the same effect on third-sector employees; the latter, however, had the highest level of well-being across the public, private and third sectors. Moxham and Boaden (2007) studied the use of public-sector performance measurement frameworks in third-sector organisations. They found that although there are a number of performance measure-

ment tools available from both the public and private sectors, the third-sector organisations studied used only short-term quantitative statistics focused on output. As the organisations are heavily reliant on external funding, they also used the specific reporting requirements from funders to guide their performance measurement. Parry, Kelliher, Mills and Tyson (2005) compared human resource management (HRM) practices in third- and public-sector organisations. They found a number of similarities between the two sectors, but as their study focused primarily on comparing salary levels and benefits such as extra parental leave or subsidised meals, their results are of less relevance to this thesis. Hustinx (2007) studied the values Belgian Red Cross volunteers attach to paid and unpaid work. Volunteers were not likely to reduce their paid work in favour of volunteer work, and the study found that ‘no matter how important volunteer work is to the respondents, their regular job will always come first’ (Hustinx, 2007, p. 81). The study did find, however, that a higher level of participation in volunteer work meant a stronger propensity to reduce the level of paid work.

Overall gap and contribution

While the reviewed studies, when taken together, include the sectorial and organisational levels along with, to a certain extent, the personal experiences of people working in either sector, no article was found trying to include all three aspects in the same study, nor were any studies found comparing communication based on micro-level analysis of video observed data. In terms of experiences, Henriksen (2014) argues that in the Danish context little research exists on how volunteers experience and understand the organisational settings they volunteer in. Wilson (2012) identifies the same gap in an American context, where he also calls for more research on how volunteers relate to other people during their work.⁸

The goal of my research questions and this thesis is to attempt to include both the sectorial, organisational and communicational levels, along with the personal experiences of people at those three levels. The aim is to contribute to a field of public–third sector comparisons that, as can be seen in the review, is multidisciplinary, drawing on, among others, sociology, political science, public administration, non-profit management and organisational theory.⁹

8 Wilson does, however, give the caveat that these types of studies may be underreported in his review.

9 Third-sector research in general also seems to be multidisciplinary, as illustrated by the diversity of disciplines contributing to journals such as *VOLUNTAS* and *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*.

STRUCTURE OF ANALYSIS CHAPTERS

The following chapters are the analyses of Ditte and Dorte's two types of work including the sectorial and organisational, situational and, relational and communicational levels - and combined with their own experiences of these levels.

The analysis will begin with the situational level, followed by the more structurally focused sectorial and organisational levels, and finally finishing with the relational and communication level, where selected situations are analysed in more detail.

ANALYSIS OF SITUATIONAL LEVEL: DORTHE

Understanding what Dorte does when working

In this first part of the analysis, Dorte's work will be introduced. I will focus on what characterises her work in terms of the types of situations in which she finds herself and the types of tasks on which she works. As part of describing these characteristics of the work, I also seek to answer the question, 'Where do tasks come from?', with the aim of understanding what seems to cause or be the source of these tasks, which ultimately make up Dorte's work.

Dorte's paid library work will be introduced first, followed by her volunteer scout work.

Dorte's paid public-sector work: Librarian

Dorte has been a qualified librarian for 13 years, and currently works at a public library in a somewhat rural municipality in Denmark (field note, March 2, 2016). Each of the 98 Danish municipalities is required to offer public library services to its citizens (The Ministry of Culture, 2013), and Dorte is employed by one of these municipalities to work in its library services. In Dorte's municipality, there are four different library branches, of which she normally works in two. She is one out of about fifteen librarians working in the municipal library system.

Overview

Dorte's library work consists of three major components: desk duty, external

programmes, and office time (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:47:59-00:52:57). These components will be briefly introduced here, and described in more detail below.

Desk duty consists of three- or five-hour shifts where Dorthe is on duty at one of the four library branches in the municipality. The libraries are open to the public every day from 7am to 10pm, but only offer personal assistance from a librarian between 10am and 5pm on weekdays. These manned opening hours are divided among the librarians in morning and afternoon shifts. Dorthe has three of these per week in two different libraries. They are centred around a desk in the library, from which Dorthe works. When doing morning desk duty, Dorthe begins working in the library at 8 with material logistics and begins offering personal assistance at 10,

Programmes and events can both take place in one of the libraries or externally. One day Dorthe might hold a workshop at a local school about critical evaluation of sources in research or about the use of social media. Another day she might visit a kindergarten with a puppet sidekick to show the children what the library has to offer in terms of books, computer games, and events. These programmes are an on-going part of Dorthe's job, and take place a couple of times per month on average.

Office time is time set aside for working in the staff offices found at each library. Dorthe answers e-mails, plans future programmes and events, and works on projects. She is involved in a couple of projects, including one about trying to show citizens from disadvantaged backgrounds how the library can be of use to them. Working on projects like this and having meetings are also done during office time, which makes up the rest of her work hours during the week.

Formal agreements

Dorthe has signed an employment contract in which she formally commits to work as part of this municipal library service and is paid to do so. Her work is full time (37 hours a week) and she is required to be physically present for this number of hours. If Dorthe works more than 37 hours in a week, she must work fewer hours another week, and vice versa.

Tasks and situations: The *how* and *why* of the work

Library work is not what most people think it is

At the end of my first interview with Dorthe, I ask her if there is anything left that I didn't ask her about, but which is important to understanding what

her paid work is. As the purpose of this section is to gain an understanding of Dorthe's paid work, I will let her answer be the introduction to this:

Dorthe: Well, I think it is important to understand that library work is not what many people think it is. Many people say, 'Surely it shouldn't take that many years to learn to put books back in their places'.

Dennis: (laughing)

Dorthe: And that is really almost the only thing that librarians don't do, I think. We have book sorters for that, you see. And the books are becoming a progressively smaller part of the life of a present-day librarian. Of course they are still there, and I have no doubt they always will be – but it is dissemination, which I said a lot of times – it is first and foremost a work of dissemination. Different things, both culture and programmes and knowledge dissemination. Yeah. (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 01:16:24-01:17:09)

It seems important to Dorthe that her work is recognised as being something other than the perhaps most visible and space-intensive part of a library – the books. With that potential misunderstanding out of the way, let us move on to the first part of Dorthe's work: desk duty.

Desk duty

User requests

When I ask Dorthe what she does in her job, she begins with following description, which has to do with desk duty:

Dorthe: Well first of all, I have a number of shifts where I stand at the desk in my libraries and serve the users who come in if they need help. A lot of them are quite self sufficient now because we have self-service machines where they can check out and return materials themselves, and they can find the books themselves, and if they can't, they will come over and ask. Some of the senior citizens, especially, still like us to check out and return materials for them, and who also will gladly have our help. Then there are various tasks with finding materials for schoolchildren who have assignments, or a parent who says, 'Oh, I would really like to read a good book to my little daughter'. So you have a lot of different competencies in play, to be able to find the right material for the right user. At the public service desk there is still quite a bit of computer help. We have computers that are available for use where unemployed people will come in. They need to log in to the job centre and sign up, or they need help

with some NemID¹ with the bank, which they cannot figure out. Lots of different things. On no account are we to do [social worker] casework, but sometimes we will come close to that, in relation to helping someone who really does not have a good grip on that computer stuff. And what else? Keep an eye on some kids who come and want to play PlayStation games in the afternoon (laughing), or just talking with them, because that is also something they need. ... And then there are hold lists and miscellaneous e-mails; there will be e-mails about either books or articles we need to get, or things like that. There are a number of altogether different daily routines, which runs (incomprehensible) this library. (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:47:59-00:52:14)

Desk duty seems to involve a number of diversified tasks, which Dorthe here differentiates between in terms of both the people involved and what the request involves. Common to them all is that they revolve around a library user having entered the library and asked Dorthe to help with something. In both of the library branches where Dorthe usually works, the desk is placed near the door, which means she is able to see people entering and leaving the library. She seems to do the same thing every time someone enters the door:

“Dorthe politely greets everyone who enters by saying hello, and if they approach the desk, she automatically asks if there is anything she can help them with. Moreover, she also asks people who are just standing close by whether they need help with something, and she politely says goodbye again when they leave.” (field note 19A, January 25, 16)

Based on (video and participant) observations, I have collected and categorised the different types of queries Dorthe seems to encounter during desk shifts in table 13.

1 NemID is a public and common secure login service used to access banks and almost all public-sector systems online.

Category	Type	Example/field note reference
Finding materials	Specific searches for materials, often on specific subjects, using Dorthe's skills in making specific search queries in the library catalogue	User asking: Do you have any books on making furniture for doll-houses? (field note, 7A, January 27, 16)
	Giving advice on materials based on her knowledge of authors and library materials (i.e. not her technical search abilities)	User asking: Do you have any books by Bjarne Reuter that my grandchildren would enjoy reading? (field note, 13A, March 2, 16)
	Looking for the shelf where books on a particular subject are located	User asking: Where are your novels for young adults? (Field note, 6B, January 27, 16)
Library systems	Helping borrowers check out or return materials directly at the desk	
	Helping borrowers find materials reserved for them (on a designated shelf near the desk)	
Technical	Technical queries, which the borrower does not have (easy) access to themselves	Helping people become registered as borrowers in the library system
	Teaching borrowers how to use self-service machines to check out or return materials	(field note, 12A, January 25, 16)
	Help with printing and copying	(field note, 6H, February 3, 16)

Category	Type	Example/field note reference
Other	Managing the usage of the library's gaming console(s)	Each borrower has 30 minutes, and they are required to leave something (e.g. a jacket) as security. (field note, 2A, February 2, 16)
	Borderline casework	Helping user make prints from their private online banking system (field note, 19A, February 3, 16)
	Special inquiries	Finding a Lithuanian-language version of a form from the Danish Customs and Tax Administration (field note, 43A, March 15, 16)

Table 13. The different types of queries Dorthe seems to encounter during desk shifts, with some examples.

Table 13 aims to provide an overview of the types of requests Dorthe deals with during desk duty. Common to all these interactions is that they are user-initiated. Across tasks ranging from handling materials to assisting with computers to recommending books, all originate with the user entering the library. At the same time, they can be said to be the result of the library offering these different services, as users would not be able to request them otherwise. The types of tasks Dorthe does during desk duty, in other words, seem to stem from a combination of what the library offers and what the users seek. When it comes to user inquiries, Dorthe does not decide on her own what she will be doing, but rather responds to the needs of the users.

Fixed tasks and system-based tasks

Along with user inquiries, there seems to be a number of other fixed tasks that are part of desk duty – tasks that seem more system-based. One day, after having followed Dorthe during morning desk duty at one of the libraries, I make the following note on the morning's work, which consisted of printing various hold lists

and finding the materials so they could be shipped off to the relevant libraries.

The morning is spent with the lists, and Dorthe walks around and finds the materials from the lists. ... Dorthe spent a lot of time looking for materials that weren't where they were supposed to be. Either because they had just arrived, because they had been put on display, or because they just weren't where they were supposed to be. She had to give up on just one book, and the rest she found after quite a bit of searching around. (Field note 23A, January 25, 16)

A couple of months later I note:

There are a number of 'tasks decided by the system' – that is, tasks that sort of come to Dorthe by themselves, cf. the way the library system has been set up. E.g. when a user enters the library, or books are handed in that are on hold, or if shelf-check lists need to be made, BOBs, bibliotek.dk (netpunkt) [nationwide library catalogue and reservation systems], internal hold lists for other libraries, and so on. The bookshelves must appear tidy; the newspapers must be fetched; the notes that the previous librarian has left on the counter (because they would like an extra set of eyes) need to be checked; the phone needs answering; e-mails to the common address need to be answered. (field note, 41B, March 3, 2016)

It seems that a lot of the system-based work has to do with the transport and logistics of library materials on their way to, or coming back from, a borrower. It is vital to the library that the library catalogue is always correctly updated. This is the system that knows where an item is right now and what the status of the item is: is it in one of the branches of the library, at home with a borrower, or out at a kindergarten? Is it checked out, ready to be checked out, reserved by a local library user, or reserved by someone far away via the interlibrary loan system? For Dorthe to be able to do her job, she always needs to be able to locate a given item; she needs to understand and comply with the system for moving materials around, such as between library branches; and she also needs to know the exceptions to the rules that the system cannot figure out on its own. The tasks she handles as a librarian seem highly specialised and systematised in a number of ways. I note:

There is a myriad of different technical systems that Dorthe uses as part of her paid work. The door system, which keeps an eye on which materials have moved in and out of the door; database systems and reservation systems; e-mail systems; etc. There are tons of things to find your way

around in, and many different lists that needed to be pulled with holds and books with one or another particular thing about it. Dorthe also had a lot of knowledge about a number of exceptional cases, which the systems couldn't just handle. Much was automated in a really intelligent way. If, for example, she scans a book that is reserved, then a small receipt is automatically printed; and if the item is going to another library, the A4 printer also automatically starts printing [a transfer note for it]. The system knew how to do this, and that was really clever. Dorthe's paid work requires a high degree of professional knowledge and ability. There really are a lot of workarounds: e-mails are an integrated part of the reservation system, I think, and have a number of standard texts build in, but the text-messaging system does not, so there she has to go in and find a document somewhere in a large archive where it says what she is actually supposed to do when sending a text message.

The library is a mixture of a very well functioning digital system combined with the fact that workers still need to mind their steps and know what they are able to do and not do in the individual systems" (field note, 7A, January 25, 16)

On the one hand it is Dorthe's job to understand and be able to use all these systems, and at the same time it seems she must be able to do workarounds for the holes in these systems.

Summary – where do Dorthe's tasks come from?

Dorthe's tasks during desk duty seem to come from four different sources:

- User inquiries
- The library's service offerings
- The systems used to manage library materials, among other things
- The exceptions needed to manage materials using workarounds from the library systems.

These all seem to share the characteristic that none of them is decided upon by Dorthe. Users, service offerings, and systems are all things to which Dorthe responds, as a reaction to their requests. In other words, Dorthe seems to be in a reactive state while on desk duty.

This is not say, however, that Dorthe does not like working desk duty. She says she prioritises working these shifts, although she does have to carve out enough time to manage the projects and programmes she is also involved in. The amount

of desk duty Dorthe has each week is adjusted from time to time; this is done by talking with the director of the city libraries (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:59:26-00:59:54).

Programmes and events

The second part of Dorthe's work we will be looking at is programming, which happens both out in the community and on the premises of the libraries. Dorthe says that this type of activity occupies a lot of her time when not on desk. Some of this programming happens as part of on-going projects: teaching school-children about social media or source criticism, or trying to engage new target groups with library offerings. For this project librarians have worked with senior citizens, and are now looking at how to show vulnerable families with children what their rural library system can offer them. In addition to such projects, Dorthe also visits kindergartens to talk to children about library offerings, and she organises themed evening programmes in the libraries (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:49:35-00:52:14, 2016, pts. 01:00:11-01:01:41).

I ask Dorthe what her role is in these programmes. She says:

Dorthe: I have a knack for being the French clown [outgoing person] of our library services, so if it is an outgoing face [that is needed], then it has often been me. ... So something with dissemination and close contact with the users, that's one of the things I am good at, I think – and that I also like doing. Yes, [I] like talking with people, and am used to talking with people and am used to acting in a larger gathering of people, without it stressing me out. (Dorthe, 2016, pp. 01:05:49-01:05:13)

I ask Dorthe where these kinds of tasks come from. How does she come to work on these projects and programmes? She answers:

Dorthe: The other tasks, they emerge out of the projects we throw ourselves into or think up ourselves – new programmes we offer. Something like, for example, these projects we get money for from the Agency of Culture; they have emerged because some funds are made available, and where some are sitting and thinking, 'Well, we really ought to do this and that'. Now it hasn't been me who has had these big thoughts, you see; I am really just one of the worker bees. But some of the clever ones, they will think, 'Let's see if we can get funding for a project doing this and this, which will develop something for the rural municipalities'. They develop a project description ... and if you get the funding, then you need to make

it happen in real life. (2016, pt. 01:04:09-01:05:13)

Dorthe then participates in these projects, which she says are based on the librarians' own initiatives and ideas. I ask her how these tasks are divided among the librarians:

Dennis: ... Is it a suggestion when a project like this about the rural municipalities comes up? Is it then a suggestion, or is it something that looks more like an order? I mean, that may be a too strong word perhaps, but what do you think?

Dorthe: Well, it is a suggestion. So the way it works with us in the [MUNICIPALITY NAME] libraries, is that no one is forced to do something they don't want to. But it could well be, that someone receives a very broad hint about that: 'We really think you are well suited for this project; wouldn't this be something you could take part in?' But you can also see yourself in it sometimes, and say, 'That one, I would quite like to have'. And you can also say, 'Yes, I can see that I would, that I am suitable for that, but I quite simply have enough tasks as it is'. ... So that is then respected, I think. We of course also have performance and development reviews.

Dennis: Yeah, so that would also be a place where you could adjust the number of tasks?

Dorthe: Yes, yeah. (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 01:06:55-01:07:46)

Dorthe says she experiences both kinds of assignments in her job: those projects and programmes she is asked to take on, and those she herself finds interesting, which she is usually allowed to take on just by asking to be considered (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 01:05:49-01:06:07). Being brought onto a project and deciding how many tasks she should take on are things she talks with her director about, both as the need arises and during the annual performance and development review. Where the work that Dorthe does while on desk duty seems to put her in a reactive position, the tasks in this area seem more based on her own ideas and initiatives, coupled with those of her colleagues. She says:

[W]e are very much divided based on projects, while we at the same time have those arms [involvement in projects] in over each other, where we fit in and have competencies in different areas. So it is a very flat organisation, where we work closely together with several different colleagues in different connections, really. So that does require some meetings from

time to time, but it is not necessarily every week, but some weeks there could be several meetings. Especially when you are starting something up, or at the beginning of a new season ... then we need to meet and then we need to talk.” (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:56:29-00:58:05)

Summary – where do Dorthe’s tasks come from?

Compared with desk duty, Dorthe seems to see her programming and outreach work as something she can more freely choose to participate in or not based on her interest, her suitability in terms of competencies, and the amount of time in her work schedule.

Office time

The last part of Dorthe’s work is office time. This she spends co-ordinating and planning projects and events. All the preparation work needed to run programmes and projects is done during office time. This time is also used for meetings with colleagues, e.g. those involved in projects together. If she has a quiet day on desk, Dorthe will also answer e-mails and do some of her prep work there (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:55:24-00:56:15). All the library and office computers are set up so that when she logs in, she has access to all her files and e-mails, regardless of which computer she is using. This means she can always take work with her, which requires access to digital resources (Field note 32A, March 2, 2016). The tasks she works on during office time could equally derive from leftover work from desk duty, but mainly seem to come from the projects, programmes, and events Dorthe is involved in.

Tensions & the top-down perspective

After having looked at the tasks that make up Dorthe’s paid work, I will now use Jaffee’s tensions as an analytical tool, with the aim of understanding how the library as an organisation seems to handle tensions 1 and 2. This can tell me something about why Dorthe’s work seems to be the way it is. I combine this with looking at the organisation from a top-down perspective with the aim of understanding which kinds of decisions are Dorthe’s to make and which are not. This part of the analysis will begin here, and will be discussed further at the end of the chapter.

Differentiation in the library means less decision-making power for Dorthe

Part of the answer to the question of how the library handles tensions 1 & 2 -

must be what Dorthe herself feels she is able to decide, and not least what she does not consider it possible for her to decide on her own. Dorthe experiences less discretion in her work in the library as compared to the scouts:

Dennis: If we were to say, parallel to what you said before about the scouts, ... how much control is there [here in the library] by someone other than you?

Dorthe: Well, there probably is more control. 'Then there are things you are not allowed to do; then there is, for example, a marketing group.' So if I just think I want to make something in the autumn holidays, which needs to go out in a press release to the papers, then I am not allowed to write a press release myself. That has to go to the marketing group; they are the ones writing it, because they can do it properly. They took a course, and they can do it the right way, and so I am allowed to write to them, 'Could you make one of these, because of this and that'.

Dennis: Okay, so on the task level?

Dorthe: Yes. On the task level, there is quite a bit of control.

(Dorthe, 2016, pts. 01:06:07-01:06:55)

In terms of tension 2, the library is differentiated in the sense that tasks like press releases have been allotted to a certain group within the staff (horizontal differentiation), and a rule has been made that other staff groups are not allowed to do releases on their own (vertical differentiation). This limits Dorthe's discretion to act on her own, both because of the horizontal differentiation between Dorthe and those of her librarian colleagues who have taken the marketing course, and because of the decision that she is not allowed to write press releases herself, indicating a vertical differentiation where someone has authority over Dorthe in this situation. Dorthe has the authority to ask the group to make a press release, and the group has the authority of being the only ones allowed to make press releases. Looking at tension 1, the way the human factor seems to be controlled here is through a mutual understanding of and respect for this differentiation of tasks. Dorthe does not specify who made this decision, but seems to respect it and to see it as a condition of her paid work in the library.

Another example of the limits to Dorthe's discretion has to do with the library's appearance: one day during desk duty Dorthe tells me that the current design and furnishing of this library branch was done in collaboration with a local school. She tells me that at a certain point she was making an exhibit about something in the library and had taken some old tables from the basement – tables that used to

be in the library, but had been removed in the refurbishing process. However, she was told that these tables were not allowed to be in the *new library* – they did not fit in – so she had to take them away again and find another solution (Field note 29A, March 2, 2016). We see the new design of the library take authority over Dorthe's ability to choose tables as she sees fit. In a sense this new design concept becomes the factor that controls Dorthe as the human factor here. Because someone decided on this new look for the library, this design and/or the people behind it is now given authority over how Dorthe is able to create a display. A decision that it seems someone other than Dorthe has made influences what she is able to do in her work. Again, Dorthe did not specify who made this decision, or who told her the old tables could not be used, but it seems likely that this would have come from the group of colleagues responsible for the redesign effort.

A last example has to do with the specific way Dorthe's work-station for desk duty is outfitted. I note the following during a morning desk shift at one of the library branches:

When we enter the actual library in the morning ... the keyboard Dorthe usually used was a model with a built-in mouse surface, and that keyboard was not there anymore. One of the others said that it was the new house manager who had just decided to throw it out. Dorthe had clearly not been asked about this; it had just been done. She missed the keyboard now, and said directly to me that she was kind of feeling a little annoyed by this. ... They had also moved the plate (the RFID reader) over to the other side of the keyboard, and that bothered her as well, because she thought it was so well placed on the first side. (Field note 6A, March 3, 2016)

Dorthe's discretion is limited both in terms of how to perform certain tasks and which tasks she is allowed take on herself. These limits can also extend to practical details of how the desk she works behind during desk duty is actually outfitted. As one of many librarians using the same desk, she is not able to decide fully on her own how it is set up. The fact that she is one of a number of librarians means that she has less discretion in these decisions.

Systems do a lot of leading during desk duty

During desk duty it is not really a person as such that leads Dorthe, as we might expect from the top-down perspective. Rather, it seems to be the systems set up to facilitate the logistics concerning the materials, as well as the borrowers who approach her and ask for help that decide how she spends her time. The rules set up by the systems on how she is to e.g. register the whereabouts of a book

dictate when Dorthe does what, and also to a certain extent how she chooses to fulfil these tasks. Requests from borrowers dictate the rest of her work there. In a sense the systems make up the top-down authority that Dorthe has to comply with. They both manage her as a human factor in controlling how she does her work, and at the same time ensure integration among the different librarians, who might otherwise have their own ways of doing desk-duty work. The users also have the authority to direct what Dorthe will be doing during desk duty.

Summing up

Control or management does not seem to come from one specific position or to consistently come in a top-down manner. It is not the director of the city libraries alone, or her deputy, who seems to direct Dorthe's actions. Control seems to be distributed among:

- Library systems
- Horizontal and vertical differentiations, with colleagues being in charge of certain tasks and areas (e.g. press releases or the look of the library)
- Common ideas about what desk-duty work consists of, e.g. handling reserved materials that are returned in the course of the day - many other tasks, including also that the library should appear tidy
- Dorthe's own choices about how to act during desk duty, office time, and programmes
- Dorthe's formal manager's approval of and decisions about how much desk duty she has per week, and which projects, events, and other tasks Dorthe will be involved with, the latter usually based on Dorthe taking the initiative by asking.

Dorthe's volunteer third-sector work: Scouting

Dorthe has been a scout for almost 30 years in total, and is a member of The Danish Guide and Scout Association, also commonly referred to as blue scouts (in Danish called Det Danske Spejderkorps, and therefore hereafter abbreviated DDS). She was a scout as a child for eight or nine years, and thought she would continue in scouting even longer. But when she was 15, her family moved to another city where the local DDS Scouts group didn't function very well, so she ended up not joining. Later in life, when her daughter started as a DDS scout, she was 'roped in' as a leader in that local group and has continued as an active DDS scout since then, at present for 21 consecutive years. Dorthe has been an active member of her current local group for nine years now (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:27:11-00:28:25).

The Danish Guide and Scout Association, DDS

The Danish Guide and Scout Association is a nationwide Danish third-sector association consisting of approximately 400 local groups, which are all part of the national association. It was established in 1910 and today has a little over 35,000 children, young people, and adults as members (“Om Det Danske Spejderkorps,” 2018). The association is divided into national, regional, and local levels, which are all connected with each other. Almost all members of the association are members of a specific local group, as is the case with Dorthe. Dorthe’s local group, the Pine Trees, has around 50 members. The group organises scout activities in their local community for children and young people from when they begin school and until they are approximately 18 years old. The young people are able (and encouraged) to continue as leaders at this point, and usually have already been involved as leaders before this age. Activities are organised during the evening on a weekly basis, along with a number of camps and other events every year.

Overview

Dorthe’s scout work consists of two major components: being a leader for children and being the local group leader.

As a scout leader for children Dorthe is one of two adult leaders who organise an activity once a week for one of the age groups. These activities take place during the evening on weekdays and last around 1.5 hours.

As local group leader Dorthe has the overall responsibility for the local group. This means making sure there are enough leaders for each branch (children are divided into branches based on their age), organising meetings for all leaders in the local group, and organising meetings with the board of the local group. Dorthe also seems to play a relatively large role in organising camps in the local group.

Formal agreements

In contrast to her library work, which is paid, occupies a fixed number of hours per week, and is formally agreed upon via contract, Dorthe’s scout work is unpaid (other than covering her expenses such as food during a camp), and she is not required to be present for a specific number of hours every week. Although this volunteer work is not formally agreed upon through an employment contract as such, there are formalised agreements about Dorthe’s volunteer work. First, as a leader for children she has signed a leader declaration in which she agrees to work towards the goals of The Danish Guide and Scout Association, including, among others, the Scout Law. Second, she, along with all other lead-

ers, must submit to a background check every other year to verify that she has no prior convictions related to children. Third, when she accepted the position of group leader, Dorthé formally signed the minutes from the Annual General Meeting (AGM) at which she was elected to this position (Dorthé, 2017, pts. 00:00:00-00:01:55). Thus Dorthé has formally entered into written agreements about both kinds of work; the paid work contract, however, specifies an actual employment for a fixed number of hours per week.

Tasks and situations: The *how* and *why* of the work

Leader for children (branch assistant)

Dorthé does a number of different things in her local group, but puts special emphasis on one of them when I ask her what she does as a scout:

Well I am ... first and foremost, I am currently a leader for the minis ... where I have weekly meetings with mini scouts together with another leader. (Dorthé, 2016, pts. 00:00:17-00:00:45)

The Minis are children aged eight to ten. Later in the interview, I ask Dorthé why she says 'first and foremost' about that position:

Dennis: ... you said it yourself, that you were first and foremost a leader for the minis?

Dorthé: Well yeah, because I feel that is the most important part of what I do. That is to work with the children, and I am also very unwilling to let go of having a role, as a leader with children in my group. Even though I do know there are many older seasoned group leaders who say the group leader 'shouldn't have her own branch, shouldn't be a leader in the branches', because it is really enough work to be the group leader. But ... it is important to me to know the children. It is important to me that the children know me, and the way it is now, they all know me. (Dorthé, 2016, pts. 00:20:35-00:21:24)

Dorthé sees working with the children as the most important part of what she does in the local group, and she seems to value that position over her work as group leader. At the same time, she finds it very important that she as the group leader has a relationship with all the children in the local group, that they know each other. Some of the activities Dorthé does with the children revolve around badges, which are also related to the scout uniform.

Uniform and badges

Members of the DDS scout association wear a uniform shirt and a scarf. The shirt is the same nationwide, while the colours and pattern of the scarf are specific to each local group. Dorthe explains:

Dorthe: Yes, when you are at scouts, you always wear your scarf. You do not necessarily wear your uniform, if it is very hot, but you always wear the scarf. It is our distinctive feature that we have that uniform, and it also makes it possible to see all the badges. ‘Arrrww [wow], you sure have a lot of badges, and you sure visited lots of places.’ Those are the camp badges, which are placed on the left arm. And when you are wearing your uniform, you can always go and ask a scout you didn’t know before, ‘Now tell me, were you also at [event name] in 2015? I was there too; where did you live?’ So ... yeah.

Dennis: So there is like a common history in it somehow?

Dorthe: Yes, there is. (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:12:03-00:13:54)

The uniform, scarf, and badges are one way doing this type of volunteer work seems to differ substantially from working in the library in terms of physical appearance. The librarians are also uniformed in the sense that they wear a black t-shirt with the library logo on it, signalling to library users what their role is. But the scout uniform seems to differ from this, in particular because of the badges. A badge is a small piece of cloth, which is sewn onto the scout uniform. Each badge signals that the wearer has obtained a certain set of skills, experienced something, or attended a certain scouting event. When they complete something, the children receive the badge and will then wear it on their uniform. The national-level DDS has made a number of badges around different themes, which the leaders in local groups can then use in their scout work. The badges are described online, with suggestions for activities to be done for the badge work (“Mærke-univers,” 2018).

Badges can perhaps best be understood as the scout version of a diploma, where these diplomas are visible to other scouts, as they are put on the uniform. In that sense, the scout uniform could be seen as form of resume of the experiences a scout has had and the skills she has achieved. When Dorthe says: ‘Arrrww, you sure have a lot of badges, and you sure visited lots of places, she seems to be mimicking what a scout child might say when seeing her uniform. This function of wearing your history, and enabling others to see your history, we do not see in the library. A library t-shirt says nothing about the experiences the librarian has

had, nor does it signal which events the librarian has attended.

In addition to this physical rendition of their history in the scout association, the badges represent the activities that are one of the things Dorthe and her co-leader orient themselves around when planning the programme for the coming season of weekly meetings.

Weekly meetings

The children in a local group are divided into different age groups (called branches), which meet once a week to do an activity, usually organised by the leaders of that branch. I ask Dorthe what they do at the weekly meetings, and she says:

Dorthe: We do all sorts of things. First and foremost, we start with what they themselves would like to do through their own play and their own competencies. We try to develop it based on those things. And in a down-to-earth sense: we've just had our first meeting after the New Year yesterday, where we actually just had a bit of snow, and they wanted to play in the snow. And so we thought, 'Okay, we will begin with that; we need to get reacquainted with each other after a long Christmas break'. So we played in the snow. And when they were starting to get cold, so they didn't really feel like playing in the snow anymore, then we went inside with the ones ... who were the coldest. And looked at which badges they had already earned, and what they would actually like to do in the spring, so we had a basis for our programme. ... Then we asked them, what they themselves would like. We made sure not to promise them that we would be able to do everything they would like, but to gain some ideas for how to make our programme for the spring, and then looking a little towards the badges we have, which we can earn in our scout work. (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:00:54-00:01:46)

The programme Dorthe and the other leader, Hanne, made shows the activities for the spring season, which can be seen in Table 14

Titles of the activities as written in the programme	Explanation
Outdoor life in the dark	3 meetings with this theme
Ghost party	
Rope animals	Learning to tackle rope
That guy BP and why we are scouts	BP stands for Baden-Powell, the founder of the Scout Movement.
Winter holiday (remember to wear your scarf on the 22nd and tell people about Baden-Powell and the scouts).	The 22nd is International Scout Day – the birthday of Baden-Powell.
The climate badge	Badge, 4 meetings
The grand nature check	Badge, 4 meetings
MicroMini day	Joint activity for all micro and mini scouts in the division
Health	Badge, 3 meetings + a Saturday from 10am to 5pm
Bonfire badge	Badge, 3 meetings
Group trip, more information later	Common weekend camp for all branches in the local group

Table 14. Programme with spring activities in Dorthe's scout work. The second column with explanations was not part of the programme given to the scout children.

Out of 24 activities for the spring, 14 are based on the badges made by the national level of the DDS. So here the badges are a substantial part of what Dorthe and Hanne choose to do with the children in their branch. The division (a regional entity consisting of a number of local groups) has also organised a joint activity, which they will attend, and the local group has a weekend camp, which is for all age groups in the local group.

Common elements – The established and ceremonial

Apart from the specific theme being worked on during a meeting, these weekly meetings also have some common elements, which are the same every week. Dorthe says:

Well, we always begin with either raising the flag, if it is summer, so that we are able to do that before the sun sets. And if it is winter, then we roll out the indoor flag and place it in the stand, so it stands rolled out during the meeting. And then we begin with the task of the day, you see. If we planned something with knots, then we take out the knot box and work with knots. Or maybe we planned a hike, where they are then going around to different stations, which can be both unmanned and manned stations. Occasionally there are three of us; we also have an older scout helping us, so often there are three adults here, and then you can easily man some stations on a small hike, you see. ... And then we also finish with, first rolling the indoor flag back up again, and that always happens, or it is supposed to always happen ceremoniously. That is not easy to learn, but we try. That we ... respect the flag and when we raise it or roll it out we sing 'Der er ingenting, der maner'. We don't sing when we roll it up again, but we salute the flag. And then we have a completely established closing ceremony where we join hands with each other, with the left hand on top, the scout hand, the one closest to the heart, and hold each other's hands. And then we pass a hand squeeze around, and the one who had the diary at home is the one who sends the hand squeeze. And you are to stand with closed eyes and your legs crossed, and when you have then received a hand squeeze with your one hand (Dennis: laughter) and passed it on with the other hand, then you uncross your legs (Dorthe: laughter), and when the one who sent the hand squeeze receives it again, then he says, 'The hand squeeze has been received', and then you are allowed to open your eyes again. ... And then at the end we sing a goodbye song. (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:03:00-00:04:37)

The song 'Der er ingenting, der maner' is flag hymn from 1916. The first verse reads:

There is nothing that urges / as a flag hoisted / while it draws our hearts /
and our minds up towards the heavens / and it flies under trestle trees / as
a flaming command, oh but also as a whisper / of the greatest we know:
/ Not yours and not mine / but the entire people's eternity! (Juel, 1916)

Again, there are some elements that differentiate being a scout from being a librarian. Although library work also seems to entail doing certain things the same way every time (e.g. the system-based tasks), these rituals or ceremonies seem quite a bit more comprehensive and detailed. Unlike the library work, there doesn't seem to be an instrumental purpose to them in the same sense. Just as with the uniform showing the history of the scout wearing it, these ceremonial parts of the meetings also seem to be about the history or traditions of the scout association. In Dorthe's case, she is talking about eight- to ten-year old children singing a flag hymn from 1916 involving words like 'flaming command' and 'the entire people's eternity'. This I interpret as an expression of an association whose work is focused on traditions and history. This type of activity does not seem to take place in the library.

Camps and other events

In addition to the weekly meetings, Dorthe also organises and participates in longer camps and other scouting events:

... We of course always have a summer camp; then we have a group trip, which usually falls in the first weekend of March. Sometimes we have had ... the big scouts on ... a big camp, either an international camp or just a very large camp, where we think that we quite simply do not feel up to bringing the little ones. And in those cases we have taken them on an MUS camp ... (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:07:04-00:07:23)

The MUS camp is a joint camp run by three different scout associations targeted at the youngest scouts. Dorthe's local group has joined this camp when the older scouts went to the bigger camps. The division also organises the division tournament, which Dorthe's group attends every fall (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:07:47-00:08:04).

Summing up Dorthe's tasks as a leader

Based on (video and participant) observations, I have collected and categorised the different types of tasks Dorthe does as a scout leader in table 15.

Category	Type	Example/field note reference
Planning & preparation	Plan and prepare activities	(field note 18A, January 21, 16)
	Discuss and agree with fellow leader(s) about how an activity will be carried out	(field note 13A, March 5, 16)
	Camps: plan camps and events by making a programme and finding and/or writing up descriptions of the activities taking place	
	Camps: send out information about camp to the parents	(Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:19:24-00:20:14)
	Camps: co-ordinate which children will be driven by which parents to the camps	
	Camps: buy food and activity materials	(field note 4A; 5A, March 5, 16)
	Camps: buy snacks and beverages for the leaders' evening gatherings	(field note 42A March 5, 16)
Instruction	Give children instructions on how to perform an activity	Explaining that the children will be turning empty wine bottles into handheld lanterns during one of the weekly meetings (field note 16A; 17A, January 21, 16)
Execution	Carry out activities	
	Do dangerous parts of activity for the children	Dipping bottles and string into methylated spirits and preparing them to be lit with a match (Field note 19A, January 21, 16)

Execution	Organise and participate in playing games with the children	As part of a weekly meeting, children and leaders black out the windows of the scout hut and play hide and seek in the darkness.
	Lead and carry out rituals or ceremonies	Rolling out the flag as the weekly meeting begins, with saluting and singing (field note 15A, January 21, 16)
	Camps: take part in cooking and serving meals	(field note 30A March 5, 16)
	Tidy up after activities have finished	
	Camps: clean (e.g. cleaning bathrooms and mopping floor of the camp hut)	(field note 58A, March 5, 16)
Social response & intervention	Respond to children coming to her with problems or needs, e.g. helping someone use a Stanley knife to cut foam for a duct tape sword.	
	Solves conflicts between children	During the evening on a weekend camp as the children are getting tired and start quarrelling (field note 34A March 5, 16)
	Reprimands children who are misbehaving	A young scout hitting someone else with a duct tape sword (field note 21A March 5, 16)
	Include children in activities by e.g. encouraging a boy currently not participating in the production of duct tape swords to help the others with the sawing.	

Table 15. The different types of tasks Dorte seems to do during her work as a scout leader.

As can be seen here, Dorthé's work in the scout association seemingly encompasses all aspects of the activities and events they organise. The work done in the local group seems not very horizontally differentiated at all. There seem to be few tasks that Dorthé will not be involved with at one point or another. The other leaders also handle a lot of these tasks, but in contrast to the library, the local group does not seem to be differentiated when it comes to who does what in the actual activities. Where the library has book sorters, whose job it is to put books back in place, and cleaning personnel doing the cleaning, the scout work here seems to involve almost all aspects of organising and carrying out both weekly meetings and camps. The work could be seen as differentiated in that each age group (branch) of the scout children has a number of specific leaders attached to it, but other than that it seems that most leaders will take on most tasks.

Where do tasks come from?

As with Dorthé's paid work, I will also discuss here how Dorthé seems to know what to do, in the more practical and everyday sense.

“Dennis: ... how do tasks come into existence, how do you actually know what to do if we, let's say, we look at being a leader for children ... ?

Dorthé: [I]n my case, it probably comes through longstanding experience, and various courses I have taken, because there could of course also be things that one forgets along the way ... And then you will just get, you take a course, where they say, 'It is also important that you just remember, are we using the scout method, are we using the ... different ways of doing things, are we on top of both learning by doing and what it's all called'. And then, 'Well, no, I do forget that from time to time'. So ... in order to be reminded from time to time, we take a course. But other than that, it is very routine-based, and we know that we have a connecting thread in our group, where we know that the micros should be able to tie a reef knot and a bow when they reach the ... mini branch. In the mini branch, they obtain a knife certificate, and there they are to learn several other knots and so on, and there are some things that we expect that you are able to do when you start in the next branch ... And we always work with the scout law in view, where you need to have all of those qualities, mentally, imbued into the children, because that is the scout spirit, which we also would like for them to have, and which they will get, among other things, through some of the activities we do. So you see, it is a little difficult to say how I know that. ... [I]t is the kind of thing that here is just in our

bones, or that you have heard about, and that you learn from. Then you pick it up along the way, from other leaders, and from courses, and from books, and from – you get the idea, all sorts of places, right, but there is kind of an annual cycle of work. We know there are some things, there is the Scout Community Help in September, and there is Thinking Day on February 22 ... So there is kind of an annual cycle of work ... where you actually know that you do different things during different times of year, also considering seasons, and then we of course have a lot of inspirational material, which we can look into, if we run out of ideas. (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:21:50-00:25:20)

Dorthe's answer seems to focus on a number of different aspects of the scout association, all related to why she acts the way she does and chooses to do what she does as a scout. Below I categorise and discuss these.

Training courses and activity inspiration

Dorthe seems to see national-level training courses (and inspiration materials describing activities) as legitimate reminders of how scout work is supposed to be done, in the sense of living up to certain ideals or values. Consequently, the national level of the association is, to a certain extent, able to define what Dorthe thinks she should be reminded to do. Dorthe refers to the scout method, for example, as something she has to remember to use, and this notion likely comes from the courses and materials made by the national level of the association. Dorthe and Hanne also use the national-level badge system in their activities with the children; in this way, the national level influences the kinds of activities they do with their scout children.

National events

When national-level events like the camp Spejdernes Lejr 2017 (Jamboree Denmark) are organised, the local group will attend the camp, and thereby the national initiative also in a sense controls what the local group does for their summer camp that year.

Digital infrastructure and other systems

The national-level association supplies digital infrastructure in the form of a member registration system, thereby controlling how local groups keep records of their members.

Traditional events at the local, regional, and national levels

A lot of the activities done in the local group are based on tradition in the sense that they do these things every year. Some are local traditions, like the year-

ly group weekend camp and a summer camp. Some are returning regional and national competitions and hikes the group attends (Dorthe, 2016, pp. 00:07:47-00:08:23), and some are traditions like Thinking Day. Because Dorthe and other local group leaders orient themselves towards these activities, this also means that a lot of their work is decided upon by the organisers of these events, and in a sense also by tradition itself. Tradition, of course, just like organisational goals, is the tradition of people, and not an independently existing entity. But although all traditions must have been started by someone, they are perhaps for the scouts a management function, which does not have a box in the organisational chart, but which still plays a big role. Salamon (1992) and Sørhaug (1989/1996) argue that experienced members of associations will resist organisational changes (i.e. maintain traditions) because they are highly esteemed members of the association as it is today. If the current values and traditions of the organisation changed, they would risk losing their positions as esteemed members, because the criteria for recognition would then change. When Dorthe talks about the traditions, she does not relate them to specific people or organisational entities – they do not belong to certain people, but rather they are described as just existing on their own.

Dorthe's experience

Finally, in addition to the sources described above, Dorthe bases a lot of her own ways of doing her work on her 29 years of experience as a scout.

Her own upbringing and many years as a leader in the organisation have given her an idea about what scouting is, how it should be done, and what kinds of things she does as a scout.

Group leader

This is the other position Dorthe has in the Yellow Bears local group. The group leader is, from Dorthe's point of view:

“sort of a patrol leader of the leaders ... it is the leader for the leaders”
(Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:19:09-00:19:18)

I ask her to elaborate:

“Dennis: And what do you do then? What are the things that come onto your plate, if you can put it that way?”

“It is really all sorts of things. Of course it is to just keep track of what goes on in the group on an overall level, making sure there are enough leaders in all the branches, and ... if there is a lack of leaders, seeing if

I can find some or if I am able to step in myself. But it is also perfectly ordinary things like, when there are new members, to have them registered in our membership system. ... It is to write; I write to the parents every time we have a trip to a cabin or an event, [or] the summer end-of-season event, then I am the one who sends out the notes. Or maybe I could just be the one who made sure it was done, but it just happens to be me who actually does it, but I could just as well be the one who says, 'You must just make sure to print notes and hand them out to the children' ... so yeah, it is those kinds of things. ... It is probably not a complete description at all, it is quite possible I do more than this, but er ..." (Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:19:20-00:20:18)

The way Dorthe acts as the group leader seems to be primarily focused on co-ordinating work and making sure nothing has been forgotten, as opposed to directing (ordering) others to do certain tasks in a top-down fashion. Dorthe seems to take responsibility for things she thinks are needed for the local group to function, and which she considers her tasks as group leader and/or others are not doing.

Summing up Dorthe's tasks as group leader

In table 16 I have collected and categorised the different types of tasks Dorthe seems to be involved with in her position as group leader.

Category	Type	Example/field note reference
Meetings & co-ordination	Call meetings of the Group Supervisory Board and the leaders. Chair these meetings.	(field note 9A, March 1, 16)
	Co-ordinate and initiate activities in the local group with the leaders of the local group	(Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:14:09-00:15:33)
	Ask the board for permission to e.g. spend money on something	(field note 1B, September 13, 17)
	Update the board about the work going on in the group	(field note 10A, March 1, 16)

Meetings & co-ordination	Send out information about upcoming camps and events to parents	(Dorthe, 2016, pts. 00:19:20-00:20:18)
	Attend meetings in the Division (a regional entity)	
	Attend the National Congress	
Administration & fundraising	Register new members in membership system (keep the database of members updated)	
	Organise selling of decorative greenery to apartment buildings in the city, along with other fundraising activities	(Dorthe, 2017, pts. 00:59:37-01:02:57)
Recruitment	Find new leaders for branches or step in herself	When another leader needed a break, Dorthe stepped in and covered his position as a leader for the junior scouts in addition to the branch she was already a leader for (field note 26A, January 25, 16)
	Find members for the Group Supervisory Board	(Dorthe, 2017, pts. 00:19:12-00:21:07)

Table 16. The different types of tasks Dorthe does as the group leader.

In contrast to the tasks Dorthe has as a regular leader in the local group, her tasks as group leader seem both more specific to this position and also to involve a number of co-ordination tasks involving, among others, the leaders and the board of the local group. As the group leader, it seems likely that Dorthe also has a bigger formal responsibility. I ask her:

Dennis: Do you think you feel more responsible for the survival of the group than most other people? I don't mean to say they don't, but that you perhaps do so a little more than the average?

Dorthe: Well, I I think they are very responsible and take on tasks, all of them. But perhaps I just have some kind of over-responsibility. Perhaps I do more than I should or do it faster – with some things – with others I do it slower. But the best way I can perhaps explain it is with [this example,] that we just had a day of tidying up last Sunday. And I have been moving towards that for a long time and talked about, 'We really do need to tidy up, because of all the mess. It is a mess outside and it is a mess inside and it is a mess in our shed ... and in all the cupboards'. And nothing will quite simply happen before I then say, 'Now. Now is the time. When are you available?' And then we go into our calendars and find a day where everyone is available and then we have a tidying-up day. So it's the feeling that nothing will happen if I don't say, 'Let's find a date'. And that is of course also my position as the group leader, but it is still also – I feel that the responsibility kind of lies a little heavier on my shoulders than it does on everyone else's, with getting the place tidied up. And I think it is like that with most things.

(Dorthe, 2017, pts. 00:29:25-00:31:47)

Dorthe seems to experience that as the group leader she needs to take the initiative in order for things to get done in a way that the regular leaders do not. She says that she feels this responsibility falls a little heavier on her shoulders than that of others, and that this is not only because this is also formally her role as the group leader.

A little later in the same interview, Dorthe tells me that she has switched to being a leader for the troop scouts, which was necessary because another leader had become too busy and needed a break from being the leader of two branches. I ask her a little more about that situation:

Dennis: But you do say, that you actually didn't feel like doing that. But you did it?

Dorthe: Yeah. And it's not the children I don't like – it's just that I don't feel I am the best troop leader in the world, and for that reason I don't really feel that much like it. I would like for them to have the best troop leader in the world, and that isn't me – but they will have to make do with me.

Dennis: And that was to make the puzzle fit with everyone else?

Dorthe: It was to make the puzzle fit, so that I don't wear out any of the other leaders unnecessarily, yeah.

Dennis: There it is.

Dorthe: There is some duty in it as well.

Dennis: ... What then if we take ... the library here? Do you feel responsible for the wellbeing of library in the same way?

Dorthe: No. You see, I am not the patrol leader here (laughing), we have [NAME OF DIRECTOR] for that. And come to think of it, nor am I that person in any of the projects we have; I am not project manager there. I have sub-projects that I feel responsible for ... and I of course have the common responsibility, which we all have: that the place look nice, that if there is a quiet moment at the desk then you do a round and make sure the exhibition podiums are filled up, that there aren't books tipping over and so on. So in that way I feel responsible, but on the overall lines I don't feel responsible at all in the same way I do in the scout group ... but other than that I feel especially responsible for the sub-projects that are mine ... those I feel tremendously responsible for. (Dorthe, 2017, pts. 00:33:25-00:38:11)

Dorthe seems to attribute most of the differences in her feeling of responsibility to the differences in the positions she takes on in the two organisations. She does not respond, for example, that she feels a greater responsibility to the library because that is a paid job. Also, as the only group leader, Dorthe does not have someone else who would automatically take over if she were to leave. It would formally most likely fall to the chairman of the group supervisory board to find someone else who would stand as candidate, but as this is not a paid job, they cannot simply send out a job ad and wait for the applicants. In the library most of the tasks (with the exception of the sub-projects) Dorthe manages can easily be taken over by someone else, both because the other librarians know how to do these tasks and because the library leaders would likely make sure to find someone to do them, as it is within their (vertically differentiated) rights to ask someone else to take over.

Summary and further discussion

Scout work based on initiative

In a sense, it seems that a lot of Dorthe's tasks in the scout association are the result of her own initiative. Although she differentiates between what she expects of herself as group leader and of others as regular leaders, there seems to be a common characteristic in that they all act as initiators. She and the other leaders initiate the planning of weekly meetings and camps. They are also the ones who instruct the participating members in the activities, thereby defining what happens. They are the ones who decide to follow traditions as to how a weekly meeting begins or how a meal is finished with a song, and they are the ones carrying out the planning of activities and camps. A lot of this, I would not interpret as active choices. It seems unlikely that Dorthe would be taking a minute to actually decide whether the food needs to be cooked on a camp, whether she needs to book a hut for this camp to even take place in the first place - or if she and the other leaders should plan activities for the weekly meetings in their branches. She could choose to not to do any of these things, but although this would not have financial consequences for her (losing a salary because she was fired for not doing her job), the whole endeavour of being a scout leader would fail if these and many other basic things were not done. Consequently, being a scout the way Dorthe is, should not be mistaken for a free choice to do whatever she feels like at any given time. As Dorthe said, she feels responsible towards others, and one way of living up to that responsibility is by taking initiative. It seems that Dorthe's scout work is characterised by initiative, or, to use a sports metaphor, the right to serve lies with her and with other leaders. She will react to things happening during activities and events she has initiated, but for the most part, the work seems to rely on her (and others) taking initiative and starting things. Looking at Dorthe's discretion in terms of living up to ideals stemming from the national-level scout association, she is also not *required* to follow these ideals, nor is she required to use the activity suggestions made by the national-level association in the badge material.

Dorthe seems to have a higher degree of autonomy in the scout association relative to the library. The above description of her scout work seems to be in contrast to how, for example, she is unable to decide how the library systems work or which tables she is allowed to use for an exhibition in the library. At least some of Dorthe's library work seems to place her in a more reactive role. During desk duty, most of what Dorthe does is based on something she encounters – what the borrowers ask for, which reservations have been made, and the many other types of inquiries listed above. The same seems to be the case with the overall

framework of the projects, where Dorthe says someone else defines what the project will be about, and then she comes in and works on carrying these ideas out in practice.

Library work based on systems – Being a small cog in a big machine

A lot of Dorthe's library work, as mentioned above, revolves around a number of systems, because all municipal libraries in Denmark in essence share their materials with each other through an interlibrary loan system – any user anywhere in Denmark can search through all library catalogues collectively using the website bibliotek.dk. This ensures that a borrower far away from Dorthe's library is able to order an item that actually sits on the shelf in Dorthe's library, and will get it within a couple of days. As a consequence of this and a number of other services the library offers, Dorthe has to comply with formalised and system-based procedures. This is also one way we can see that in Dorthe's paid work, she is a small cog in a big machine. Although the same in principle can be said about her scout work – that she is a small cog in a big machine (and, when including the regional and national levels, a large and differentiated organisation), there doesn't seem to be a scout equivalent to this somewhat elaborate system. This idea can perhaps be further clarified or better illustrated if we describe library work as a form of *assembly-line work*.

Being a librarian: Diverse and specialised assembly-line work?

Although it is in many ways also different, Dorthe's paid job seems to share traits with a factory assembly line, where her task is to respond to whatever comes down the (assembly) line to her station. In the traditional factory system assembly line of e.g. Taylor's *Scientific Management* (Taylor, 1911), part of the objective was to separate planning and execution of the work so that the best way to perform a given task was used every time, in contrast to the differentiated and human-factor-induced rule-of-thumb approaches used by workers when working on their own (Taylor, 1911, pp. 22–26). The many system-based tasks and the reactive state Dorthe seems to be placed in, particularly during desk duty, makes her work seem similar to that of an assembly line. Understanding Dorthe's work through this metaphor, she is doing standardised tasks that could be said to be based on the 'one best way' approach, as the library systems to a certain extent decide how Dorthe must perform many tasks.

According to Taylor's prescriptions, managers were also to take over the knowledge of the workers, leaving only execution of the tasks to the workers (Jaffee, 2001, pp. 50–54), but this seems only partially to be the case for Dorthe. On the

one hand, the systems control how she is able to work, but on the other hand she has considerable discretion in deciding how to go about talking with borrowers, e.g. when helping them find the right kinds of materials based on the topic they are interested in. The tasks coming her way on this line also vary quite a bit, and she has a lot of different tools and specialised knowledge at her disposal, which she uses to handle these different requests. When working on projects and events, I expect Dorte to also have considerable discretion in choosing how to act, although she must still comply with the overall framing done by those who thought up the projects and defined them.

We could also understand Dorte's work using the assembly line as a metaphor in that other entities both inside and outside the organisation may be involved with the task (item) at an earlier stage on the assembly line before it reaches Dorte and also after it moves on from her. Dorte is reliant on others before her handling the item according to common standards, for example, by always making sure the library catalogue is updated so the database has the correct information about the whereabouts of the item. She will otherwise not be able to find the item if a borrower asks for it, and the same goes for other librarians after her, including librarians at other libraries who have requested materials via interlibrary loan. The system would likely have great difficulties if it relied on each librarian's own way of finding out where an item was, where it was going, and how it would get there.

The scout group could also be said to be based on the idea of the assembly line, where some of the planning is done at the national level, e.g. when badges are made. But the choice to follow these ideas and to use this knowledge is Dorte's to make, and I argue that this makes it different.

Scouts manifest their history

A last difference between the two types of work seems to lie in the relationship of the organisation to its history. I argue that the scout association seems more focused on its history and the history of its members than the public library. The badges on the uniform worn by Dorte seem to be a physical manifestation of her history in the association as a member. When the group sings a flag hymn from 1916 as part of the beginning of their meeting while saluting the Danish flag, this also seems to place emphasis on history and tradition. This focus on and manifestation of personal and common history does not seem to be part of Dorte's paid work in the public library.

ANALYSIS OF SECTORIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL: DORTHE

In this chapter, I will describe and compare Dorte and Ditte's paid and volunteer work from a sectorial and organisational point of view. I do this, because as part of the circumstances, or conditions their work takes place under, this level should influence how their work takes place, and how they themselves experience their work (cf. my basis in critical realism and hermeneutics). My description and analysis of these contextual circumstances is based on a combination of:

- Observations from fieldwork
- Official documents, e.g. associational bylaws, structural descriptions, constitutions, and Danish law
- Interviews with Ditte and Dorte
- Theoretically based descriptions and understandings of organisations and sectors.

I combine these because:

1. I cannot rely on asking Ditte and Dorte alone, as they will not be aware of everything that influences their work and their experiences.
2. I cannot rely on observation alone, as neither their experiences nor all structural aspects are observable to me (some belong to the unobser-

vable part of the real domain).

3. As I need to use retroductive reasoning to reach sometimes unobservable plausible explanations, I use theoretical understandings of how organisations and sectors work and are constructed to support my work in making the qualified guesses needed for this type of reasoning.

I will begin the chapter by describing and analysing the structural makeup of the public- and third-sector organisations in which Dorthe works, and finish the chapter with a comparison and discussion.

Dorthe's paid public-sector work: The municipal library

Structure

As mentioned, Dorthe works for the public library in a somewhat rural municipality with four different library branches. When Dorthe works at the public service desk or takes part in a project, she does so as part of the public sector in Denmark and as a paid employee of this municipality. Figure 9 shows how the library is part of the municipality and also part of the state, and seeks to illustrate the connections between these different entities. The figure is based on the before-mentioned top-down perspective, as it seeks to illustrate a progressively higher degree of authority over the organisational entities below any given entity in the figure. Nuancing the idea of being able to clearly distinguish owners or controllers from workers, the chart is also based on Weber's bureaucratic idea of the principle of hierarchy in a formalised organisational structure (Jaffee, 2001, pp. 89–92; Weber, 1959, p. 197). In the chart, each office or entity (box) is seen as being under the supervision and management of, in principle, all offices higher on the chart; in other words, it primarily illustrates vertical differentiation, but does not make a clear distinction between the group of owners and the group of workers.

The chart is based on a number of written sources describing the formal makeup of the municipality and the library where Dorthe's works, combined with information from Dorthe about its structure. To maintain anonymity, the sources are not cited, as they refer to places and persons.

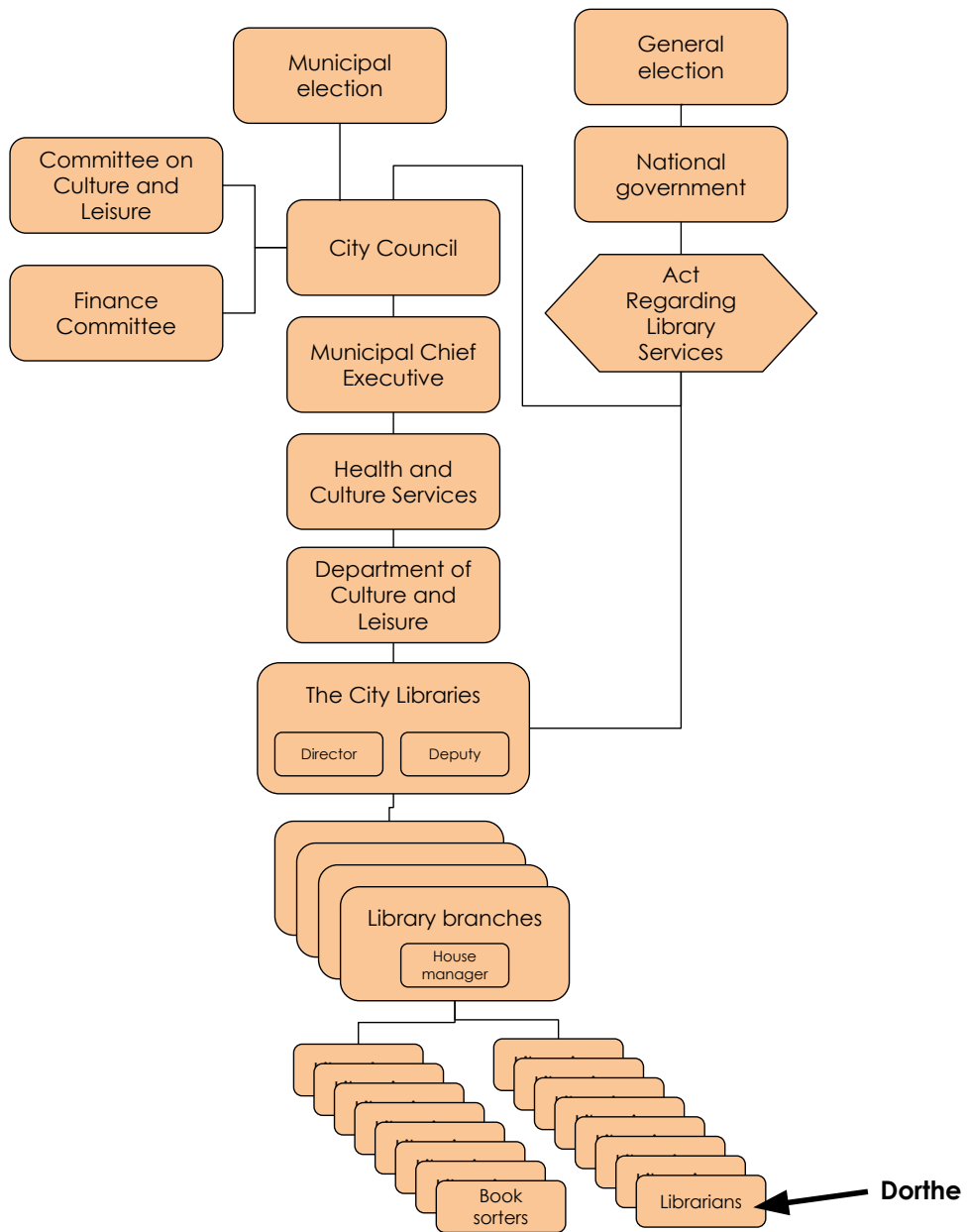


Figure 9. The library as part of a municipality and state. Apart from The Act Regarding Library Services which is legislation (marked as a hexagon), all elements in the chart represent organisational entities, which include people. The chart seeks to illustrate the different entities formally connected with Dorthe's work, but the size of the squares does not illustrate the relative size or complexity of the entities they represent. Also, only some of the entities include specific staff groups or formal roles. This is primarily done in the cases where Dorthe mentions these positions as part of her understanding of the organisation.

In the following, I will present the different entities in the chart, starting from the top.

General elections, the national government, and the act regarding library services

As part of the public sector, the library is governed by the Public Libraries Act, which states that all 98 municipalities are required to offer library services to their citizens, and also sets some overall goals for these public libraries (The Ministry of Culture, 2013, sec. 3). As this law was enacted by the national government, the government is the supreme administrative authority of Dorthe's work as the creator of the overall regulatory framework of the libraries. All other entities under them in the chart must in principle live up to the goals and requirements of the Public Libraries Act – including both the city council in Dorthe's municipality and the public library itself (illustrated by lines going to both entities). Finally, as the absolute supreme authority of Dorthe's work in the library, general elections are put at the top of chart, as all citizens who vote take part in deciding who will be part of the national government and to represent their interests and needs.

Municipal elections, City Council, The Committee on Culture and Leisure and The Finance Committee

Below the national government in the chart we find the municipal level. Here the supreme authority is the city council, which has appointed a number of committees (consisting of members of the city council). City council members are elected by the citizens living inside municipality borders, and for that reason the citizens are placed at the top of this municipal part of the chart.

The leader of the city council is the mayor. The committees under the city council are vertically differentiated, as they each deal with a certain political area of the municipality. This allows them to go into detail in the political-level work of these more specific areas. Only two committees out of seven are included in the figure, as only these make decisions influencing the library. The Committee on Culture and Leisure deals with the political area the library falls under, and the Finance Committee deals with the budget for the entire municipality, and thus also for the library.

Municipal Chief Executive

Right under the political level in the municipality we find the Municipal Chief Executive, which is the highest authority *official* in the municipality.

Health and Culture Services

This office is part of the administration dealing with the areas of 1) health (e.g.

elder care and health promotion) and 2) culture and leisure. The latter is placed in its own sub-department:

Department of Culture and Leisure

Among other things, this department deals with leisure activities, sports facilities, theatre, third-sector associations, and libraries. Thus, this is the department most directly responsible for administering Dorthe's workplace in the municipality.

The City Libraries

This is the delimited public-sector organisation Dorthe works in. The city libraries have a director, a deputy, and a small administration. A total of around 20 people (plus the book sorters) work there, most of them being librarians.

The library branches

The city library consists of the four library branches in the municipality, which are located in four of the larger towns in the area. Dorthe works at two of these. Each branch has a number of **book sorters** working there. These are usually young people earning pocket money by putting books and other materials back on the shelves after they are returned to the library.

House managers

Each branch also has its own house manager, who has the overall responsibility for practical matters regarding that specific branch. Dorthe explains:

Dorthe: It is practical, when we have a library, that there is someone who is always there. So that when an electrician shows up and says, 'I am here to fix the lamp that someone called about', you are not standing there thinking, 'Er, what lamp would that be?' because you weren't there yesterday. So that is why we found out it was practical to have someone belonging there, who handled all the practical matters regarding the building. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:58:13-00:59:04)

Librarians

This is where Dorthe is placed in the chart. This is a relatively broad category, as not only qualified librarians are considered librarians here. Common to all in this staff category is that they do desk duty, but they come from quite different educational backgrounds ranging from administrative assistants, to librarians (some bachelor's and some master's degrees), to MAs and experience economists (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:55:41-00:56:54). Dorthe elaborates:

Dorthe: We **all** have desk duty. So in that way you can call all of us librari-

ans, because that is something we all need to be able to do. And then there are some who are trained in finding all the difficult things, and the ones not trained in that can ask the ones who are. [laughing] (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:56:55-00:57:17)

The top-down perspective as a continuum

The chart is, as mentioned, based on the top-down perspective and principle of hierarchy, meaning that the decision-making power is highest at the top of chart and lowest at the bottom. If we continue this line of thinking, we could seek to identify some entities as the owners or controllers of the organisation and others as the workers, being the objects of this control.

One answer to this would be that as the library is part of the public sector, it is all Danish citizens who are the owners of the library, which would make the national government and the city council the controllers of the organisation: the government, because it passed a law that became the regulatory framework for the library; the city council, because it controls and finances the library under the requirements of this national law. As the law both states that a municipality is required to offer library services to its citizens and sets some overall goals for these services, the national government could then be seen as the overall controller of both the city council and the library. But in the end, the ownership of the library lies with the citizens it is there to serve. It is their requirements and needs that the library must seek to fulfil. Because Danish democracy is representative, I do not see the citizens as controllers of the libraries as such – this is the task of the elected officials and their administration.

Consequently, the city council and the library leadership can then be seen as entities responsible for making sure the goals of the organisation are met (i.e. the goals stipulated in the library act). However, as there are a number of organisational entities between Dorthe and the supreme authority of the organisation, I will argue we need to add nuance to the top-down perspective's distinction between owners/controllers and workers in a way that includes the entities between them.

Schematically, the top-down perspective would look like this, if we placed the organisational entities on a continuum from owners or controllers to workers:

Owners/controllers

1. National government
2. City council

3. Committee on Culture and Leisure and Finance Committee
4. Municipal Chief Executive
5. Leadership of Health and Culture Services
6. Leadership of the Department of Culture and Leisure
7. Leadership of the City Library
8. House managers (for matters relating to each library branch)
9. Librarians

Workers, the ones being managed and controlled

From this top-down perspective, there are eight entities between Dorte and the top-level management (not counting house managers, who are mostly responsible for the building they work in). I will argue it is not possible to distinguish clearly between controllers and workers here; rather, each entity seems to bear responsibility for some aspects of entities below them.

- The government manages the city council in requiring by law that they maintain public libraries that meet certain criteria.
- The city council manages the committees, as everything has to be passed or at least be passable in the city council.
- The Committee on Culture and Leisure and the Finance Committee are politically in charge of the city library, including its budget.
- The Department of Culture and Leisure is administratively in charge of the library.
- The city library (and its leadership) must meet the requirements of the national law while at the same time referring to the political and administrative levels above them in the municipality.
- The librarians refer to the leadership of the city library.

It could be argued that each of these entities may be subject to organisational pressure and likewise resist this organisational pressure. The question of who decides on e.g. goals, and which entities would then be the ones resisting organisational pressure, is quite complex in this context. In this thesis I am focusing on Dorte and her work, and consequently I will here primarily be looking at Dorte and her fellow librarian colleagues as the human factors that the organisation needs to control.

Dorthe's perspective: The city library as part of the public sector

There are many entities above Dorthe in the municipality, but I would like to understand better which of these entities Dorthe sees as influencing her work in practice. I bring the organisational chart of the city library with me, and ask Dorthe:

Dennis: ... How far up [pointing at the entities above Dorthe on the chart] do you have any feeling that these really have that much influence over your work?

Dorthe: Well, it doesn't influence my daily work all that much really. But once in a while, when there are budget negotiations in the fall, then sometimes it would be nice if at least the Department of Culture and (incomprehensible) the Finance Committee had a good grip of what the library actually does. And we often get the feeling that they don't always have a good grip of that. ... Other than that, we don't see a whole lot from either the Municipal Chief Executive or ... the Director of Health and Culture Services. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:46:22-00:48:26)

Dorthe says she does not experience much influence from the higher-level entities in the municipality in her daily work, but that when it comes to budget negotiations, the library needs the committees to understand the importance of the work. She goes on to say that some of her colleagues actually organised a study trip for the Committee on Culture and Leisure in order for the politicians on the committee to get a better understanding of the value of the library in the municipality (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:47:18-00:48:58).

I then ask Dorthe which entities she thinks do influence her everyday work, and she says:

Dorthe: Well, [the Director of Department of Culture and Leisure] also has her ear to the ground, things happening, and so has a direct influence on what we do.

Dennis: Yes. For example? ...

Dorthe: Yeah. I actually don't know that. No.

Dennis: Well, no. No no.

Dorthe: That is over me, you see. That is something [the Director of the city library] deals with. [laughing] (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:51:31-00:52:02)

So from Dorthe's perspective, it is the Department of Culture and Leisure that

more directly influences her everyday working life in the library. However, she does not actually know in what way this influence is exerted or on what, as this is something her director handles. When it comes to a more direct influence on her everyday work in terms of projects, desk duty, and office time, Dorthe says:

Dorthe: That would be [the Director of the city library] ... in the direct sense.

Dennis: Yes; and what is it then, for example ... when are you in contact with [the director], then? What kinds of things is it then, or when is he in contact with you, if it is the other way around?

Dorthe: Well, it really is, I am tempted to say, more the other way. Besides of course as a colleague [laughing], then it is really, for example, when a place has opened up on a project about visiting the educational institutions and doing library dissemination. If I then put my name down, 'Well, this is something I would like', if they find me suitable ... then [the director] contacts me and asks me if I have too much on my plate, if it fits, if I am able to do this, and so on, and just checks to see if it is okay. ... So in that way, he has a direct influence on the division of my work assignments, you see. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:52:47-00:54:43)

The director of the city library and his deputy seem to have the most direct influence on Dorthe's work assignments in that they have the final say on what she will be involved with and, for example, how many hours of desk time she will have per week. Dorthe says that often she will be the one going to her boss, asking permission to join a project, for example, meaning that the initiative usually comes from her, and the decision-making and overall co-ordinating role lies with her boss (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:54:49-00:55:06). Dorthe elaborates further on the influence she and the other librarians have:

Dorthe: We are after all a small, small organisation; when we are down on our own level here, we are really only 16 employees, when not counting the book sorters, you see. So it is really very collegial.

Dennis: Yeah. You are not far from each other in that sense?

Dorthe: No. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:55:06-00:55:24)

Dorthe explains this point about being collegial towards each other a little later in the interview:

Dennis: What then, if you are making a decision about something? Is it then more like a common, 'Now let's have a staff meeting, and isn't it time

to do something in [City Name] because ... that thing isn't working?'

Dorthe: Yes, that is the case here. So we also have house meetings, and they are not set; it will be when we think, 'Now we need a place to sit down and talk with each other and look each other in the eye'. ... Then we will have house meetings and agree on what we will do, and in relation to the house.

Dennis: Yeah. But that is more like a common [decision]?

Dorthe: Yeah. That it is. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:59:04-00:59:37)

Summary and discussion

The library is owned by the Danish population

Dorthe works in an organisation that in essence is owned by the Danish population and exists to fulfil their needs. This organisation is controlled by both the national government and the local city council, which are its supreme administrative authorities.

Small part of a large and highly differentiated organisation

When looking at the number of entities with a formalised relationship to Dorthe's library work, she seems to be a small part of a highly differentiated organisation – both vertically, in terms of the number of levels in the hierarchy, moving from national legislators to Dorthe working at the desk – and horizontally, as each entity in the chart seems to have a progressively larger area of responsibility, the further we move up the organisational chart. Some of these, to Dorthe, seemingly distant entities are able to influence her work if they, for instance, make budget cuts or change the law that defines the overall goals of public libraries.

Dorthe's amount of influence over the entire organisation

On the one hand, I will argue that Dorthe is a small cog in the large machinery of the public sector in Denmark, and that she has very little influence over any of the entities seen on the organisational chart.

On the other hand, it does not seem to matter much to Dorthe that there are eight vertically differentiated entities above her in the organisation, in the sense that she does not experience most of these entities as having any direct influence on her everyday work except when it comes to things like budget negotiations. They seemingly control her as a human factor (tension 1) only in a quite indirect way.

Dorthe's amount of influence over her everyday work

Dorthe seems to experience her everyday working life as regulated by 1) negotiations among colleagues about what they will work on and 2) asking her boss permission to join specific initiatives or increase or decrease the number of hours of desk duty she works each week. She does not seem to experience her bosses actively controlling her work very often. On the contrary, it is usually she who goes to her boss to ask permission to do something. From this local perspective, Dorthe does not seem to be a small cog in a big machine, but rather she seems to see herself as someone with a lot of influence on her everyday work. From this perspective, it seems that the local leadership of the libraries do not really do that much controlling of Dorthe or her colleagues as human factors (tension 1), but rather rely on them undertaking initiatives that fall under the goals of the library.

In contrast to the assembly-line metaphor (another way to control the human factor and to create integration) used in the previous chapter to describe the way Dorthe's work seems to be organised, she seems to experience a lot of discretion in terms of decisions about what she chooses to do. In other words, it seems that the concrete way Dorthe does her work is controlled, in some ways like an assembly line, but when it comes to decisions about, for example, how much desk time she will do, what needs to be done in a library branch, or which projects she would like to be involved with, she seems to experience a lot of discretion.

Dorthe's feeling of ownership

In the previous chapter, Dorthe says that she feels responsible for things she considers common responsibilities in the library, but that since she is not the formal leader there, and since she is not the project manager for any of the projects, she does not feel that the library as such or these specific projects are her responsibility. I interpret this as a way of also talking about a feeling of ownership. It seems that because Dorthe does not feel she has ownership of the library itself or the projects she works on, she does not feel especially responsible for these. In other words, she is managed as a human factor (tension 1) in that she to a certain extent lets others make decisions for her and lets others define the projects she will take part in.

On the one hand, from a distant perspective, this could be seen as the result of the library being an organisation that is ultimately owned by the Danish population (and thus only Dorthe by a very small share). On the other hand, from a local perspective, her lack of a feeling of ownership could be seen as the result of Dorthe not having a formal role as a leader. She is not the 'patrol leader' of the library, as she says (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:33:25-00:38:11).

Dorthe's volunteer third-sector work: The scout association DDS

As mentioned, Dorthe is a member of and consequently does her volunteer scout work as part of the Danish Guide and Scout Association (DDS). This is a national Danish third-sector association consisting of, among other things, approximately 400 geographically distributed entities called local groups. When Dorthe organises activities, such as weekly meetings for scout children, these take place within her local group.

In the following sections I will first describe the structure of Dorthe's local group, followed by the structure of the regional and national levels of the DDS association, including the connections between these levels.

Local-level structure on paper

Local groups are the organisational entities that organise the weekly meetings and local-level camps that make up a lot of the scout work taking place in the DDS association on a daily basis nationwide. Most members of DDS are members of a specific local group somewhere in Denmark, and it is through their connection with the local group they are part of the nation-wide DDS association.

Local groups are legally independent associations

Local groups are all legally independent associations (in a sense, they are 400 horizontally differentiated entities), with their own groups of leaders, local boards, and general assemblies. Each local group pays a fee to the national-level association for each member of their local group; other than that, they are also financially independent from the national organisation, meaning it is also their responsibility to make sure they have enough money to fund their activities.

Funding

The local group receives a certain amount of municipal public funding based on the number of members it has and under a number of requirements, one being that the association is democratically organised (The Ministry of Culture, 2011b, 2011a). Each member also pays a fee to be part of the local group and its activities. These two types of funding are dependent on how many members the local group is able to attract.

In addition to this, the local group fundraises by selling Christmas trees and decorative greenery once a year in the local community, by hosting a Christmas fair, and by selling Christmas calendars and flower bulbs (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:59:37-

01:02:42). These sources of income are not very directly related to the actual scout activities the local group does, nor are they dependent on their number of members.

Local groups structured based on national principles

Local DDS groups are formalised and differentiated organisations in the sense that a number of predefined roles and entities exist and are described in the by-laws of the national-level association. Some roles and decisions about, for example, which age groups a local group will offer activities for, can be decided at the local level, and are not defined at the national level (The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2015). The structure of Dorthe's local group differs somewhat from the local-level structure presented in the DDS by-laws. I will begin by describing the structure as it looks on paper and then move on to discuss how the Pine Trees local group differs somewhat from this.

In the organisational chart below, I have included all the formally existing roles in Dorthe's local group. These roles exist before any person takes on the tasks associated with them, making the local group a form of formalised bureaucracy in which the way work is organised and differentiated is not something any person joining the local group can decide completely at their own discretion. Rather, the formal role sets a direction and some expectations for what a person will do in the local group (Jaffee, 2001, p. 91). The structure is presented in figure 1, and while it will not be exactly the same in all 400 DDS local groups, there will likely be many similarities. As with the library, the chart is based on seeing the organisation as vertically differentiated, where a higher placement in the chart means a progressively higher degree of authority over the organisational entities below any given entity in the figure.

For presentation purposes I have divided members into *active members* and *participating members*.

Active members (green) are the ones planning, organising, and doing the work in the group: among other things, attending co-ordination and planning meetings, organising activities and camps, and handling accounting and other forms of paperwork. *Board members, group leaders, branch leaders, assistants, and other leaders* belong to this group. None of these are paid for their work, other than having some of their expenses covered.

Participating members (red) are the ones participating in the activities organised by the active members. In the oldest branches, the participating members, especially the patrol leader and patrol assistant, will gradually move towards becoming active members.

Annual general meeting

At the top of the chart we find the annual general meeting (AGM), which is the supreme authority of the local group. All active and all participating members of the association (or their parents, in some cases) have voting rights there. This means that the supreme authority of the association potentially consists of all members of the association – both the leaders who volunteer their time in the local group and all the children and young people who take part in the scout activities in the group (or their parents).

The AGM is held once per year, and among other tasks it must approve the accounts of the local group and elect the group supervisory board.

Group supervisory board

The group supervisory board consists of:

10. Parents, primarily to members under 15
11. Young members between 15 and 23
12. Leaders in the local group, among these at least one group leader

(The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2015)

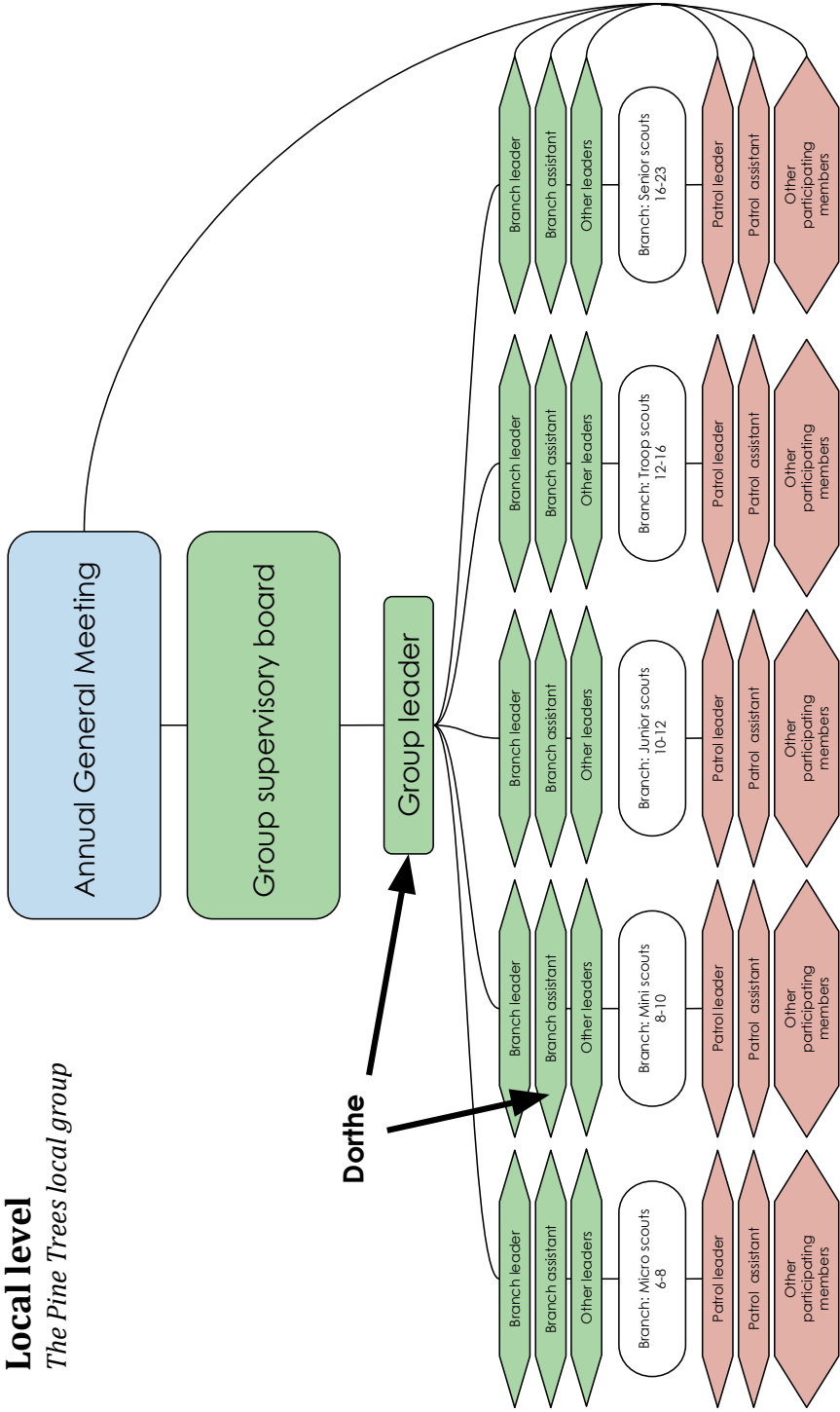
According to the by-laws, the board is responsible, among other things, for ensuring that the local group lives up to the values, aims, and laws of the national-level association; for the groups' finances; and for following up on the decisions of the AGM (The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2015).

Group leaders

Directly under the board are the group leader(s). A local group will have one or two group leaders, who are formally elected for two-year periods by the leaders of the local group. In the Pine Trees local group, the election happens during the AGM. Dorthe has been group leader for eight years. She is currently the only one in this role, and the elections are usually uncontested. While the AGM is the supreme authority of the local group according to the formalised structure defined in the DDS by-laws, Dorthe describes the meeting as:

Dorthe: ... [just an] expanded informal coffee party, where we go through the agenda, and the ones standing as candidates are usually also the ones being elected. And I have stood as a candidate. And we have a six-year principle ... So, in principle, I shouldn't be there anymore. But since there isn't anyone else, and I want to, and they seem satisfied with the way I do it, I am elected.

Local level
The Pine Trees local group



Dorthe



Figure 10. Structure of the Pine Trees local group, where Dorthe is a volunteer scout.

Dennis: I see. But it is the kind of thing where, every second year, you actually have to stand as a candidate?

Dorthe: Yes.

Dennis: But without rival candidates? You are not exactly looking at ...

Dorthe: Yeah, I haven't had that yet. But I am trying to, I would really like a co-group leader. We used to have that, we've been two group leaders. So every year I try to persuade one of my scout leaders to join in. But they are busy, these young people, with all sorts of other things. Unfortunately [laughing]. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:14:16-00:15:30)

There have been no other candidates for the position during the last eight years, though Dorthe says she tries to persuade others to join her. In other words, it seems that being in a position of leadership in this local group is not a coveted position.

Leaders

Under the group leader are the leaders. They are adult and young adult active members who are attached to one or more branches of the local group, where it is their job to organise the weekly meetings for this age group, as well as camps and other events. Aside from the group leader, the leaders are perhaps the most active of the active members.

The leaders are horizontally differentiated across the branches, but in what seems to be an effort towards integration, there are meetings for all leaders in the local group across branches:

Well, the leaders' meeting is, as the name implies, the leaders who meet and plan what we will be doing of things that are the responsibility of the leaders, common things, throughout the course of the group and the scout year. And if we could do with some cleaning up or we need to check all the tents before a summer camp, or something else, then there will be a number of those kinds of things along the way. But it is then the task of the group leader, which is also me, to just make sure that we have the meetings we are required to have and that we hold the meetings we need to have. And they are not fixed; we take them a little, on an ad hoc basis along the way. (Dorthe, 2016, p. 00:14:09-00:15:33)

As weekly branch meetings do not take place at the same time, the leaders do not meet across branches there. The leaders are differentiated into the different age groups for which they are responsible, and the leaders' meetings seem to be the place for common decisions.

Branches

The children and young people in a local group are divided into branches based on age. Each branch has leaders who are in charge of its activities. There is a 'branch leader', with overall responsibility, a branch assistant who is next in line, and there can potentially be other leaders as well.

Patrols

Finally, at the bottom of the chart, we have participating members and patrols. Dorthe explains:

Dorthe: "Well... we don't have to hide the fact, that it has arisen as, as a semi-militaristic project. It was a former officer who came up with the scouts, so there are some of the things [from his military experience] that have been passed on to the scouts, and we work in patrols, meaning teams, which are made up of children who can work together, and where they perhaps have different sets of skills. There is a ... patrol leader and there is a patrol assistant, and they are usually the ones who are a little older than the others, or at least have some skills, which make them suitable for being patrol leader and assistant, and then there are ordinary members of the patrol. And the patrol leaders will get increasing responsibilities the older they get, up through the scouts. When it comes to the small ones, there are some who report in and out when on a hike, stand with the patrol flag ... and not much else, but as they become junior or troop scouts, they will gain a bigger responsibility for being the ones who kind of convey their knowledge to their somewhat younger patrol members, and that is the principle called children leading children, which is a substantial part of the scout work, yeah, that they learn from each other and lead each other, yeah." (Dorthe, 2016, pt. 00:29:06-00:30:23)

Each branch may have a number of patrols, depending on how many participating members there are.

The top-down perspective as a continuum

The above description aims to illustrate the formal (primarily vertical) differentiation of roles made in the local group. The chart is, as mentioned, based on the top-down perspective and principle of hierarchy, meaning that the decision-making power is highest at the top of chart and lowest at the bottom. If we continue this line of thinking, we could seek to identify some entities as the owners or controllers of the organisation and others as the workers, being the objects of this control.

One answer would then be that the AGM is the owner of the organisation. This would then mean that together, all members of the local group are its owners – all the people who take part in the group as either active or participating members also own the group.

This would make the group supervisory board the top representatives of the owner(s) who are tasked with making sure the goals of the organisation are met. It is the leaders in the group who elects the group leader(s), and the branch leader and branch assistant answer to the group leader(s). Below these in this hierarchical description of the association are the children and young people who participate in scout activities. The older branches are also organised into patrols with patrol leaders and patrol assistants.

Schematically, the top-down perspective would look like this, if we place the organisational entities on a continuum going from owners or controllers to workers:

Owners/controllers

1. Annual general meeting
2. Group supervisory board
3. Group leader(s)
4. Branch leaders, branch assistants, and other leaders

Workers, the ones being managed and controlled.

Dorthe has two places in this hierarchy, as she is both the group leader and a regular leader (specifically, she is a branch assistant for the Mini Scouts.)

Managers answer to the workers

The peculiar thing about this type of organisational structure, when looking at it from a top-down perspective, is that the managers in the end answer to the very workers it is their task to manage. The group leader is elected by the other leaders in the group, and the group supervisory board is elected by the annual general meeting. The AGM consists of all active and participating members (or their parents, representing them), and this means that all leaders – the workers who are the object of management – are also owners/controllers of the organisation, along with the participating members.

Thus we can understand and illustrate this hierarchy not only as a continuum going from most to least power or control, but also as a circle, as illustrated in

figure 11, which shows a form of circular vertical differentiation, which I will call tension 3.

I define tension 3 as the co-existence of a top-down perspective, where a select group has the task of managing others, with a bottom-up perspective, where the



Figure 11. Tension 3 – Top-down and bottom-up

objects of management are also the owners of the organisation, as they have a vote in the organisation's supreme authority. An organisation structured around tension 3 is still vertically differentiated, but it is so in such a way that the bottom decides over the top and the top also decides over the bottom. The organisation seems to exist in a tension between these two perspectives.

When Dorthe says, for example, that she has to take the initiative when the scout hut needs cleaning, this could be seen as her using her top-down influence to make a decision. When the other leaders agree to do this, this could be because they accept perhaps both the need for cleaning the hut as well as Dorthe's authority to decide that they will do this. Dorthe's authority in the situation could be seen as stemming from the leaders having elected her as their group leader themselves, meaning they choose her to manage them, and now accept that she can legitimately do this.

I would argue that Dorthe having this authority can also be seen as the organisation's way of handling the integration necessitated by tension 2. The top-down perspective present in the structure of the local group could be seen as a way to create integration among all the leaders as part owners and workers of the group. When Dorthe decides to have a cleaning day, she is integrating vertically differentiated leaders.

The DDS association seems based on the co-existence of both mechanisms at both the local and national levels. In this case, on the local level, all of the potential objects of management have voting rights specifically regarding the areas where the management could exercise organisational pressure over these voters. The formalised structure of the local groups seems to include both perspectives, and I will argue that this is one way the organisational structure differs from that of Dorthe's paid work in the public library.

Local-level structure in practice

Although co-existing with the bottom-up principle described in the above, the top-down perspective does seem to exist in the formalised structure of a local group as described in the DDS by-laws (The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2010, 2015).

However, it seems to play a different, smaller role in practice in the Pine Trees local group than we might expect if only looking at the structure *on paper*.

On paper, the annual general meeting is the supreme authority of the local group, and it is first and foremost the responsibility of the AGM to ensure that the goals of the local group are reached, just as it is the AGM that approves the accounts of the local group and has the power to dissolve the local group association.

As mentioned, all members (or their parents, in some cases) have voting rights at the AGM; so on paper we see a structure where the managers in the end answer both to the workers (the leaders) it is their task to manage and to the participating members (the children and young people who are scouts) who receive the service of scout activities in the local group.

However, in Dorthe's local group, the Pine Trees, just as Dorthe is the only candidate for group leader, being a parent-member of the group supervisory board is not exactly a coveted position. Also, the Pine Trees group does not experience a lot of participation in their AGMs from participating members or their parents. Dorthe says:

And all parents to children and all children over 15 years of age are invited to participate in the general meeting – and four will show up, if we are

lucky [laughing], that is. So it isn't really a crowd-puller; people are really afraid of being elected. (Dorthe, 2016, pt. 00:17:21-00:18:05)

So the annual general meeting is no crowd puller. As Dorthe says, they might see four parents attending (sometimes a few more, though (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:18:05-00:18:24)). She ascribes the low turnout to the *fear of being elected for something*. The leaders, however, almost all attend, but if we look at the AGM as the supreme authority in which especially participating members or their parents also have a say, it does not in practice wield a lot of decision-making power over the local group.

The local group is required to have an AGM according to both the by-laws of the association (The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2015) and Danish law, in the form of the 'Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity' (The Ministry of Culture, 2011a, secs. 3–4, 2011b, secs. 3–4), which ensures municipal financial support for the local group as long as they meet certain criteria (one being that they are democratically organised, i.e. they need AGMs and elections).

It could also be argued that the AGM is needed to make sure there are enough people on the group supervisory board, which is both a formal and a practical necessity. I ask Dorthe about what the board does:

“Dennis: [W]hat does the group supervisory board then do relative to the group of leaders?”

Dorthe: Actually decide on economy and overall things, so if the case is that there is a bigger thing we would like to buy, because we are in need of a gathering tent or something else, then it is the group supervisory board that is to decide whether we can afford that... And it is always a parent who is the chairman, and it is always a parent who is the treasurer and not a leader. And they are sitting in some of the heavier positions there in relation to being able to say whether one is allowed to do that or not. Then they are also part of doing many of the things that need doing during the year, where we perhaps are short on hands. But it is first and foremost kind of a safeguard, making sure that it happens the way it is supposed to, the scout work...

Dennis: In what way, I mean?

Dorthe: Well, if ... there were irregularities one way or another in either something economical or if you had completely gone astray, with all scout

meetings taking place in, well, Tivoli ... I mean that it had nothing at all to do with the scout work ... Then their role is also a bit to be a kind of guard against that ...

Dennis: Yeah, all right, so in that sense, they can influence specifics as well?

Dorthe: Yeah, I haven't tried it, but that is part of what they are there for. If there is a group going down the wrong road." (Dorthe, 2016, pt. 00:15:33-00:17:13)

According to Dorthe, the group supervisory board handles the finances of the local group. It is also members of the board who are legally responsible to the municipality for the work of the local group regarding funding requirements, although they are in most cases not personally liable (The Ministry of Culture, 2011b, sec. 5, 2011b, sec. 31, 2011a, sec. 5, 2011a, sec. 31). The board also has the important, but at the same time perhaps mostly theoretical, role of intervening if the scout work in the local group is not done the way it is supposed to be, i.e. is not meeting the overall goals of the organisation. She sees the board as a theoretical safeguard against this, but this is not something she has ever seen practiced.

Dorthe says that she also keeps an eye on the person who formally looks after the finances, even though this isn't formally her task, as the group has previously had a 'bad experience' with trusting a treasurer blindly (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:21:22-00:23:10). Finally, Dorthe also takes other issues to the board for discussion. When the leaders are planning a summer camp, she will ask the parent members how they feel about the destination, because they will be asked to drive the children back and forth. She also tries to involve the parent members of the board in other things happening in the local group so they are kept in the loop, and so she can hear their perspective as parents on the local group's work. Dorthe also mentions that if she were to have a difficult situation with a leader, she would first go to the chairman of the board to discuss what to do (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:23:10-00:24:50).

Recruiting board members

So where do the parent board members come from, when so few parents show up at the AGM? I ask Dorthe about the role of the board members in relation to recruitment:

Dennis: So, in principle, they are at the top of the cake. And, by all means, just under the annual general meeting. In practice, I get this idea, that it really is more you and perhaps also some of the other leaders, who actu-

ally make sure to give someone a push onto this board. How does that work? ...

Dorthe: Yeah. Well, yes and no, really. I do think that we take it on us, me and the leaders, to try and find some parents, who will stand for election. Luckily, our current chairman, the elected parent chairman – she had herself been out and talked with some. So at least one of the ones who were we elected this time, she had been tapped by the chairman. So that way the parent members, they can be a lot more active, the chairman can be very active and not very active, and that goes a bit up and down. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:18:51-00:21:07)

Dorthe says that she and the leaders take on a certain responsibility for making sure there are parents on the board so that there is someone they can ask for permission when they wish to spend money, e.g. on a new tent. I interpret this as Dorthe seeing a need for someone to handle the finances and to have the overall responsibility for the scout work in the group. Dorthe would likely have to consider their role as controllers of the local group both legitimate and needed in order for her to take this initiative.

Dorthe feels accountable

From the top-down perspective, Dorthe has both the AGM and the group supervisory board above her in the hierarchy, but to understand how she experiences this in practice, I ask her if she feels someone is leading her in the local group setting. She answers:

Dorthe: I don't have much of a feeling of being led. But I have the feeling of answering to – to the group supervisory board, but also to the scouts and their parents. So it is not the case that there are people who tell me what to do. But I know that the things I must – and the things I do, they must be approvable by the ones I sort of refer to. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 01:04:18-01:04:45)

Dorthe does not experience others deciding over her, but she feels accountable towards the members of the group and their parents in the decisions she makes, as she also is formally accountable to them at the AGMs. She also says that she has a lot of influence in the Pine Trees local group:

Dorthe: On the entirely local level in the Pine Trees, I really have a lot of influence. Yeah, I do have that. And I am listened to and heard. I won't say the old cliché that my word is law, but that is almost the case. There

also isn't really anyone who does anything without asking for permission. When our young scouts a few years ago wanted to renovate the hut, they came to me with the suggestion and needed permission for it, you see. ... And it was their suggestion that came to life, but they started by asking me, and not the chairman and not anyone else. So in that way, I am a figure-head in the Pine Trees. That, I have to realize; that, I have to acknowledge [laughing]. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 01:07:11-01:08:56)

What Dorthe here describes seems to match the idea of a vertical differentiation where decisions that others deem need approval are run past her. She does not have to be the initiator of a given effort, but she fills the role of approving these efforts. This seems similar to the role of the group supervisory board in approving money the leaders would like to spend, e.g. on a new tent or leadership training.

Dorthe does not always make the decisions

Dorthe explains how she can switch between being in charge and not being in charge, depending on the situation and her formal role in it, the following way:

Dorthe: For each branch, there is a branch leader, and it is actually the branch leader who has the overall responsibility for the individual branch, and who has a number of assistants or helpers under her. And in our case, there is a branch leader and an assistant, and perhaps a helper in the branches with the highest numbers or the youngest children. And it is of course rare in practice that you have to put your foot down and say, 'Well, I am the one who decides' ... , as group leader, there it sort of seems as if, there they ask me about bigger things ... Is it okay if we, Peter and I, borrow the trailer this coming weekend ... and she does this automatically; she might as well have asked the chairman, she asks me and I say 'of course', you see.

But on the other hand, I make sure, when I am an assistant for the Minis, then it is Hanne who decides what will be taking place in the Mini branch. I mean, I take part and I contribute, and we decide an equal amount, when we are at the meetings, if there is someone who is unable to behave themselves, then we are both able to handle them, you see, but it is her overall principles for how a Mini meeting is to take place that set the tone there. So you could say that yes, that some decide over others. (Dorthe, 2016, pt. 00:32:29-00:35:01)

Dorthe says here, that she switches between making decisions herself and letting

others make decisions. But as the group leader, she does still have a lot of say.

Summary, discussion, and comparison

The natural system perspective

On paper, we see the described tension 3, where the managers in the end answer to the workers it is their task to manage. But in practice there doesn't seem to be that much of a top-down management practice taking place – at least not from the AGM or the board. Rather, the Pine Trees local group seems to be organised around a number of horizontal differentiations of tasks and areas of responsibility, with less (vertical) focus on who decides over whom, but more with an eye towards who is in charge of doing a task that it has been commonly agreed needs to be done. The Pine Trees seem organised similarly to what Jaffee, with reference to Scott, calls the *natural system perspective*:

The natural system perspective views 'organizations as collectivities whose participants share a common interest in the survival of the system and who engage in collective activities, informally structured, to secure this end' (Scott 1987:23). This perspective is more sociological, with its emphasis on the informal activities of participants, the way behavior in organizations deviates from formal rules and structures, and the role human participants play in creating organizational values and cultures. (Jaffee, 2001, p. 4)

Leaders, members, and board must all share an interest in the local group's survival, although it seems the leaders, especially Dorthe, feel perhaps the highest degree of responsibility in this regard. But in contrast to the above quote, the local group is not informally structured. There are a number of titles and a clear formal hierarchy, but these seem in practice to mostly serve the purpose of differentiating who does what horizontally, and who decides over whom in which situations vertically. What I will argue we are seeing is also behaviour deviating from formal rules and structures, as the top-down perspective seems to exist more on paper than in practice. Tasks seem to be differentiated such that each role respects the authority other roles have over defined parts of the organisation. We don't see a management level putting organisational pressure on workers to comply with certain aims or values through vertical differentiation. The organisation also seems based on a common idea that all roles are needed. For the local group to work, someone has to make sure there is enough money in the bank. Someone needs to initiate a day of tidying up; someone needs to organise the weekly meetings for each age group; and so on.

In contrast with the library, it seems that the formal hierarchy means less in the scout group.

Afraid of being elected to do volunteer work

It is not a coveted position to be either group leader or a member of the board. Dorthe says that people are afraid of being elected. In other words, these positions at the top of the formal hierarchy are not automatically sought for their influence over the organisation or the prestige they could come with. Taking on a role in the local group means having to spend (unpaid) time doing the tasks involved in this role. If a parent joins the board of this volunteer association, this will not mean that their tasks at their paid jobs or at home will decrease. The same is, of course, the case for Dorthe, who still chooses to be a leader for children, while also being the group leader.

In the library, Dorthe's leaders will adjust the number of tasks she has to fit her 37-hour work-week. But this mechanism does not seem to exist in the volunteer association, just as there is no fixed number of hours per week that can be used as a guiding principle.

The local group is owned by its members

Dorthe does volunteer work in a local group of a scout association, which in essence is owned by the members of this local group. This means that all the volunteers working in the local group, and all the children and young people participating in these activities, together make up the supreme authority of this local group through their voting rights at the group's annual general meeting.

In contrast with the library, whose supreme authority consists of voters both in the municipality and in the entire country, the only people with voting rights in the scout association are those directly involved with the scout work in the local group in question. In the library, the city council and the municipal chief executive deal with the entire municipality, whereas the elected group supervisory board, group leader(s), and all other active members of the local group are in these positions only to deal with things related to the scout association and the local group. In other words, the supreme authority of the local group consists of people who are involved with scout work either directly or through their children.

Bigger part of smaller organisation

In the library, Dorthe seems to be a small part of a large and highly differentiated organisation. In the local group, Dorthe seems to play a pivotal role as the group leader and to be a large part of the association, which is much smaller than the library.

Dorthe's amount of influence over the local group

Dorthe says she has a lot of influence in the local group as the group leader, that what she says is listened to, and that people often ask her for permission. She also says that when she is acting as branch assistant, she lets the branch leader make the overall decisions, so the percentage of decisions that are up to her changes as she switches between her two roles.

Dorthe's feeling of ownership

In the previous chapter, Dorthe says she feels very responsible for the wellbeing of the local group, and that she sees this as a form of duty. She ascribes some of this to her formal role as group leader in the association; I would argue that this can also be understood as a feeling of ownership.

National-level structure

The national level of the association is what binds the approximately 400 local groups together, and their affiliation with the national-level association is in a sense what makes them part of the Danish Guide and Scout Association (DDS). The association, however, cannot be said to consist primarily of this national association; rather it is the case that the national association and the 400 local groups *together* make up what the DDS association is.

The national association is differentiated into a number of different entities, which each have their own tasks and areas of responsibility. In the illustration below, the local group is the smallest entity. (This is Dorthe's place in the association, as she is a leader and the group leader in one of these approximately 400 local groups.) A few of the entities in the illustration are **paid staff (orange)**, while most are **unpaid volunteers (blue)**. The description in figure 12 is based on the association's constitution and bylaws (The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2010; 2015), combined with other documents from the association describing its internal structure.

National Congress and Central Board

The *National Congress* is, as stated in the association's constitution, the supreme authority of DDS. During the yearly meeting, the delegates there make decisions on the overall direction of the association and approve the national-level association's accounts and budgets. The National Congress also has the ultimate power to dissolve the entire association and to change the constitution (although a two-thirds majority is required for those particular decisions). The National Congress elects the Central Board, whose job it is to lead the association, and the board is accountable to the National Congress (The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2015).

Paid staff

While volunteers undertake the vast majority of all the association's work, there is some *paid staff* employed by the association at the national level. The top management post is the *Secretary General*, who reports directly to the Central Board. The Secretary General is the leader of the *paid staff*, one part of which is *administration* and the other *development and communication* (in total around 30 persons, some part-time) ("Korpskontoret," 2016). All other roles are unpaid at both the national and local-group levels.

Committees

At the national level there are also committees, which run projects and/or are responsible for a certain area the association wishes to work on. This work will often be based on a mandate from the National Congress, but in their daily work the committees refer to the Secretary General, as it is this person's job to carry out the wishes set forth by the National Congress and Central Board. Some of these committees support the local groups directly in their work, e.g. by making new inspirational material about scout activities, and others organise training courses for leaders from local groups ("Den fælles organisation," 2017).

Divisions and local groups

At the bottom of the chart are the local groups, which as described are part of the national association, but at the same time are legally independent associations with their own local boards and annual general meetings. The organisation also has a regional level called a *division*. Local groups together form these geographically based networks of around ten groups ("Oversigt over grupper og divisioner," n.d.; The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2015).

The top-down perspective as a continuum

Looking at the national level association from the top-down perspective, one answer would then be that the National Congress is the owner of the organisation, and the Central Board as the top representatives of the owner, tasked with ensuring the goals of the organisation are met (*i.e. managing* the association). The Central Board employs a paid Secretary General, and other paid workers answer to her, just as the volunteer-based committees do. Below these in this hierarchical description of the association are the committees, followed by the members populating the divisions and local groups; these would then be the objects of management.

Schematically, the top-down perspective would look like this, if we place the organisational entities on a continuum going from owners or controllers to workers:

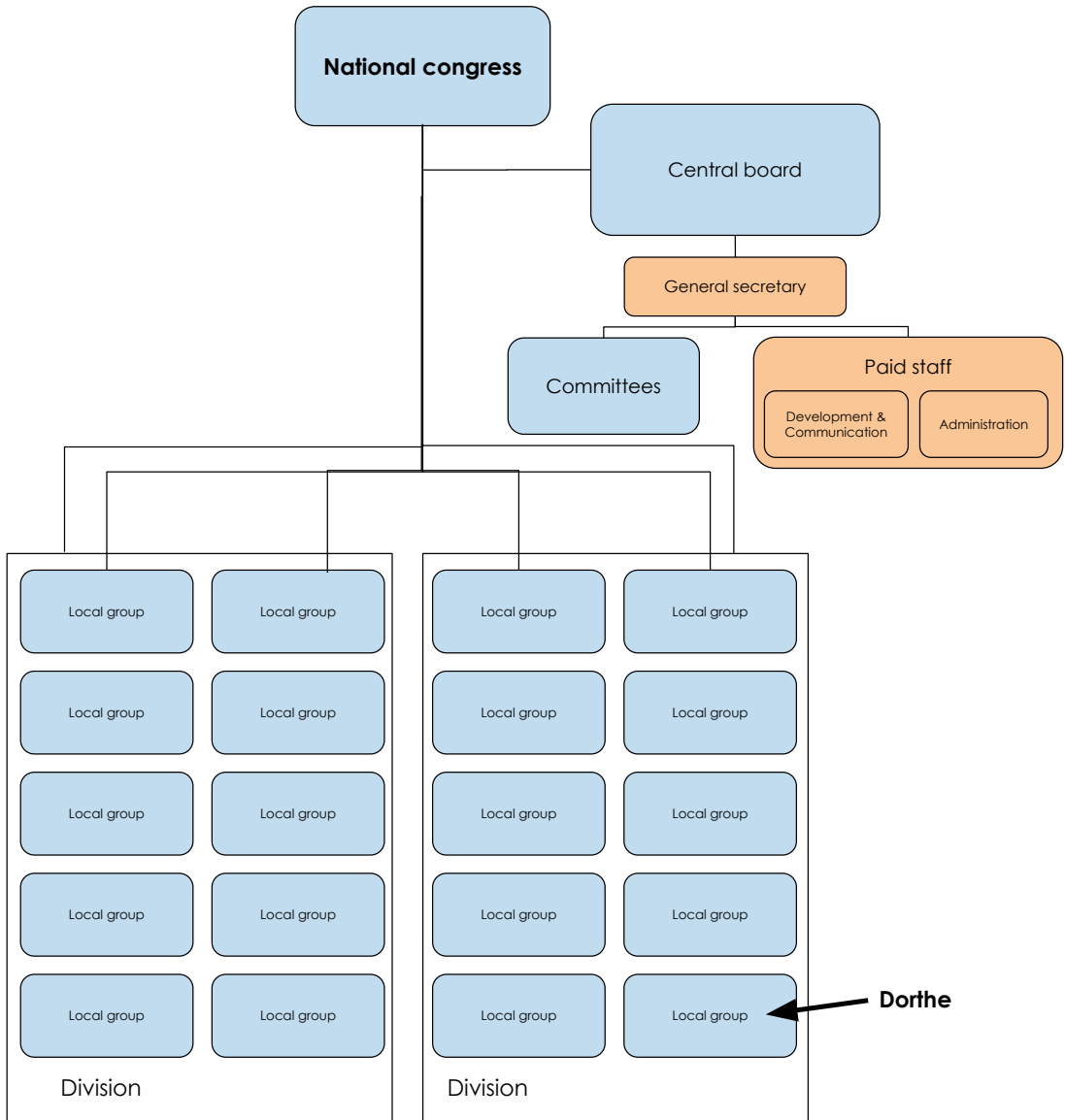


Figure 12. All blue entities are unpaid volunteers; orange are paid staff.

Owners/controllers

- 1) National Congress
- 2) Central Board
- 3) Secretary General
- 4) Paid staff
- 5) Volunteer-based committees
- 6) Leaders like Dorthe in divisions and local groups

Workers, the ones being managed and controlled.

The bottom entities here would then be the ones resisting organisational pressure from the first three. However, as we shall see, the people who might potentially resist any imposed goals are to a degree the very same people who have decision-making power in the National Congress.

Voting rights

Each of the more than 400 local groups is allowed to send two delegates (usually local group leaders) with voting rights to the National Congress. Divisions also have two votes each. Scout centres and large, regularly held events can also be recognized as entities, with two votes each; finally, each member of the Central Board has one vote each. The vast majority of the votes come from local groups. The National Congress elects the *Central Board*, consisting of 12 members. The chairpersons of the board are two chief scouts (one male, one female), who are also elected directly by the National Congress (The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2015).

Managers answer to the workers

The national-level association shares similar traits with the local level in that the managers ultimately answer to the workers whom it is their task to manage. Schematically, this cannot be represented simply as a continuum going from most to least power or control. We must also understand it as a circle, as illustrated in figure 13

The Danish Guide and Scout Association by-laws (2015) require that the Central Board suggest future goals for the organisation to the National Congress every year, although any delegate at the congress can in principle do the same. Once the National Congress has agreed upon overall aims for the future, it becomes the responsibility of the Central Board to make sure these aims are reached. It may seem contradictory that this body is tasked with managing the people to

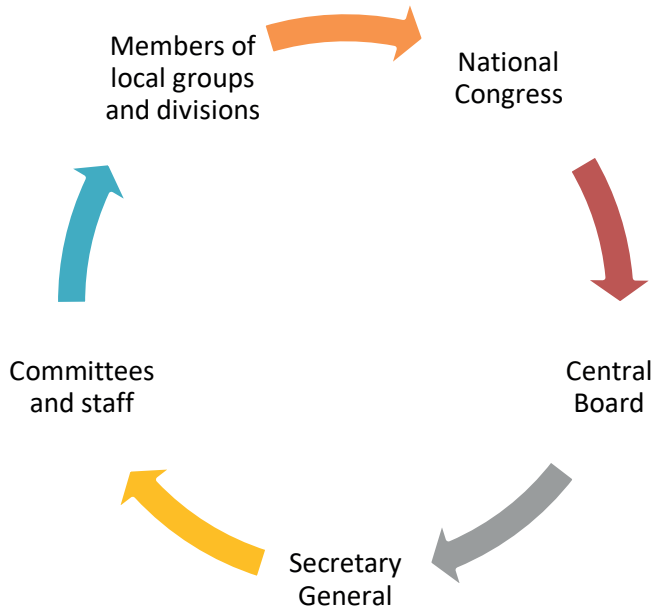


Figure 13. Tension 3 illustrated at the national level

whom it ultimately answers at the National Congress, but there are at least three reasons why this may make sense.

1. The future aims agreed upon by the National Congress are, as Klausen (2001) argues is generally the case in the third sector, broadly defined. Consequently, some work is required to translate these broad aims into concrete actions.
2. Cf. tension 1: the fact that goals have been agreed upon does not mean they will automatically be carried out. Hence, initiative needs to be taken, and work needs to be organised, and indeed *managed*, in certain ways. A central board, committees, and staff are differentiations that place responsibility for specific things on specific areas of the organisation.
3. The goals are the result of a democratic process, and although such decisions may be less contradictory than those found in the public sector, it will still be the case that not everyone will agree with decisions made by the National Congress. Decisions on the future goals of the organisation only require a 50% majority to pass, and it seems unlikely that they will be agreed upon by a 100% majority each year. Hence there

will be members who disagree with the goals set by the national body. Dorthé tells me she has attended the National Congress many times, and I ask her how the delegates usually treat the suggested overall aims:

Dennis: Is it the kind of thing where ... : This is something we will just pass by, or is it something that is debated a lot, up and down?

Dorthé: There is a lot of debate ...

Dennis: So those development plans ... In your experience, are they then more or less passed in the form they are presented?

Dorthé: Yes, they actually are. And they have actually also ... been sort of an imprint of what most people wanted ...

Dennis: Yeah okay, so it is also in that way, there is coherence. (Dorthé, 2017, pt. 00:03:01-00:04:11)

So the aims are debated quite a bit, but in the end are usually passed as they were presented. Dorthé attributes this to the aims in the end usually expressing what the majority wanted anyway, but this still leaves a potential minority disagreeing. Dorthé also explains that she herself does not always take much notice of what the agreed-upon development plan includes, and that she will not necessarily put much effort into working towards these goals. Dorthé explains it this way:

But it also comes ... down to how much you actually – I am tempted to say – follow the development plan, which just happens to be there presently. There has been some focus on increasing the number of scouts: ‘Everyone is to have a friend who is a scout’ ... And in that case, I withdraw and say, ‘We don’t have room for that in our little cabin. We don’t really have the atmosphere for it, because we are the kind that knows – we all know each other.’ (Dorthé, 2017, pt. 00:10:08-00:11:49)

In other words, Dorthé does not feel obliged to follow goals defined by the national-level association – even though it is possible for her to influence them to a certain degree.

Summary, discussion, and comparison – paid and volunteer work

Bureaucratic organisations with formalised differentiations and roles

Both organisations have formal differentiations of tasks and responsibility,

where roles for the most part exist and are described in written form before a person takes on or is assigned to one of these roles. Both organisations are also vertically and horizontally differentiated, meaning there are chains of command on the vertical axis and specialisations into different tasks on the horizontal axis.

Dorthe's work is based on formalised roles

Both Dorthe's paid and volunteer work are based on formalised roles that existed before Dorthe began at either organisation and on formalised written agreements about entering these roles.

The difference perhaps lies in the fact that as a scout, though Dorthe has formally agreed to enter into these roles, there is no management above her in the organisation with the legitimate, formal authority to direct her to do certain tasks or work towards more specific goals. This is not only because Dorthe has a formal role of leadership in the local group, but also because the local group seems to work as a form of natural system, where initiatives taken are often followed, and consensus about what needs to be done plays a much bigger role than formal authority.

Salary and the possibility of being fired, expelled, or not re-elected

As a scout leader Dorthe has agreed to work towards the ideals and goals of the scout association by signing a 'leader declaration', which contains formalised descriptions of the broad tasks Dorthe is to do as group leader and branch assistant. Dorthe signs the minutes from the AGM when she is elected group leader, thereby formally accepting this position. There is, however, no agreement or document specifying how many hours per week Dorthe must work in these positions.

Although firing someone is a rare occurrence in the volunteer DDS association, the organisation does have a procedure by which it can expel members from the association or remove them from their positions as leaders and/or group leaders if they fail to live up to the association's membership conditions, which are to uphold the scout law (The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2010; 2015). So in principle Dorthe could be expelled from the association, but not because she refused to take on a specific task, for example, or for failing to work a certain number of hours. Another potential consequence would be that Dorthe might not be re-elected group leader if she did not live up to the expectations of the other leaders in the group; this could also be seen as a form of firing.

As a librarian Dorthe has signed a contract agreeing to work towards the ideals or goals of the library, and to do this for a specific number of hours every week.

She is paid for this work, and if she does not do her job in a way her managers consider appropriate (e.g. not working the agreed-upon number of hours, or refusing to help library users) she can be fired, thereby losing her salary.

Dorthe's library work then differs in having, first, more concrete demands she must meet in order to be able to say that she is doing her job, and thus avoid being fired, and, second, in that Dorthe will lose her salary if she quits or is fired from her job.

Hiring

When the library needs a new director, for example, it is likely that placing employment ads and job postings online will be sufficient to secure applicants for the job, as there is an established job market for paid work.

When the local group needs new leaders or new members of their board, they can also try to attract these using volunteer job postings, but will often in practice need to find people to encourage directly to take on this task. The problem of finding new volunteers cannot always be solved, regardless of whether a need for them has been identified.

Both organisations answer to voters

The city council and the national government consist of people elected to public office, which means that they as the supreme authority answer to voters, just as we see in the Danish Guide and Scout Association. Important differences between the public library and the Danish Guide and Scout Association, however, include: everyone with voting rights in the scout association is a scout; all their decisions have to do with what goes on in the scout association; and the people they can vote for are also scouts. In contrast, far from everyone with voting rights in the municipality or the nation works in a library (or even visits libraries, for that matter), and public libraries are a very small part of what a city council or national government deal with and are potentially held responsible for. In the scout association, I argue, the top management answers to the workers it is their job to manage, but that does not seem to be the case in the public library in the same sense.

National-level influence on local level has limits

There seems to be a structural gap between the national and local levels of the DDS association, in the sense that the national-level board does not have any direct influence on decisions made in the local groups. The National Congress could make decisions that would influence the local groups quite directly if it changed the constitution or by-laws of the association, for example. But in the

everyday running of the local group, it is first and foremost the local-level AGM, the group supervisory board, and the group leaders who have formal management roles.

Ownership – scout work is seemingly more important to Dorthe

I have noticed that Dorthe often refers to some of the central historical figures in the scout movement, but that she does not do this when it comes to the library. Dorthe says that those names are basically less important to her, and goes on to explain:

Dorthe: You see, it is first and foremost the scout movement, which lies closest of all to my heart. If I could do it for a living, then I would like to do that – apart from the fact that you are a volunteer and not paid for it. But if I didn't have to spend my time doing anything else, then I would spend almost all my time on scouting.

Dennis: Could you try and explain that? Why do you say that, when we are talking about knowing the history and ... the background of the scouts and the libraries?

Dorthe: ... To me the library, and those old ones there – Døssing and the gang – are important, because that is the approach that library services in Denmark must be free and accessible to all ... But to actually – no, yes, it is important – but it is apparently just not as important to me to know exactly who really came up with the libraries at that time. (Dorthe, 2018, pt. 00:49:55-00:51:25)

Dennis: If we were to pretend that you really could just do the scout work you are doing today, but were paid to do so – as a thought experiment. Would that change anything for you? It's of course hypothetical, but still?

Dorthe: Well, I think that is a very difficult question because ... I would like to be able to spend more time on scouting, and I can't do that as long as I still need to earn money, so I have something to make a living from, making it possible to buy corn flakes every day. But at the same time, I can't see myself being paid to do scouting. That absolutely goes against everything I am ... I don't want to be paid to be a scout. Because that is just something I am, and it is something that is my hobby and my leisure interest, and for that reason I can't really – it is difficult for me to make the thought experiment that I am a professional scout, that I could be paid to do it. (Dorthe, 2018, pt. 00:51:53-00:53:27)

Dorthe says that being a scout is just something she is, and that getting paid for it would somehow go against this fundamental idea. I have previously argued that the scout organisation can be seen as a natural-systems type of organisation, where all members share an interest in the survival of the organisation. With the above quote, I would add that it seems Dorthe is not only keenly interested in the survival of the organisation, but that she also sees herself as an integral part of the organisation. So when I argue that the national level of the organisation actually influences Dorthe's local-group work, and that this can be seen as organisational pressure – which we could then expect resistance against, from the bottom up – I also need to add that Dorthe feels closely connected to this organisation on both the local and national levels.

Adding a third characteristic to tension 3 – ownership

If we continue in the line of thinking of tension 3, perhaps it is not so much a question of the National Congress deciding over the local group (top-down), or the local group – along with all the other local groups – deciding over the National Congress (bottom-up). It could also be a case of the local group and its members taking part in and seeing themselves as part of the national organisation. This would to a higher degree naturally legitimate activity materials, development plans, and ideals taught in training courses, as they all come from the organisation Dorthe sees herself as an integral part of.

That Dorthe sees herself as an integral part of the organisation does not, however, mean that she will accept everything anyone else does in the organisation. The week after one of my interviews with Dorthe, it was time for the National Congress of the scout association. Dorthe explained to me that there had been a heated debate on Facebook about one of the suggestions made there. Some argued that it would turn the organisation into more of a company than a volunteer scout organisation, which would go against the scout values. She then says:

I actually sat one day where I was, telling [HUSBAND'S NAME] about what I was reading on a Facebook debate, and then I started crying. Because I thought, 'This touches upon my scout ideals, this does'. I couldn't understand it at all. (Dorthe, 2017, pt. 00:04:56-00:05:12)

So when Dorthe feels like an integral part of the organisation, this does not only mean she will be more likely to accept what others are doing in the organisation; it can also mean that she feels very strongly about her understanding of what the organisation and its goals are, which guides the way she reacts. Again, this is in contrast to the way Dorthe sees herself as part of the library.

As a final note on ownership: Dorthé also grew up in this scout association. She was a member as a child, and she is a member today. She did not grow up as part of a public library in the same way, and this, I would argue, also makes a difference when it comes to feeling ownership.

[12]

ANALYSIS OF SITUATIONAL LEVEL: DITTE

Paid work

In this first part of the analysis, Ditte's work will be introduced. I will focus on what characterises her work in terms of the types of situations in which she finds herself and the types of tasks on which she works. As part of describing these characteristics of the work, I also seek to answer the question, 'Where do tasks come from?', with the aim of understanding what seems to cause or be the source of these tasks, which ultimately make up Ditte's work.

Ditte's paid work in the municipality will be introduced first, followed by her volunteer scout work.

Ditte's paid public-sector work: Project leader in the social welfare department

Ditte is a project leader in the social welfare department of a municipality in Denmark. She had been in this job for a shorter number of years than Dorte, at the time of the study. Ditte holds a master's degree in a social science field.

Overview

Ditte is part of a municipal social welfare department. This department offers social services and specialised education to citizens with special needs via specialised institutions (often referred to as *measures* or *services*). The institutions under the office give assistance to people with physical and/or mental disabilities in-

cluding trauma resulting from abuse, addiction, brain damage and psycho-social difficulties. Common to most institutions under the department is that they are residential, i.e. citizens using their services also reside in these institutions, some permanently and some temporarily. The institutions are not limited to serving citizens inside the municipality's borders but are open to any municipality's citizens who fit the institutional requirements. All residents are fully financed by the municipalities they come from. Citizens must go through a referral and assessment process by the municipality sending them to be able to live in one of the institutions.

Ditte's work consists of three major components: being the project leader on building projects, council officer work, and secretarial services for a leadership forum (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:10:17-00:12:21, 2016b, pts. 00:00:29-00:00:43). In the following section, these components will first be introduced briefly in an overview, followed by a more detailed description looking at the types of tasks and situations the work entails.

As *project leader*, Ditte is the point person in the social welfare department for four building projects the office is currently having done. Two are new buildings, which are to replace buildings currently used by two institutions. The third and fourth are extensions of existing buildings, which are already in use by a third and fourth institution. The building projects take up most of Ditte's working time (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:00:29-00:02:50).

Council officer work means supporting the city council and the political committees in their work. For example, if they ask for data related to a certain problem like substance abuse in municipal institutions, Ditte will contact the relevant institutions, collect the data, and convey it in written form to the politicians. If a violent episode has occurred in one of the institutions, Ditte can e.g. find answers to questions the politicians will have or are met with by the media. She also does this type of work for her managers, e.g. if they need to be briefed on something before going into a meetings (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:10:17-00:12:21).

Secretarial services for a leadership forum means making agendas, minutes, and drafts of decision-making documents for a forum of directors from a number of specialised institutions who meet to share knowledge and deal with questions and challenges shared across the institutions (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 01:03:44-01:06:19). Although this area of responsibility does take up some of Ditte's work time, it will not be described further in this chapter for the following reasons: 1) it is not her primary task; 2) it shares traits with the council officer work described above; and 3) it was not part of the participant and video observation done.

Formal agreements

Ditte's work at the office is full time (37 hours per week), and she is required to be physically present for this number of hours. If she works more than 37 hours one week, she must work less another week, and vice versa. Ditte has signed a contract to do this work, and she is paid to do so (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 01:06:19-01:08:27).

How and why: The tasks and situations of the work

Ditte's work as project leader on building projects

Ditte's primary task has to do with four building projects the municipal social welfare department is currently conducting. These include both new buildings for the department's specialised institutions and renovations of existing ones.

Ditte explains that whenever something is built for any department in the municipality, the process of design and construction is overseen by its *buildings and facilities* office. This office has overall responsibility for the entire building project, all the way from idea to finished construction, including putting the project out to tender and working with the winning contractor during construction (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:01:12-00:02:38). However, the department of the municipality for which the building is being built is also part of the process, as is the specific institution that is to use the building. Hence, when building projects are done for one of the institutions of the social welfare department, a project leader from the department is also assigned to the project. Ditte is one of these. She explains that although the building office staff is good at its job, there are certain things about the buildings needed for the specialised institutions of the social welfare department that require more specific knowledge. She gives an example about building a kindergarten for children with special needs:

[I]f you e.g. say that, well we agreed, that there needs to be a fence around this kindergarten ... and we agreed that this should be hedge, green hedge, because it needs to look like this and this, and then some meeting comes up, where the building office is present, and they are sitting there saying, 'We apparently are beginning to lack funds, and what should we do? Oh, well, that fence is probably not so darn important, or we will change it into a chain-link fence instead of a hedge', or something like that. And then we come in and say, 'Those children have autism and ADHD and they can't have too many stimuli, and that is why there needs to be a closed plane and not a chain-link fence.' So something like that, where you sort

of think, they cannot know enough about this in order to not accidentally ruin that fence; and this is where I need to be there ... (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:05:54-00:08:37)

As the building office staff are not experts in specialised education or children with autism, but rather in having buildings made, the task of making sure the building meets the specific requirements of the institution that will be using it falls to someone else – in this case Ditte. Ditte goes on to explain how she sees herself as a form of intermediary on the four building projects she works with:

[T]hose are the ones where I am the project leader from the social welfare department's side and spend my time running, trying to ensure a reasonable connection to the director, and staff, and to a very small extent residents, but, well, I am sort of like the intermediary between the institution and ... our buildings office, and ... the buildings office then has the primary contact with architects and entrepreneurs, but I do occasionally also meddle a bit. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:01:12-00:02:12)

Ditte seemingly has the task of making sure the institutions and their needs are represented in the building process. She elaborates on her concrete tasks:

[T]he building office, they make sure to build, but there also needs to be – we need to move the residents at a certain time, they need information, as do ... the municipalities that have assessed them to qualify for a placement – they need information. Once in a while, when we remember it, we are to send out a press release about, that the ground-breaking ceremony is coming, and so on. There is a lot of communication, and also staff things, like in some places you risk ending up with fewer residents, and then you need to consider whether you need to lay off staff or if they should be moved, and under all circumstances they need to be given notice about having to go to a new place now. They do know this of course, but they must formally be given notice that they are now going into a new section. So that area, I am sort of the co-ordinator of. So that is the building projects on an overall level. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:02:52-00:03:48)

It seems that Ditte is basically in charge of everything that doesn't have to do with the technical aspects of managing the building process. She says that her tasks are sometimes referred to as *derived tasks* (i.e. tasks that derive from a building project) (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:02:38-00:02:50). In other words, the work seems to be based on a differentiation in which the buildings and facilities offices are

tasked with getting the building built, and it is then up to the entity that ordered the building – in this case Ditte – to handle everything else. Consequently, if the social welfare department would like the press to know a new building is being built, or would like to have a ground-breaking ceremony, they need to assign this task to someone. Because the institutions are employers, they also need to be aware, for example, of labour legislation that defines how they are to give notice about movement or firing of staff. Keeping track of the timeframes for doing this also falls under Ditte's purview, as she reminds the institutions when this needs to be done (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:05:41-00:04:30).

The differentiation between the building office and Ditte's office is, however, not without mutual co-ordination (integration). Ditte also describes her role on the building projects as being half a project leader, in a sense. Although the building office has formal responsibility for the projects, they are often very much a joint effort between the project manager from their office and Ditte from the social welfare department. She elaborates:

Ditte: [I]t is buildings and facilities; the project leader from there has the very formal responsibility e.g. in relation to the architects, and so this is the person who is the project leader. But it is also a very joint effort ... so there are things where I, like – so e.g. right now, I am the contact person for staff security systems – so personal attack alarms really, we just try to call it something – that isn't always called something with 'attacks'. That is the kind of thing ... that I have a lot to do with, because this is something the institution has a lot of opinions about. So I see to, sort of try to initiate, that this is discussed with the institution, that they bring their input forward, and then I co-ordinate with buildings and facilities: 'Well, how much money do we have allocated to purchase this? Is it enough, and what do we do, if this happens?' and so on. ... I am really there to ensure that the institution's wishes and requirements are passed on to buildings and facilities in a fairly sensible manner. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:05:54-00:08:37)

As safety for staff in the institutions is seemingly a quite direct and important concern for their directors (some residents display *externalising* behaviour and may attack staff), this is something Ditte is heavily involved with. The directors of the institutions have the daily management of the institutions as their primary task, and the social welfare department (here Ditte) then takes care of the more technical details of finding suitable systems and working out how they can be integrated into the new buildings. In other words, Ditte handles things that the directors are not expected to do themselves – both in the specific case of staff

security mentioned here and also with regard to a number of other tasks derived from complex building projects. Here we see a horizontal differentiation where certain tasks are placed with specific entities in the organisation. In a sense, it seems Ditte is in charge of handling all the things the institutions are not expected to handle themselves, while making sure that the needs of the institution are met in the building project.

Based on interviews, video, and participant observation, I have collected and categorised the different types of work Ditte seems to do when working on the building projects.¹ (See table 17)

Common to these tasks is that they all relate to the building projects and that they bring Ditte into contact with a range of different organisational entities. Some have to do specifically with the physical makeup of the new buildings, others with tasks that derive from the new building being built.

Overall, the tasks Ditte handles seem to come from a number of different sources. They can be a result of her own scheduling of things that needs to be done in the building process; they can come from the political level; from her managers; from the institutions; from buildings and facilities; and from the contractor or architect (via buildings and facilities). As we shall return to, the organisation is highly differentiated both vertically and horizontally, and across these differences tasks come to Ditte. One way to understand her job is that she is there to support integration among these differentiated entities, i.e. to connect overall political aims with the practice of the institution vertically, and to connect the institution with buildings and facilities horizontally.

1 The overview is likely not as comprehensive as we see with Dorthe's work at the library desk. First, these building projects stretch over a longer period of time than the observation done in this thesis, meaning that not all tasks have been done while the observation has taken place. Secondly, the tasks involved in these projects are in a sense less observable than desk duties. A lot of these tasks are done by Ditte sitting in her office working on her computer, which means they are less accessible than the more verbalised tasks Dorthe does in the library.

Ditte's work as project leader for building projects

Category	Type	Example/reference
Building process management	Co-ordination and joint decision-making among all parties involved in the building project	Attending status meetings on the construction process with representatives from the institution, the social welfare department, buildings and facilities, and the contractor (field note 4A October 10, 16)
	Taking part in continuing adjustments and questions that arise as the building process progresses	The contractor on one of the building projects has found a requirement for a 200 lux light at floor level (likely a requirement from cleaning services to be able to see dust properly). This will be very bright in the evening for the residents living there, and so at a meeting, which Ditte also attends, it is agreed to find a price for installing dimmer switches – although these were not included in the original drawings (field note 6A, October 10, 16).
	Making sure the social welfare department's perspective is included in the design and makeup of the buildings	Ditte says they try to avoid building kitchens in U shapes, as these can make residents feel trapped, and as the staff needs escape routes (field note 16A, October 28, 16).
Derived tasks	Tasks that derive from having a new building made for an existing or new institution. These tasks do not have to do with the actual building or how it will be fitted, but rather are consequences of either making a new institution or moving an existing one.	Notify residents in an existing institution that they will be required to move at some point. This legally means they need to go through a new referral and assessment process with their own municipalities, and the office has calculated that this can take up to 14 months in a longest-case scenario (field note 8A, October 18, 16).
	Involving relevant parties in decisions surrounding the buildings	Designing and carrying out the participatory process of finding a name for a new institution and getting the name approved by the city council (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:22:20-00:25:38)

Ditte's work as project leader for building projects (continued)		
Category	Type	Example/reference
Consultation procedures	Ditte writes proposals for things that she then often sends in consultation to parties affected by the proposals.	Ditte asks for feedback on a requirement specification for staff security systems from a project leader from buildings and facilities and from the institutions that will be using it (field note 26A, November 3, 16).
Recording keeping	Ditte is required to keep records in order to document the work on the building projects and maintain transparency in public administration.	E-mails, memoranda, project descriptions, etc. are systematically registered as part of a case file concerning each specific building project (field note 5A, October 18, 16).
	Handling public records disclosure requests	If a media outlet or a citizen asks to see records regarding a case, Ditte may be involved in preparing these if the request has to do with cases she works on (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:12:38-00:14:35).
Public relations	Writing speeches and making slides and notes for introductory presentations for both politicians and leaders	Writing a speech for the mayor for the ground-breaking ceremony of one of the institutions (with input from buildings and facilities) (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:04:30-00:05:41)
Political	Preparing motions about the building projects to be discussed, passed, or rejected by the city council.	Any text going to the political level about the building projects is written or drafted by Ditte (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:04:30-00:05:41).
	Gathering and writing up information for the city council or political committees about the building projects	

Table 17. Types of tasks Ditte does as project leader

Council officer work

The other part of Ditte's work that we will be looking at is a diverse category of tasks that I have termed *council officer work*. These are tasks that are not directly related to the building projects. They usually involve either generating or finding information and passing it on, or answering specific questions, often requiring specialist knowledge. Requests for this type of work can come from the institutions, Ditte's managers, and city council members.

Finding answers – An example

In the first interview, Ditte recalls an episode where a staff member at one of the specialised institutions was assaulted by a resident. This is an example of the council officer work Ditte does. She says:

... [W]e had an assault out on [name of institution] ... and this happened in the middle of the holidays. There was an abundance of media coverage – so when I returned from my holidays, then it's the kind of thing where I am then writing an answer to the city council because they are asking, ... 'Now the director has said this and this to the press, and what did he mean by that?' And so they are asking questions you have to answer. And I have equipped my manager with answers to what is happening in the matter and he has attended various meetings. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:10:17-00:12:21)

In this situation, a director in the municipality has answered some questions from the press in relation to the assault, and the city council members are now responding to this by wanting to know more. The politicians' access to information about this goes through the social welfare department, and in this case through Ditte. It becomes her job to find out what has happened, and to keep track of how the incident is treated, both to supply the politicians with the answers they require and to equip her own manager with up-to-date information. It is the social welfare department that handles these requests, and not, for example, the director of the specific institution where the assault took place.

The other types of tasks I have categorised as council officer work can be seen in table 18. These are based on interviews, video, and participant observation.

Ditte's council officer work		
Category	Type	Example/reference
Equipping	Finding and conveying information for managers and politicians. Equipping them to handle cases, to make informed decisions, and to answer questions from the press.	A staff member was assaulted in a specialised institution. Ditte found and conveyed information about the incident to managers and politicians (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:10:17-00:12:21).
	Serving managers and politicians by e.g. drafting speeches they are giving and by providing them with quick overviews of tasks they will be involved in	In a meeting with her manager about talking points Ditte was to prepare - she brought a short overview of the task at hand - in case her manager did not remember what this was about. With this, Ditte enabled the manager to quickly brush up on and make an informed decision about the talking points (field note 1A, October 11, 16) + (field note 20A, October 11, 16).
	Generating data about subjects needed for politicians or managers to treat a problem or make informed decisions	A political committee was focusing on substance abuse. Ditte had been tasked with making a survey to map the level of abuse with the users of the institutions (field note 23A, October 11, 16). This task came to Ditte via Marianne, the office manager who was given the task from the politician chairing the committee (field note 7A, October 18, 16).

Ditte's council officer work (continued)		
Category	Type	Example/reference
Political	Preparing motions to be discussed, passed, or rejected by the city council or political committees	After a national focus on preventing violence in social welfare institutions, Local Government Denmark has asked its member municipalities to respond to a proposal dealing with violence. Ditte writes agenda points (motions) for the city council based on this request (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:10:17-00:12:21).
Event and process organisation	Organise and co-ordinate events for the social welfare department	Ditte has prepared a vision day in co-operation with another municipality based on a shared and quite specific schedule for the day (field note 17A, October 28, 16).
Finding answers requiring specific expertise	The social welfare department staff are specialists in a number of different areas and are able to answer questions the institutions themselves cannot.	An institution has asked the social welfare department if their staff are allowed to clean inside their residents' apartments using the residents' own cleaning supplies. Ditte asked Lisbeth, who is in charge of occupational health and safety. Lisbeth will ask someone else with specific knowledge about the use of cleaning agents, and then come back with an answer (field note 4A, November 30, 16).

Table 18. Ditte's council officer work

A lot of the work Ditte does in this category seems to revolve around helping politicians and managers – what I have referred to as *equipping* – i.e. providing them with insights into the social welfare department and making it easier for them to make informed decisions and to attend meetings or give speeches. Other tasks have to do with preparing specific motions for the city council and with organising events.

Where does Ditte's work take place?

A last detail of Ditte's work to be included in the description here is where it takes place. A lot of Ditte's time seems to be spent in her office working on her computer. Ditte also attends a number of meetings, both in-house and externally, along with visiting the institutions and building projects from time to time. Ditte shares an office with her colleague Ulla, and it seems they often use each other as sounding boards when discussing the tasks they are currently working on (field note 2A, November 30, 16).

Summary of tasks and situations

Ditte's job is to create integration within a differentiated organisation

Ditte's job regarding the building projects could be seen as the result of a highly differentiated organisation. As these building projects span such differentiated entities as the external architects and contractors, the internal buildings and facilities office, the administration of the social welfare department, and, finally, the specialised institutions, there must be some mechanism for creating integration among them all; this is where Ditte refers to herself as a form of intermediary. The contractors will not necessarily build in the way that best suits the needs of the specialised institutions if left to themselves; Ditte is part of making sure this happens. The institution will also not necessarily be aware of all the derived tasks that come from having a new building constructed (e.g. those created by legislation), nor is its director likely to have time to address all of these, as he or she still has to manage the institution while the new building is being built. Some of the tasks involved in the building projects rely on Ditte making sure things are happening the way they should; Ditte seems to have a *proactive* role here.

In terms of tension 1 – how Ditte is controlled as a human factor here – I would argue that this building project management seems to be task-oriented work (Thompson, 1967), where Ditte's actions are guided by what she considers it necessary to do and not what someone else has directed her to do. When she knows, for example, that the law specifies they must give the residents notice

about moving, I would argue that it becomes an observed necessity for Ditte to make sure this is done.

Ditte solves a number of tasks based on requests

Where the building projects seem to rely partially on Ditte keeping track of what needs to be done next, there are also a number of tasks that come to Ditte based on requests from others, tasks that place Ditte in a *reactive* position, where her task is defined by the person or entity making the request. Almost all of the council officer work Ditte does is based on requests from others (see the overview in table 18), and these requests often end up on her desk through one of the office managers in the department.

In other words, in terms of tension 1 – how she is controlled as a human factor, or how she knows what to do – a lot of this can be seen as stemming from other entities in the organisation. This seems to be in contrast with her (at least partially) proactive role on the building projects, where Ditte, in some cases, is the one making requests of others.

ANALYSIS OF SECTORIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL: DITTE

Paid work

Structure of the social welfare department

After this introduction to the types of tasks Ditte works on at the social welfare department, the structure of her work at the sectorial and organisational levels will now be described and discussed. Finally, an overview of where tasks come from in Ditte's work will be presented. In the analysis of Dorthé's work, these two levels were kept separate, but as Ditte's paid work puts her into contact with so many different organisational entities, these will be described in further detail before going back to the question of where tasks come from.

Figure 14 shows the social welfare department and how it fits into the structure of the municipality and of the state. The list of organisational entities within the municipality included here is far from exhaustive. The focus is on the entities that are involved in the building projects or seem to be otherwise related to Ditte's work. As with the description of Dorthé's work, the organisational chart is based on the idea of illustrating vertical differentiation based on the top-down perspective and the principle of hierarchy in a formalised organisation. In the chart, each office or entity (box) is seen as being under the supervision and management of, in principle, all offices higher on the chart – in other words, it primarily illustrates vertical differentiation, but does not distinguish clearly between a group of owners and groups of workers. Some of the horizontal differentiations made

between offices in the municipality are also relevant to Ditte's work; thus these will be included in the description below.

The chart is based on publicly available organisational charts and descriptions (from the municipality's website). The organisation is formally described in these charts; this information is combined with observation and Ditte's descriptions of her workplace. To maintain anonymity, the online sources are not cited, as they refer to places and persons.

General elections, the national government, and legislation

As part of the public sector in Denmark, the social welfare department and Ditte's work there are governed by a number of laws. The Consolidation Act on Social Services is, according to Ditte, central to the social welfare department (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 01:39:50-01:43:28). This law stipulates that citizens with impaired physical or mental function are entitled to certain services from the public sector (The Danish Ministry of Children and Social Affairs, 2018). It is some of these services that the social welfare department offers through its specialised institutions, and it is part of Ditte's job to make sure the institutions have suitable buildings in which to conduct these tasks. Ditte says that other laws also play a role: for example, how the staff in the institutions are allowed to act in regard to entering residents' apartments and how the staff are allowed to store keys giving them access to the resident's private premises becomes a constitutional question of the right of property (Grundloven, 1953) (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 01:42:10-01:42:40). The social welfare department has a legal adviser on staff who helps them deal with these questions. General elections are placed as the absolute supreme authority over Ditte's work because all voters take part in deciding who will become legislators in the national government.

On the chart, the laws are placed with a line going directly to the social welfare department and the deputy director, as they define specifics of their tasks, but also with a line going to the city council, as this political level has general responsibility over ensuring the municipality complies with the law.

City council and committees

The next entity under the national government is the political level in the municipality, which is the supreme authority of the organisation Ditte works in. A horizontal differentiation of the political level is made, with a number of committees dealing with different areas of the work done in the municipality. I have only included here the two committees directly involved in the area Ditte works with – the area-specific social welfare committee and the budget-responsible finance committee. The city council is a public office, to which its members are

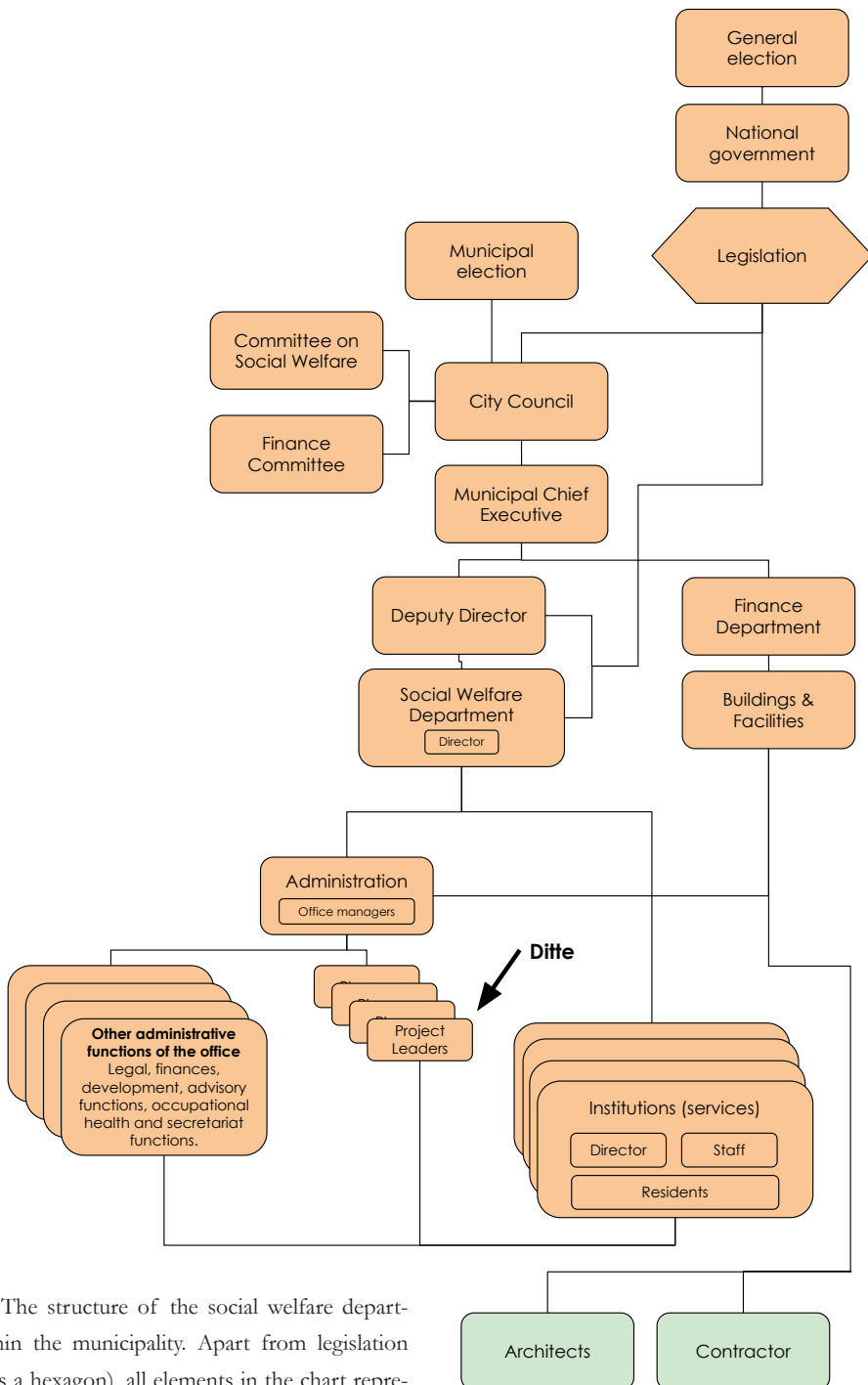


Figure 14. The structure of the social welfare department within the municipality. Apart from legislation (marked as a hexagon), all elements in the chart represent organisational entities, which include people. The chart seeks to illustrate the different entities formally connected with Ditte's work, but the size of the squares does not illustrate the relative size or complexity of the entities they represent. Also, only some of the entities include specific staff groups or formal roles.

elected by the people living within the municipal boundaries; the leader of the council is the mayor.

Municipal chief executive and deputy directors

Right under the political level we find two layers of managers: the chief executive, with overall responsibility for the entire organisation, and a number of deputy directors, who are in charge of different areas in the municipality. I have here included only the director responsible for the social welfare department.

Social welfare department

This department is at the bottom of the vertical differentiation illustrated in the chart, from the perspective of the political level of both the state and the city council. The department has director who is responsible for both of its two parts. One part is made up of the specialised institutions, which have their own local directors, staff, and a number of residents who are the recipients of the services they offer. The other part is the administration, which offers a number of centrally placed, specialised functions to the institutions and handles the connection with the political level. This is where Ditte works as one of the project managers. There are a number of other functions or horizontal differentiations in this office (e.g. legal services, finances, and development), which I have combined into one box on the chart for purposes of clarity. The administration has two office managers, though Ditte primarily refers to only one of them (Søren). The social welfare office (and Ditte, as part of it) can be seen as a form of *specialised and knowledgeable intermediary* between the institutions carrying out the work with the citizens in need, and the politicians making decisions about the general area of social welfare, which the institutions are part of. The social welfare office connects the politicians with the institutions, for example by gathering and synthesising information about the work going on in the institutions for the politicians. They connect the institutions with the politicians when conveying wishes from the institutions back up to the politicians in the form of motions. This is the integrating function, I argue, that they seem to have in the municipality.

Buildings and facilities

Buildings and facilities is the office with overall responsibility for and technical knowledge of the building process. Where the social welfare department represents the specific knowledge and wishes from their specialised institutions and from the city council, the building office owns the projects and handles contact with the external architects and contractors designing and constructing the buildings.

As can be seen in the chart, buildings and facilities belongs to a different vertically differentiated hierarchy in the organisation than the social welfare department. Buildings and facilities is placed under the finance department, which reports directly to the municipal chief executive, whereas social welfare reports to a deputy director responsible for this area. In other words, one of these offices is not in a position of authority over the other; the line connecting the two across the chart thus illustrates horizontal differentiation between them.

Architects and Contractors

Finally, the architects and contractors are external entities (marked in green) that have won the task of designing and building something for the municipality through an open bidding process. They have the job of carrying out what was described in the contract, and as questions arise during the building process, they are in contact with buildings and facilities, the social welfare department, and the specialised institutions. They report to buildings and facilities, which has the primary function of customer.

The top-down perspective as a continuum

The chart is, as mentioned, based on the top-down perspective and principle of hierarchy, meaning that the decision-making power is highest at the top of chart and lowest at the bottom. If we continue this line of thinking, we could seek to identify some entities as the owners or controllers of the organisation and others as the workers, being the objects of this control.

One possibility is that as part of the public sector, all Danish citizens are the owners of the social welfare department, and the government and city council are the more direct controllers. This perspective indicates that the department is ultimately owned by the people it exists to serve. In contrast with the library, however, the social welfare office does not offer its services to the entire population, but only to the mentally or physically disabled people specified in the Consolidation Act on Social Services (The Danish Ministry of Children and Social Affairs, 2018), making the group of people benefiting directly from its services smaller. However, the department is still ultimately dependent on the population and elected politicians supporting its work and considering it worthwhile.

As the supreme authority in the municipality, the city council and political committees can be seen as the controllers of this organisation. This political level has the ultimate responsibility for everything in the municipality, including the social welfare department. In other words, these controllers are ultimately responsible for ensuring that the goals of the organisation are met and that it complies with the law defining its overall tasks.

In other words, the Danish population is the owner, and the department is controlled by the city council and, in a broader sense, by the government. There are, however, a number of organisational entities between the city council and Ditte's position (the organisation is vertically and horizontally differentiated); thus we need more specificity and nuance in the distinction between controllers and workers. Below, the organisation is represented from a top-down perspective, placed on a continuum with managers or owners at the top and workers as the objects of management.

Owners/controllers

1. National government
2. City council
3. Committee on social welfare and finance committee
4. Municipal chief executive and deputy director
5. Leadership of social welfare department
6. Leadership of administration
7. Project leaders and other staff functions in the administration

Workers, the ones being managed and controlled

In this top-down perspective, there are six entities between Ditte, as the object of management, and the city council, as the top controller in the organisation.

- The national government stipulates that by law specialised services must be offered to citizens with special needs, and, through this legislation, manages the city council.
- The city council sets the overall direction in the municipality and manages the political committees, in the sense that everything the committees do must be passed by or acceptable to the city council.
- The committee on social welfare and the finance committee are politically in charge of the social welfare department and its budget (decisions are, however, still made by the city council).
- The municipal chief executive and the group managing director are both part of the board of directors, with the latter being specifically in charge of the social welfare department. They make up the top admini-

strative management of the organisation.

- The social welfare department has its own director.
- Part of the department is the administration, where Ditte works as a project leader. There are two office managers within this entity.

At the same time, Ditte's work seems influenced by 1) what the institutions say they need, 2) the way buildings and facilities handles the building process, and 3) the way architects and contractors go about fulfilling the building requirements. Ditte seems dependent on a good working relationship with the project leaders from buildings and facilities, perhaps also because the two entities do not share immediate managers. So, while the top-down perspective points us towards the chain of command, a lot of Ditte's work seems to be based on creating horizontal integration between differentiated entities within and outside of the organisation.

Ditte's perspective: The Social welfare department as part of the public sector

There are a number of entities above Ditte in the municipality, and I wanted to understand which of these she herself experiences as influencing her work. I asked, and Ditte started by explaining that she, on the one hand, experiences a very direct influence from the political top of the organisation, as a number of aspects of the building projects are sent to the city council for approval. In principle the city council can reject the motions they are asked to consider, and while this does happen, the motions are often passed, as they would likely otherwise not have made it to the city council in the first place. Ditte says that in this sense the city council has a very direct influence on her work – both on the bigger decisions and on the more detailed questions of e.g. how many places a new institution is to offer to citizens (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 01:24:23-01:25:59). Ditte continues by explaining how the decision-making process for the number of places might happen, with the social welfare department first making a suggestion to the city council:

'We [the social welfare department] suggest that we build this, and that it will have 40 places.' That isn't the kind of thing they will object to, because that would be weird – in the sense of, how on earth are they to know that 30 places would be better? While you do need to substantiate a suggestion like that with something – in principle they could still say, 'Well, we don't think so; your analysis seems unsound and we think there should be 30 places, because we dare not agree to more' – in principle, they could easily

say that.

Dennis: Yeah, they have that option on account of being politicians?

Ditte: Yes, exactly right, that's the point. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 01:26:00-01:26:30)

Ditte seems to be saying that the city council approves both big questions, such as the decision to build a new building for an institution, and smaller or more specific questions, such as how many places an institution should have; thus they have substantial influence on her work. But at the same time, she mentions that it would likely be difficult for the city council members to know, for example, exactly how many places it would make sense to offer in a specialised institution, and therefore they will often approve the number suggested to them. I ask her how the decision on this number (again as an example of a specific decision) is then made, and which organisational entities are involved in this:

Dennis: How far do we need to go down, before there will begin to be more direct influence or knowledge – taking positions on these things? Where does that number originate, for example? The 30 places?

Ditte: That would be on the level of the two office managers and the department director, I think. ... [T]here is a pretty big gap between what ... the department basically does and then before something is passed on to the political level. ... If you have cases that turn out to be more – to be a little more significant, then you risk that your deputy director will be involved ... but it doesn't happen very often. ... If we take this with the number [of places], then one would say, 'We need to replace an institution. It has this and this many places. Ditte, you try, together with finances, to make an analysis of some form looking at ... what the future will look like.' And then we suggest a number – which the institution then of course also has influence on, and which would then be approved by our office managers ... what they then receive at the political level, that would then be this analysis. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 01:29:32-01:32:28)

It seems that the number that is ultimately sent to the politicians is set and discussed by people in the administration horizontally, in dialogue with the institution, and then the analysis leading to the number is approved by one or both of the office managers vertically. Although it does happen, most of the decisions made in the department are seemingly not challenged by the higher entities in the organisation. I would argue this indicates that Ditte and her colleagues enjoy

a certain level of trust in their ability to make good decisions for the municipality in their own area.

In contrast with Dorte in the library, it also seems that Ditte knows a lot about the upper layers of her organisation, even though they do not necessarily affect the specifics of her work on an everyday basis. I would argue this could be because part of Ditte's job is to serve these entities, as well, and because a lot of the work she does must be approved at the top political level.

How is Ditte's work organised, and where do tasks come from?

Where do Ditte's tasks come from? How does she know what to do on any given day? Several times during observations she explains elements of this to me:

Ditte begins her day with e-mails and also checks her calendar and her big task list. She then chooses what she will be doing today. (field note 1A, October 11, 16)

Although she usually checks it in the morning, Ditte's inbox will not usually have a lot of new e-mail in it. The only e-mails likely to be there are from people who started work earlier than her that same day.

Ditte doesn't have that many e-mails in her inbox when she starts work in the morning, because not that many people will send e-mails after working hours (15:30). (field note 4A, October 11, 16)

She also talks about the big task list she consults to find out what to do:

She shows me a four-to-five-page-long document, which she uses to co-ordinate her work. There are some personal development points, a to-do list for the day, and then a fairly long list of things that are ongoing. Some points are status and others are tasks to be resolved. She has had this document since she started working in the municipality. (field note 17A, October 10, 16)

A few weeks later we talk a little more about how she organises her work, and I make the following field note:

She tends to plan a few days ahead, e.g. based on who she is having meetings with, which then require preparation. Then there are tasks that she will push for one reason or another. E.g. talking with Jørgen, whom she has now booked a meeting with Monday, because she didn't get around to talking with him. This

way, she is now compelled to handle that task. She also says that there are tasks she will not be in the mood for, which are then pushed in favour of something else. Today she is doing record-keeping, since all the other things have been taken care of. (field note 6A, October 28, 16)

The way Ditte structures her work seems *task-oriented*. It seems that she figures out which tasks to work on based on the timing of the tasks (e.g. a meeting or a deadline) combined with a look at her big task list to see what she thinks it is necessary to do now, while also considering what she feels like doing, to a certain extent. Ditte seemingly also, to a large degree, organises the details of her own work process. I ask about this during an interview:

Dennis: How much influence do you actually have there? Versus someone deciding over you?

Ditte: Basically, I think I have quite a lot of influence. ... I really have a lot of influence on the distribution and handling of the tasks – my own working day I for sure have a lot of influence on – and also largely, I think, on the content of the things I do. ... [I]f you are the one writing the memo, then for very good reasons you have a lot of influence on it. The influence I don't have, that has to do with the fact that I too rarely have a professional insight into anything, really. So a lot of what I do is then to gather from others and then put it together into something that can be passed on in the system and then be approved or not approved. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 02:02:13-02:04:06)

Ditte seems to experience a lot of discretion in her working life. At the same time, she seemingly distinguishes between 1) feeling that she is able to make her own decisions about the way she organises her own working day and how she chooses to complete the tasks before her and 2) having very little influence over the professional insight it is oftentimes her job to involve in making a decision or that needs to be conveyed to someone.

At the same time, it seems that most of the tasks Ditte does come from something external to herself. As exemplified in the above descriptions of Ditte's work, it seems she will respond to requests coming from a number of different entities within the organisation:

- City council
- Political committees
- Social welfare department director or office managers inside the admi-

nistration

- Other function inside the social welfare department (horizontally between colleagues)
- Institutions
- Buildings and facilities
- Architects and contractors (via buildings and facilities)
- National government (change in law)

From this perspective, the way Ditte is then controlled as a human factor – the way she knows what to do – seems often to be based on her responding to requests from colleagues, managers, and other entities in the organisation. The requests come to her both horizontally and vertically, and they are often approved by a vertically differentiated entity above Ditte in the hierarchy.

Where the above list focuses on specific requests, the timelines she draws up for each building project, for example, also seem to be based on Ditte's own knowledge of the conditions for construction of new buildings for existing institutions. When she reminds the institution to notify its staff of moving to a new building, this does not seem to be the result of a request from someone else; rather, Ditte takes the initiative to do this task based on her own judgment that it is a necessary thing to do.

Adjusting the number of tasks

Where the above focuses on where Ditte's tasks come from and how she knows what to do, it perhaps does not tell us a lot about the amount of work Ditte does. She explains that the office manager she primarily reports to (Søren) has the formal capacity to adjust the number of tasks she has if she has too many. I ask her if this is something she in practice talks with him about from time to time. She answers:

Ditte: It is primarily when there is too much – and I haven't actually done it that much – because it is part of our common meetings among the project leaders. ... The starting point is that then you are saying, 'Well now, Kathrine is about to start doing this strategy work; she will have too much on her plate ... is there someone else who could find the time to take over something?' And other than that, it would be, if you yourself were sitting with something outside [these meetings] and felt acutely under pressure ... then the idea is that then you of course should go to Søren and say, 'Søren, now I need you to prioritise what I will be doing'. (Ditte, 2017e,

pts. 01:15:02-01:17:11)

The project leaders in the department have common meetings where they adjust the number of tasks they have between each other, and it seems that Ditte primarily uses these meetings to move up or down the number of tasks she performs, although it has happened that she has gone directly to Søren. Søren will also attend some of these common meetings and is thereby able to also take part in the division of tasks. In other words, it seems that taking on tasks or being relieved from them is something that is done in a form of negotiation horizontally with other project leaders and vertically with Søren, the office manager.

Summary

If we go back to Jaffee's tension 1 – controlling the human factor – and look at Ditte's job in the municipality, I would argue that the way she is controlled is quite complex, in that 1) the control does not consistently come from a top-down perspective, but rather from a number of different entities in the municipality, and 2) to a large extent Ditte is not controlled as such, but rather seems to feel responsible herself for making sure she has done her job properly and completed certain tasks. Ditte seems to be task-oriented in parts of her job. In terms of tension 2, Ditte's job as an *intermediary* seems to be to create integration among a number of differentiated organisational entities.

- Ditte experiences a lot of discretion in how she organises her everyday work, in the way she completes specific tasks, and in the content e.g. of memos she is writing.
- Ditte does not, however, consider herself an expert on the subject matter of the social welfare department, but rather sees herself as someone collecting information or knowledge from others and passing it on in a format and with a focus she deems suitable.
- Ditte manages her own working day using a long document with concrete tasks and overall statuses of things she considers herself responsible for.
- Ditte seems to use meetings with other people or deadlines as guides for what to do next; as she wants to be prepared when meeting other people and she wants to meet deadlines, this preference controls her actions.
- Legislation, e.g. the law requiring that residents and staff are given notice before being moved to a new building, also controls Ditte's work,

as the municipality must comply with these regulations, and she considers herself responsible for making sure this happens.

- A number of tasks are requests from others, and in these cases, the person or entity making the request is in a sense controlling Ditte, as they are defining what she will be working on.
- The number and nature of the tasks Ditte has are negotiated with the other project managers, as well as with Søren, her office manager.

ANALYSIS OF SITUATIONAL LEVEL: DITTE

Volunteer work

Ditte's volunteer third-sector work: Scouting

Ditte is a Danish woman in her early thirties. She has been a scout for a little over 20 years and is a member of the national association the YMCA-Scouts in Denmark.² Ditte became a scout when she was around seven years old and remained a member of the same local group until she moved to her current city and joined the local group there, about five years ago (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:50:31-00:51:40). She has been a leader for approximately 15 years in total (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 02:13:52-02:14:41).

The YMCA-Scouts in Denmark

The YMCA-Scouts association is a nationwide Danish third-sector association with approximately 29,000 members and 500 local groups spread across the country ("Fakta," 2018). The association has national, regional, and local levels, and almost all scouts in the association are members of it through their membership in a local group.

Ditte's scout work primarily takes place within the context of a local scout group

2 There are certain similarities between the volunteer scout work Ditte and Dorthe do. To avoid repetition, some similar elements are only briefly described in this part, as the reader will already be familiar with these from the description of Dorthe's volunteer work.

called the Brown Wolves. Like Dorthé's local group, they organise weekly evening activities and a number of camps for children and young people in the community, and they also have participating members up to the approximate age of 18, before they usually become leaders (active members). The Brown Wolves local group consists of approximately 100 members, and they are divided into five different age groups (called *units*), which meet separate from each other.

Uniforms, scarfs, and badges

Like the DDS scouts, the YMCA-Scouts also wear uniforms and scarfs when they attend their scout meetings and activities. They also wear badges on their uniforms, which signal that the person wearing it has learned something, experienced something, or attended a specific scout event.

Overview

Ditte's scout work primarily consists of two parts: being a *unit leader for the troop scouts* and participating in *clan* meetings

As *unit leader for the troop scouts*, Ditte is responsible for the weekly meetings for scouts in the sixth grade through approximately age 18. She holds this responsibility together with another leader called Ane, who has the title of *unit assistant for the troop scouts*. Another part of this task is to organise campouts over a weekend or a full week during summer.

As a *participating member in the rover unit (often called the clan)*, she participates in bi-weekly meetings with other adult scouts in the local group. Scouts can join the clan at 17, but currently their youngest member is 25 years old (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:40:54-00:41:18). As part of the clan, Ditte also takes part in planning and organising the annual Christmas Camp for the entire local group, together with Ane and other adult scouts in the clan.

Formal agreements

In contrast to her paid work, Ditte's work as a scout is not regulated by a requirement to be present for a specific number of hours each week. Ditte says that in her current local group, you become a leader by simply showing up at a leaders' meeting and saying you would like to become one. Other than that, there is no written agreement or employment contract stipulating that she agrees to be a leader. Every other year, however, she, along with all other leaders, must agree that a *statement of no previous convictions with respect to children* (Borneattest) be obtained through a police background check (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:03:05-00:04:25). Ditte does not receive any payment for her scout work, but her expenses, such as food during a campout, are covered.

Ditte's way into the local group

Before we begin looking more closely at what Ditte does as a scout and why, let's first take a look at how Ditte became a member of her current local group:

Ditte: When I moved here it was – I didn't really know anyone, and so the most logical thing to do is to go down to the nearest scout group and say, 'Could you use a leader?' And you can always use a leader. Always. ... [A]nd then it was also because they had that clan ... people your own age – then there are some people who want to get together and do fun things. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:50:31-00:51:03)

When Ditte moved away from where she grew up to her current location, she seemingly used the scout group as way to meet people in this new area. The choice to join the local group seems driven not only by a desire to do scout work, but also by a desire to get to know some new people.

How and why: The tasks and situations in the work

Unit leader for the troop scouts

In the Brown Wolves local group there are four different evening meetings every week, for four different age groups, where different leaders organise different activities for the participating members of the local group.

Ditte is one of two leaders for two age groups put together into one unit:

Ditte: I have both the troop scouts and the senior scouts. They are actually combined because that is often done, because you don't have that many leaders. So, because that is manageable, when it is the oldest age group. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:40:54-00:41:19)

Ditte seems to feel a form of ownership over these age groups, as she uses the phrase, 'they are mine, actually' (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:40:20-00:40:49), when explaining her role in relation to them. Although they are comprised of two units, going forward I will refer to them only as the troop scouts.

As a leader of the troops scouts unit, Ditte is one of two people who is responsible for and attends the troop scout meetings, which take place every Tuesday evening. Together with Ane, it is her job to make sure there is an activity every week, i.e. that the participating members have something to do when they show up each week. There are around 15 participating young people in the unit. Some

are new, as they have just become old enough, and others have been part of the unit for a number of years now and are around 18 years old.

Ditte is the unit leader

Ditte has the formal position of being the *unit leader*, while Ane, the other leader for the troop scouts, is the *unit assistant* – but Ditte says about these formal positions:

Ditte: ... [T]hat is rarely made anything special out of ... it kind of comes down to whose name is on the contact sheet, you see; it is something like that. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:31:10-00:31:48)

On paper, there seem to be two differentiated formalised positions, where one has some vertical authority over the other. However, in practice Ditte does not seem to distinguish between the positions she and Ane hold as leaders of the troop scout unit.

Planning

The troop scout unit consist of some of the older scouts, so Ditte and Ane let them organise some of their activities themselves. Ditte explains that she and Ane will start with one planning meeting, where they decide on the basic outline of how they think the programme should run for the coming season, and where they start discussing which patrols to form. This is then followed by asking the troop scouts what they would like to do. Their ideas are collected and prioritised based on which receives most votes among the scouts (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:33:14-00:35:28). Ane and Ditte then have a second meeting:

Ditte: We are harsh and unfair, as I usually call it – we will cross out anything we don't think is a good idea and put the rest on [the programme]. And they actually plan a lot themselves. They are always given two patrol meetings ... which they are then to plan. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:33:14-00:35:28)

The scouts are involved in deciding on the content of their meetings; however, Ditte and Ane seemingly retain a right to veto ideas they don't consider feasible. In other words, they seem to place themselves in roles of authority over the participating scouts in terms of the content of the programme. As we shall see, however, the patrol meetings deviate from this arrangement.

Patrols

The patrol system is also used in the YMCA-Scouts. Ditte and Ane divide the troop scouts into patrols at the beginning of the season based on a discussion of who would be able to be patrol leader and patrol assistant, and who functions

well socially with each other (Ditte, 2017a, pts. 00:06:58-00:28:00). The patrols will usually remain the same throughout the season (one year). Ditte explains about the patrols:

Ditte: It works this way, that there is a patrol leader and a patrol assistant in each patrol. ... As a rule, a patrol should be somewhere between four and eight [people]. With us, it primarily works this way, that those are always the teams you are in – almost. As a starting point, if something is to be done, well then you do that in your patrol. Competitions, tasks of any nature. It is also the case that with these patrol meetings, as a starting point, it is the patrol leader and patrol assistant who have the primary responsibility of making sure something is planned. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:36:21-00:39:09)

The patrols seem to be used both as entities responsible for organising activities on their own, and as groups used when participating in activities or competitions organised by Ditte and Ane. The troop scouts seem to be in part participating members and in part active members of the local group, as they both organise and participate in activities. Although Ditte and Ane are responsible for the troop scouts and seem to have vertically differentiated authority over them, the task of organising the weekly activities is divided between them in a more horizontal way.

Example of programme points from weekly meetings

In table 19, a number of examples of activities are listed. As can be seen, they are a combination of activities organised by Ditte and Ane, as the leaders of the unit, and those organised by the participating scouts themselves, under the supervision of Ditte and Ane.

Common elements – Traditional aspects

Across the specific content or theme of a given activity, it seems that every weekly meeting starts the same way. One example of this comes from the Halloween-themed activity. Ditte was standing outside a local church near the scout hut where the activity would be taking place. The participating scouts were standing around talking when Ditte said to them:

Ditte: Yes. Would you join us in a circle over here? Then that's what we will be doing ... Ane has gone into prep mode, so we will just start. Yep. (Ditte, 2017b, pts. 00:05:21-00:05:27)

Without further explanation, the scouts then gathered around in a circle and started singing:

The group sings: Yes, we are Danish scouts / and the promise which was given / a spring day impetuous and free / is on our foreheads written / for God, King, and Country/ wherever life may place you / be prepared when it counts/ with heart, mind and hand.

Be prepared! Hear the hie of the storm / which through the world strides / keep tight your string / keep bright your arrow / now it is times of unrest / now we tie our band of brotherhood / in friendship and in merriment / no we will forge it together / around all of Denmark's land. (Ditte, 2017b, pts. 00:05:27-00:06:29)

Activity	Explanation
Starting up and planning ahead	The first meeting of the season. Playing getting-to-know-each-other games outside on the grass and talking about which badges the participating scouts would like to earn during the season (audio field note 00:04:15-00:06:15, August 23, 17).
Patrol formation	The participating scouts are told which patrols Ditte and Ane have placed them in. They are tasked with coming up with the patrol's distinctive features: a patrol name, something to decorate their name tags, and a patrol yell (audio field note 00:12:48-00:14:20, August 30, 17).
Badge meeting: We Dare – Dressing up	As part of earning the badge 'We Dare' ("Vi tør," 2018), the scouts are instructed to put on dressing-up clothes, to put make-up on each other, and then to perform a cat-walk in front of the group. The meeting finished with talk about breaking (personal) boundaries (audio field note 00:01:21-00:02:09 September 20, 17).
Badge meeting: We Dare – Halloween	As part of earning the badge 'We Dare' ("Vi tør," 2018), the scouts are sent on a Halloween-themed hike, where each station is manned by a monster (dressed-up leader) in need of help (Ditte, 2017b).
Badge meeting: We Dare – Refugee theme	As part of earning the badge 'We Dare' ("Vi tør," 2018), the scouts engage in a form of role play where they are asked to imagine they are now in Syria, where they wish to seek asylum. The activity seemed focused on experiencing some of the feelings associated with being a refugee (audio field note 00:00:37-00:02:15 October 11, 17).
Hike using Woop app	A so-called X-meeting organised by participating scouts across patrols. Ditte started the meeting and then the scouts who planned the meeting took over. The activity was a hike in the city guided by the phone app Woop (Ditte, 2017d, pts. 00:06:00-00:06:40).
Patrol meetings	Each of the two patrols is given the responsibility of organising two meetings for their fellow scouts (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:35:28-00:36:08).
X-meetings	These meetings are also organised by participating scouts, but these can be organised by scouts across patrols (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:35:28-00:36:08).

Table 19. Examples of activities the troop unit does during their weekly meetings. The last three meetings in the table are organised by the participating scouts, and the rest by Ditte and Ane.

I have been told that this song has been used in the association since 1923,³ when it first appeared in the scout songbook. The language used seems very traditional, e.g. with its references to *being prepared for God, King, and Country* and to *forging ties of brotherhood*. The song is accompanied by a few actions. The scouts stand in a circle when singing, and on the line *now we tie*, the group joins hands; at *now we will forge*, they move their joined hands up and down and continue doing this until the end of the song.

This ritualised beginning to every activity is one way Ditte's volunteer work seems very easily distinguishable from her paid work. Forming a circle while holding hands and singing a song with such high-flown wording (*Be prepared! Hear the hie of the storm*) is unlike anything Ditte does or experiences in the municipality. Although a working day at the office also seems to begin in roughly the same way every day, with Ditte chatting a bit with Ulla (field note 1A, October 28, 16; 1A, November 9, 16; 5A November 3, 16), there is no singing or hand-holding involved.

I interpret this way of beginning the scout meeting as a form of formalised ritual or tradition. It seems to be something they always do, something the participating scouts are used to doing. As I have observed a number of these rituals (in addition to the one for beginning a meeting), I ask Ditte about the purpose of these specific ways of doing things. She explains that some of these have a certain practical purpose. An example: when the scouts are asked, without any further explanation, to *stand in their patrols*, they form a line with the patrol leader in front, the patrol assistant in the back, and the remaining patrol members standing in line between them, all with their eyes looking forward (Ditte, 2017c, pts. 00:08:40-00:09:30). Additionally, they will sometimes *report ready*, with the patrol leader saluting the person she is reporting the patrol ready to (audio field note 00:14:19-00:15:19, August 30, 17). In an interview, Ditte explains that this has the benefit of making sure they have everyone's attention, and for this reason it is a practical way of beginning an activity (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 01:08:07-01:09:12). I ask her if these practical benefits could be not be achieved without these traditional elements:

Dennis: But if I were to provoke a bit, I would say, 'Well yeah, but couldn't you just do that without saluting and lining up and all that?'

Ditte: Yeah, you could ... and I guess I don't always entirely know why that is done.

3 I have not been able to confirm this with a written source, however.

Dennis: But you haven't stopped doing it?

Ditte: No. ... [T]hose more traditional things and why you then [do those] – that is actually a really good question. And it just comes out of being something you did when you were a young scout yourself, and then you keep doing it, because there somehow just is something to it. (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 01:07:52-01:09:12)

Ditte seems to be saying that while she can see practical benefits in some of these rituals and traditions, there are still elements she primarily does because she experienced them herself when she was a young participating scout. She finished by saying there is *something to that*, which I interpret as Ditte seeing a value in doing these activities. She does not know exactly what it is, but it is seemingly not directly related to derived benefits from doing a form of ritual or following a tradition.

Neither the traditional or ritual elements of how a meeting is started, nor the somewhat high-flown and traditional language of the song marking the beginning of the meeting, seem to be found in Ditte's paid job. As just one example showing the contrast, a meeting Ditte has with two colleagues begins with five minutes of computer problems, during which the meeting participants discuss whether everyone signed up for the office Christmas party, after which the computer is ready and they go straight to talking about their agenda for the meeting (Ditte, 2016a, pts. 01:29:54-01:32:00). When the scout leaders have leaders' meetings in Ditte's local group, they also sing the song and hold hands as described above – so this ritual seems not to be limited to when participating members are involved (field note 8A, November 10, 16). Secondly, Ditte seems to say that part of the reason for doing these traditions is that she also did them when she was a young participating scout.

Again, if we compare this with her paid work, Ditte was never a young project leader in a municipality, so even if there were traditions of starting meetings in certain ways in the social welfare department, this is not something Ditte would have grown up doing. Summing up, the traditional rituals do not seem to be present in Ditte's paid work, nor is there a sense of growing up in the organisation, which could have potentially taught Ditte these rituals had they been present.

Other elements – Religious aspects

Another aspect that seems common to most of the meetings has to do with religion. The YMCA-Scouts is, as written in the organisation's by-laws (The YMCA-Scouts in Denmark, 2016) – a Christian organisation. Just as the weekly meeting begins the same way every time, it also seems to end the same way. In

the example here, led by Ane:⁴

Ane: Let's all fold our hands and take off beanies and other headgear.
And –

The group: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

The group sings: Dear father in the high heavens / hear the calm prayer of my heart / where I am in the concourse of the world / let me go like your son / let me live in your honour / honour Denmark, father and mother / be of use to other people / obey the words of the scout law. (Ditte, 2017d, pts. 01:42:40-01:43:39)

The song the group sings to conclude was originally written for the Norwegian scouts in 1911 (Norsk Speidergutt-Forbund, 1911; “Speiderbønnen - Speiderhistorisk leksikon,” n.d.), and has seemingly also been in use by the YMCA-Scouts for many years now.

What we are seeing here I interpret as ritual elements similar to the beginning of the meeting, but with the difference that these are explicitly Christian, beginning with the Lord's Prayer and ending with a song that also seems to be a prayer (*hear the calm prayer of my heart*). I ask Ditte about her thoughts on this religious aspect of the scout work:

Dennis: The YMCA-Scouts are a Christian organisation?

Ditte: Yes.

Dennis: And you also have the Lord's Prayer every time. On the Christmas campout there were also prayers. What meaning does this hold for you? I mean in your scout work? What role does this play?

Ditte: I don't think it plays that much of a role. The way I see it, it is more of a tradition thing than it is a faith thing. It is like a really classical cultural Christian thing. Yeah. (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 00:46:21-00:47:16)

Ditte seems to uphold the prayer and song in the meetings, but she says that this to her has more to do with maintaining a tradition than about faith as such. The fact that the organisation practices Christian prayers and teaches the gospel

4 Ditte will often do these as well.

seemingly does not hold a special meaning for Ditte beyond that of other rituals and traditions. Although seems to be little more to Ditte than a tradition she maintains, it is another way this work does differ from her paid work, where no religion is practiced in the workplace, let alone any common prayers or teaching of the gospel.

Manifesting history

In Ditte's local group, there seem to be a lot of historical artefacts hanging on the walls and from the ceiling. I make the following field notes in the scout hut and the municipality, where I can't help but compare the two. First from the scout hut:

The room we are in is filled with wooden structures, old wood carvings, a hat from Mongolia (I think they had a project there) and a lot of old memories and trophies. (field note 6A, November 11, 16)

The group's history seems to be concretely represented in the form of artefacts. They don't have those at the paid job in the same way. Things from 10 years ago aren't hanging on the walls in the municipality. (field note 6B, November 11, 16)

As I am later following Ditte at her paid work, I note more about this contrast:

[T]here is a little art inside the office, and other than that they have posters about the current activities hanging out in the hallway, and other places there are roll-ups banners about current efforts – e.g. seemingly for a current effort to have shorter meetings and the like (field note 11B, November 30, 16)

The scout hut also has two fairly large portraits of Baden-Powell, the founder of the scout movement, hanging on their walls, along with materials from the fundraising drive for building the scout hut (more than 40 years ago). I ask Ditte if these historical artefacts are important to her. She answers that on the one hand, some of these things are just there because no one has bothered to take them down again, and that she doesn't really notice them (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 01:12:53-01:14:02), but on the other hand, they do mean something to her:

[W]hy is it that you have a yell and a name and have distinctive marks for the patrol? ... [T]hat is a community thing, and something that reaches further back – the group also has a history, and there are many people who have been in the group, and somebody's father and somebody's mother have been there themselves and been scouts and so on. So there is some-

thing to it – somehow something cool about the fact that it is not so historyless. (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 01:14:02-01:15:08)

Ditte seems to emphasise that the traditional aspects of giving a patrol distinctive marks has to do with both creating a feeling of community in the patrol and with simply carrying on a tradition, just as can be said about the other historical things surrounding the scout work.

I then ask her how she thinks this compares with her paid work, and if she could imagine having 40-year-old materials hanging on the walls there. She says:

Ditte: ... [S]o the reason you probably wouldn't do it so much ... it isn't the same there – e.g. the community around a clan – you don't have that there. I think it is more a thing of having a task, finishing a task, and then celebrating it, and then you have moved on. So actually that is just that. (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 01:16:16-01:17:46)

Ditte seems to look at her paid work in a way that I interpret as less embedded in history or tradition. First, in the sense that history isn't manifested or valued the same way in the municipality as in the scout association. At her paid job, you *move on* after finishing something. Secondly, Ditte seems to connect the historical artefacts and traditional rituals with a feeling of community or mutual connection she finds in the scout clan. And she says there isn't the same feeling of community at her paid job.

Leaders' meetings and group supervisory board meetings

The leaders of the local group are the ones organising the weekly activities and camps for the participating members. They also attend leaders' meetings and group supervisory board meetings, alternating between a leaders' meeting and a group supervisory board meeting every second month. Ditte will usually attend all leaders' meetings, while she and Ane have split the board meetings between them, so Ditte only participates in every second one of these. Ditte explains the basic difference this way:

Ditte: [A]ll the children, they have separate groups of leaders, and it is pretty logical that the leaders have meetings where they talk about how things will be done and what they will do with the Christmas camp – who will plan that. And the group supervisory board is a bit more separated, because it is the board where the parents take part, and they decide about the finances, and they are actually to make sure the leaders are feeling good, and they are in charge of PR, and so they have a presence a bit more

in the background. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:43:33-00:45:24)

The role of the leaders' meeting, and in particular the group supervisory board, will be discussed further when looking at the organisational structure of Ditte's local group.

Participating member in the clan (rover unit)

The rover unit differs from the other units in the local group in that it consists of adult scouts who meet Monday evening every second week. I ask Ditte what they do when they have their clan meetings. She says:

Ditte: It varies a lot. It is everything from walking, so going out into the woods, to painting eggs at Easter because someone had come up with the idea that that could be fun ... it really really differs a lot. ... For the most part it will be having two hours where we are enjoying ourselves doing something we think could be fun to do (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 02:14:51-02:17:00)

Every six months the clan has a weekend called the Clan Moot, which is where the meetings are planned for the next six months. The unit does have a unit leader and unit assistant, but the responsibility for organising the meetings is shared by everyone. During the Clan Moot weekend, each coming weekly meeting is given a theme, and two people are assigned to each, making it their responsibility to have an activity ready when their turn comes (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:29:15-00:31:27).

I ask Ditte about what participating in the clan means to her:

Dennis: What does that part of the scout life mean to you? That there also is this clan, which you are a part of?

Ditte: It actually means quite a bit. I actually chose to start in this local group based on them having a clan, because we didn't really have that in my old group ... I was thinking it would be quite fun to try and be part of a real clan ... it is very much for the friendly atmosphere and because you are talking with people about this and that and have these people fairly of the same age as yourself to meet with.

Dennis: It is completely different from the troop meetings?

Ditte: Yes. Well it can actually be some of the same things ... we have e.g. made boiled sweets – and you could easily have done that with the troop as well ... but it is completely different because you aren't the person in charge of the activity ... so it is much more relaxed. It is the difference between coming to do something for the scouts or if you are really just coming because you yourself like it there. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 02:17:00-02:19:28)

Ditte seems to consider this part of her scout work different from being a leader in the sense

that it is more relaxed and sociable, and that she does this more for her own benefit, in contrast with being a leader, which she sees as also doing something for someone else.

Summing up Ditte's tasks as a scout

Based on (video and participant) observation, combined with interviews, I have collected and categorised the different types of tasks Ditte seems to work on in Table 20.

Summary of tasks and situations

Ditte's task as a scout leader is, among other things, to make sure there are activities for the troop scouts unit when they meet every week; she shares this responsibility with Ane, who is also a leader for this unit.

The task of planning and organising the activities is shared (differentiated) between Ditte and Ane, as the leaders, and the participating scouts and their patrols, as the other organisers. Ditte considers herself and Ane as having a position of authority over the participating scouts, both in terms of what kinds of activities they will be organising and in terms of leading the meetings, or at least starting them off. Ditte also helps the patrols work well together and intervenes if someone is misbehaving.

When organising one of the weekly meetings, Ditte handles most tasks herself. She does not really seem to be given tasks by others, nor does she direct others to do things. Some meetings she will plan together with Ane, in which case they divide the tasks between them, but there does not seem to be any vertical authority involved when it comes to the tasks Ditte does. Ditte also handles an activity all the way through planning, carrying out, and tidying up (asking others to help with this), and so there does not seem to be any differentiation of tasks in the unit, where Ditte is only doing certain parts of the overall task of organising activities.

The leaders of all the units have joint meetings where they co-ordinate and organise common events, such as the local group's annual Christmas camp. These meetings seem based on the same principle, where no one has formal vertical authority over others, but rather they negotiate who will do what.

Ditte's tasks as a scout

Category	Type	Example/reference
Planning and preparation	Preparing activities for the weekly meetings with the troop scouts and for the clan	A badge meeting focusing on the children experiencing being a refugee seemed primarily thought out and prepared by Ditte (audio field note 00:00:37-00:02:15 October 11, 17)
	Overall planning of the programme for the coming season's weekly meetings	Ditte has two planning meetings with Ane where they incorporate the ideas from the participating scouts into the programme and form patrols (Ditte, 2017a)
	Organising camps and other activities involving the local groups' other units and their leaders. Involves making sure everything needed will be taken care of – often partially through delegating tasks to the other leaders.	As part of the clan, Ditte and Ane seem to be in charge of organising the annual Christmas camp. At a leaders' meeting they present a draft programme for the weekend and divide tasks among the leaders there (field note 10A, October 11, 16).
	Attending leaders' meetings	(Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:43:33-00:45:24)
	Attending board meetings	(Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:43:33-00:45:24)
Execution	Running weekly meetings for troop scouts and in the clan	See examples in table 19
	Finishing weekly meetings with group reflection	Ditte will sometimes ask the group of participating scouts to reflect on their experiences with an activity they have been doing and to evaluate it (audio field note 00:02:12-00:03:05 September 20, 17).

Ditte's tasks as a scout (continued)		
Category	Type	Example/reference
Execution	Leading rituals/traditional activities	Lead the group in singing the song they begin their weekly meetings with (Ditte, 2017b, pts. 00:05:21-00:05:27).
	Leading the Lord's Prayer and other activities practicing Christianity	Lead the group in finishing the meeting with prayer and song (Ditte, 2017d, pts. 01:42:40-01:43:39).
	Helping with joint activities in the local group, e.g. those focused on fundraising or PR	The local group was asked if they could organise pancake baking as an activity during a local 'open by night' event in the community. Ditte helps out with this (field note 1A, August 31, 17).
Social response and intervention	Helping patrol leaders with their tasks	Ditte helps a patrol leader by intervening when a younger patrol member keeps hitting the patrol leader and refuses to listen to him (audio field note 00:10:00-00:12:45, August 30, 17).
	Helping the patrols work (better) together	The patrol has been tasked with deciding on a <i>patrol yell</i> and tells Ditte they have made a decision. Ditte checks with a new member of the patrol about whether he agrees with the others about what the patrol yell will be, thereby seemingly making sure everyone has been involved (audio field note 00:16:20-00:17:43).
Participation	Participating in activities others have organised in the clan	(Ditte, 2017e, pts. 02:17:00-02:19:28)

Table 20. Overview of Ditte's tasks as a scout

Traditional elements, rituals and Christian practice

The scout activities seem characterised by traditional elements and rituals. Meetings are seemingly always started the same way, with an almost century-old song being sung in a circle, and they finish with another century-old song and a Christian prayer. Ditte says that part of the reason for doing these is that she is simply continuing to do things she grew up doing as a participating scout. The scout hut where they meet each week also has many historical artefacts hanging on its walls, and Ditte explains that part of the motivation for this is the group reminding itself that it is part of a larger history and part of a community. The YMCA-Scout association is Christian, and Ditte also leads the group in prayer, but she considers this a matter of tradition rather than personal faith.

Participating in the clan

Participating in the clan is something Ditte says she does mostly for her own enjoyment, while being a unit leader is something she also does for the sake of the troop scouts. The clan meetings are organised by the members of the clan in a horizontally differentiated manner, where almost no vertical authority seems to exist.

[15]

ANALYSIS OF SECTORIAL AND ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL: DITTE

Volunteer work

Structure of the YMCA-Scouts

The YMCA-Scouts, in the context of which all of Ditte's scout work takes place, is in many ways quite similar to the DDS, where Dorte is a member. The YMCA-Scouts also has regional and national levels, but in contrast with Dorte, Ditte's scout work takes place exclusively at the local level. Consequently, there will be less of a focus on the national level of the association here. The description of the structure will begin with the local level, based on a chart visualising the association.

Local-level structure

The Brown Wolves local group, which Ditte is a member of, is structured based on national principles, as described in the by-laws of the YMCA-Scouts (The YMCA-Scouts in Denmark, 2016), with a few local adjustments. figure 15 illustrates the structure of the local group. **Active members** are marked in **green** and **participating members** are marked in **red**.

Ditte's local group seems structured quite similarly to Dorte's local group, so to avoid too much repetition, not all entities are explained in the same level of detail here as there were in the previous chapter on Dorte's group. Also, with Dorte's group, I first presented the structure as it was described *on paper*, and then dis-

cussed how it in practice differed from this in some ways. I have here chosen to discuss practice versus on paper continuously as I go through the structure.

Annual general meeting (AGM)

We begin at the top of the chart, where we find the AGM, which is the supreme authority of the legally independent local group. The following are, according to the organisation's by-laws (The Danish Guide and Scout Association, 2015, sec. 10), invited, and have voting rights:

- All members of the local group 15 years or older
- Parents of members under 15
- Members of the existing group supervisory board who do not meet either of the above two criteria.

I ask Ditte about what they do in practice, and she says:

Ditte: That is on a much more formal level than we would invite to ... usually you will invite almost everyone who has something to do with the group. In practice you hand the parents a note and remember to send the same note to the group supervisory board and all the leaders and the clan and so on. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:05:40-00:08:16)

I would argue that this also demonstrates that the by-laws of the scout association are considered less binding than the national law governing the public sector and the municipality Ditte works in. Ditte (and the municipality) would likely not handle a public records disclosure request or a referral and assessment process in the same manner as the association handles the by-laws' way of describing the AGM here – by doing something a little different than the formally described procedures.

According to the association by-laws, the AGM agenda must contain, among other things, approval of the annual report and accounts, election of the group supervisory board, election of the group leader, and plans for the future growth of the local group (The YMCA-Scouts in Denmark, 2016, sec. 10).

Ditte says she was surprised to learn that the by-laws said that the group leader and assistant are elected at the AGM. They are to be elected there by the leaders present at the AGM, but Ditte says that she doesn't remember that ever happening (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:15:11-00:16:18). In other words, this is another example of the local group not following the by-laws of the association.

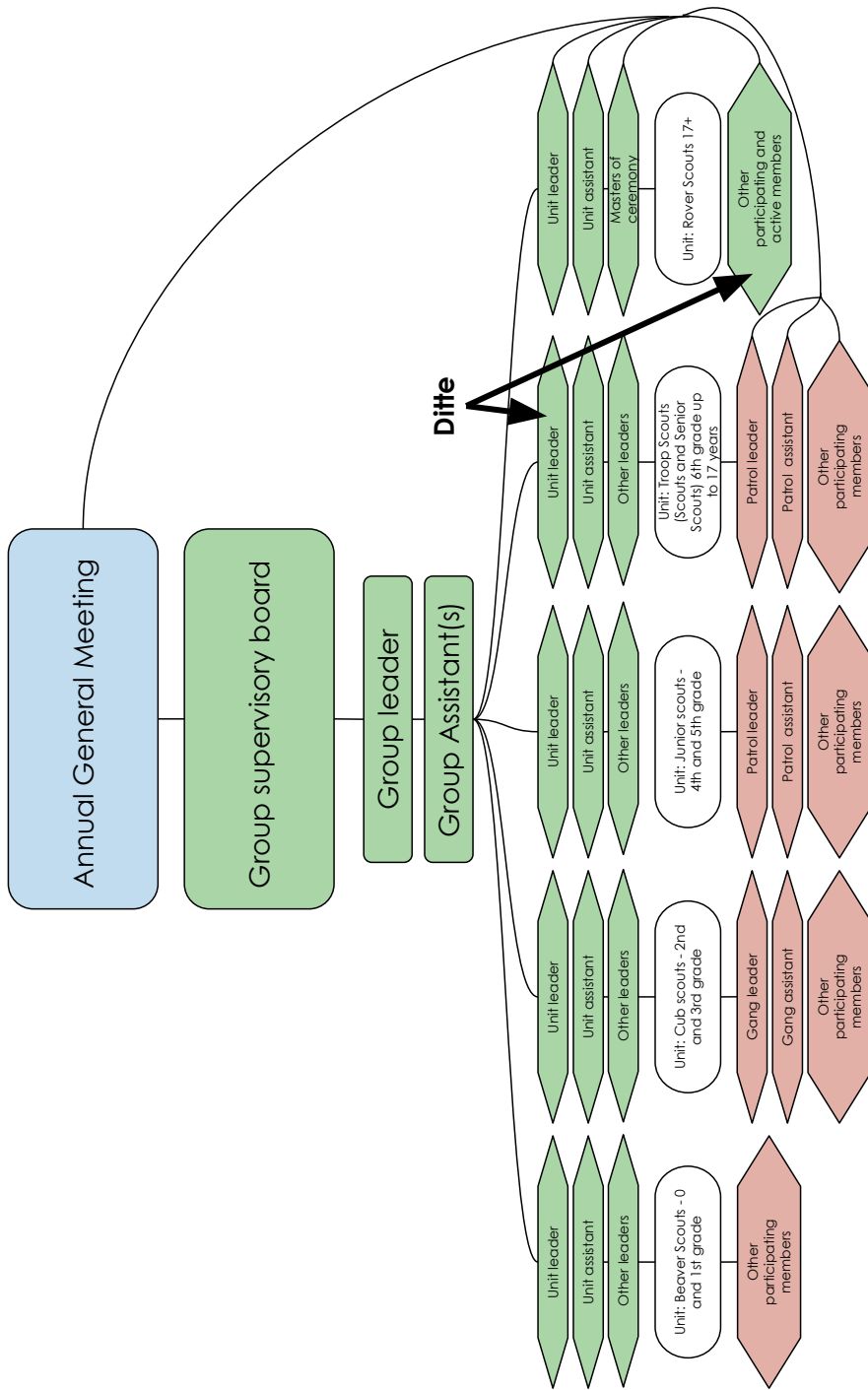


Figure 15. Organisational chart for Ditte's local group. The group has five different units, and Ditte is the unit leader for the troop scouts. As the rover scouts take turns organising the activities for each other, they are all considered both participating and active members.

Participation in AGMs

Ditte says that when it comes to parents (and participating members), the local group AGM ‘isn’t exactly a big crowd-puller’ (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:08:52-00:09:19), as only a very few parents show up. Some of the leaders will attend, along with most people from the group supervisory board, and Ditte says she herself has attended a number of times but also passed at other times when other plans have interfered.

Ditte: It is on the level of something you ought to attend, because we also sometimes will try to do something where the parents can talk about what they would like more of or how they think things are going ... That you would actually like to support ... also so they can see who the leaders are. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:11:18-00:11:59)

Just as we heard Dorte say about the AGM in her local group, Ditte also does not consider the AGM something a lot of parents will attend. In other words, the (on paper) supreme authority of the association does not seem to be filled with people (outside the leaders and board members already part of the association) wanting to influence the direction of the organisation. Ditte explains that a number of the board members have been there for many years now, and that at each AGM, out of the few parents who show up, there are a couple attending who would like to help with something and are then elected to the board. In other words, there has not been a lot of need for finding new board members, and Ditte has not been actively involved with doing this (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:12:25-00:14:04).

Group supervisory board

Directly under the AGM, the local group has a board with a chairperson, a treasurer, and a secretary. The board can consist of parents of members, members who are not leaders, and leaders. The chair should be a parent, and the board is formally responsible for the group, as they have the right to legally bind the group by signature of the chair, treasurer, and group leader (The YMCA-Scouts in Denmark, 2016, sec. 11).

In practice, Ditte understands the board as primarily responsible for making sure there is enough money, the scout hut is maintained, and for handling other practical matters needed for the leaders to be able to do scout work (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:24:08-00:24:54).

According to the association’s by-laws, the board also formally appoints unit leaders, unit assistants, and other leaders for each unit in the local group (The

YMCA-Scouts in Denmark, 2016, sec. 10). But Ditte says this is another thing that is done differently in practice:

Ditte: We will do that at the leaders' meetings, and this only comes up if there is someone who thinks they would like to try something new, and to a higher degree, if you are short of [leaders]. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:16:54-00:18:21)

In practice, deciding who will be leaders for which unit is seemingly done through negotiation amongst the leaders. If someone wants to move to a different age group or if a unit needs more leaders, then they discuss and find a solution there, and the board is not involved in this process.

Group leader

Directly under the board we find the group leader. Formally, the local group is led by a group leader, but when I ask Ditte about this, she says:

Ditte: We don't actually have one of those.

Dennis: Oh (laughing)

Ditte: We ought to have one ... as a rule you have that. We don't, because no one wanted to be that, and then because we work quite autonomously, then we haven't really been missing one. It is really a bit silly, but there is a chair of the group supervisory board, which is one of the positions that also has a strong presence, she has that at least, but no, a group leader we don't have. (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:42:10-00:42:39)

In this interview from 2016, Ditte explains that as no one wanted this position, it was decided they would manage without someone in this position. This points towards Ditte's local group also being a form of natural system, where the leaders share an interest in the survival of the organisation. It also indicates that it cannot be the group leader, who is setting goals or making sure goals are reached by the leaders. When I interviewed Ditte in late 2017 she said that they now do have a person with the formal title, but continued:

Ditte: We don't have an actual group leader as much as we have a mailbox; our group leader functions as a mailbox for things coming from the district which he then passes on and tells us about ... the group leader does not make decisions about anything at all. If you were to say there would be a level where things were decided, then you would say that was the leaders' meeting, I think. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:32:16-00:34:25)

The leaders' meeting seems to be where most common decisions are made, and Ditte continues by explaining that the unit leaders (and units) are quite autonomous in that they decide almost entirely what happens in their unit, with the possible exception of things the other leaders would disagree strongly with.

Unit leaders, unit assistants, and leaders' meetings

Each unit (age group) has its own unit leader, unit assistant, and potentially also other leaders. These formally report to the group leader, but as Ditte explains, in practice agree to things among themselves at leaders' meetings. Leaders' meetings consist only of the leaders (and not the board), but all leaders are also invited to participate in the board meetings along with the elected board members (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:31:10-00:31:48).

Units and patrols

At the bottom of the chart we have the participating members in each unit, which in some units are divided into patrols. To illustrate that they (or their parents) have a potential vote in the supreme authority of the local group, lines have been drawn in the figure above going from them and from the leaders up to the annual general meeting.

The top-down perspective as a continuum

I will begin by outlining the local group from the same top-down perspective as we have already seen in Dorthé's local group. Again, this is a continuum going from the top management in charge of defining goals and making sure these goals are reached, to the workers at the bottom, those who are the object of the management and control.

Owners/controllers

1. Annual general meeting
2. Group supervisory board
3. Group leader
4. Unit leaders, unit assistants, and other leaders

Workers, the ones being managed and controlled.

According to the association by-laws, the AGM elects members of the group supervisory board, and the meeting also formally makes plans for the development of the group. The elected board appoints unit leaders and unit assistants. When

looking at the group from this perspective, the AGM and the board seem to have a lot of vertically differentiated authority in the local group. But on the other hand, the same principle is used here as in Dorthe’s DDS scout association. A portion of the votes in the supreme authority of the local group will consist of the people who would potentially be the objects of the management’s pressure, and perhaps also the ones resisting this organisational pressure. This is illustrated as a circle in figure 16.



Figure 16. Tension 3 – Top-down and bottom-up

Tension #3 top-down and bottom-up

As with Dorthe’s local group, it seems that Ditte’s is also organised around the principle of tension 3. Structurally, there does seem to be vertical differentiation, but this exists in a tension between a co-existing top-down perspective, where some have formal authority over others, coupled with a bottom-up perspective, where these others who are to be managed are at the same time some of the owners of the organisation, who have a vote in the supreme authority of the local group.

Horizontal differentiation

In practice, Ditte doesn’t seem to experience that much influence coming from

the board⁵ or – to an even lesser degree – the group leader. Just as the bottom-up perspective giving Ditte and the other leaders some formal authority over the board and group leader does not seem to be used much. So while tension 3 seems to be structurally present on paper, the practice Ditte describes seems based more on horizontal differentiation, where tasks are divided among different organisational entities, than on entities exercising vertical authority over each other.

Ditte expects autonomy

Explaining how she understands her role as a scout leader in the local group, Ditte says she would consider it ‘extremely odd’ (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:23:38-00:23:55) if the programme she and Ane had made for the troop scouts weekly meetings were to be formally approved by the board, with a set deadline for sending it to them. She does not consider approval of her work to be their task, nor does she seem to consider the board to have legitimate vertical authority over her or the way she handles being a leader for the troop scouts unit. She compares this with her paid work by saying:

Ditte: This is compared with going to [name of office manager] and saying, ‘[Name], this, you don’t get to decide’ [laughing]; that would be kind of ambitious, yeah [laughing]. But that you can easily do here, you see ... Much more hinges on the fact that you in principle could say, ‘Well, if you don’t think we should organise that [particular] meeting, then I guess you can plan the meeting yourself’; and if the conflict really escalates, ‘Well then, you can just take over the [troop] scouts, because then I will just stop [being a leader] now’. That does a lot ... when you know they are lacking [leaders] everywhere. There are never enough leaders, you see. So for that reason ... it makes a pretty big difference. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:41:18-00:42:14)

When Ditte says that it *would be kind of ambitious*, while laughing, I interpret this to mean that this would not be possible or would not make sense for her to do in her paid job, likely because she considers her office manager as having formal authority over her (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 02:12:47-02:14:03). Ditte seemingly sees her volunteer work as a contrast to this in that she expects a higher degree of

5 Ditte does recount how the chair of the board at one point called Ane, her co-leader, and complained about an activity she thought they would be doing involving slaughtering a chicken (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:20:04-00:23:38). This was based on a parent having contacted the chair, and while these types of incidents do happen, they seem to be the exception and not the rule.

autonomy there and feels she in principle could legitimately say to people with formal authority over her that they should not interfere with her work or make decisions over her. She explains the reason for expecting this autonomy as being, that if a disagreement were to escalate into a serious conflict, it could end with her leaving the scout group. The fact that a local group will always be in need of more leaders gives her autonomy to decide on her own, as the local group would be left with a problem if she were to leave. As volunteer leaders cannot be recruited the same way paid staff can, with a salary perhaps leading to more applicants than jobs, Ditte would likely be harder to replace than a paid employee. Finally, it should be noted that Ditte says she considers the scenario of leaving over disagreements like these very unlikely, but definitely possible (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 02:15:27-02:17:53).

Another aspect of this autonomy has to do with being legitimately able to ignore others:

Ditte: A lot of the time you can just ignore the people you don't [agree with]; so you don't have to come to the things you don't find interesting and you can ignore people if they say something half-witted, right. (Ditte, 2017f, pts. 02:18:36-02:18:56)

Ditte seemingly sees her position as a leader as to a certain extent being able to choose what to participate in and not, and whom to listen to and not. So while someone may express disagreement with something Ditte has done in her unit, she can simply continue doing it, as she seemingly does not have to change things based on their objections.

The natural systems perspective

The local group does not seem to be based on the leaders resisting or reacting to organisational pressure from the board, the AGM, or a group leader. Rather, the natural systems perspective seems to be a fitting description here as well, as we can understand the local group as consisting of horizontally differentiated entities, each handling their own part of the work that it is somehow commonly understood needs doing. Ditte expects the board to handle finances and, for example, make sure the scout hut functions, and she seemingly does not seek to influence the way they handle these things. She sees the task of organising weekly meetings and camps for the troop scouts as a shared responsibility between her and Ane, and she sees, for example, deciding which leaders will be assigned to which units as a shared decision among the leaders.

The ‘ought to’ – A feeling of duty

There are, however, some decisions the board makes that Ditte is also interested in and will actively seek to influence. She has explained to me that she considers the board meetings quite dull and somewhat detached from the actual activities going on in the local group. I ask her why she still participates in some of the meetings, and she says:

Ditte: It is one of those ‘ought to’ things. I participate based on an idea about, in part, an ‘ought to’, in the sense that if neither Ane nor I will be there, then our unit isn’t represented, and that there can be some ‘ought to’ in, ‘Well, we do also have to come and say how many we are now and how things are going and that we are in control of things in our unit’ ... and then it has actually also been the case that we showed up to make sure we were also heard. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 00:45:40-00:46:37)

Ditte continues to explain that for example when the board was to decide whether leaders who were only active in the clan would receive the same financial support as the other leaders when participating in a large national camp, they wanted to make sure the board would decide in favour of this, and made an active effort to attend the meeting and make their opinion heard (Ditte, 2017e, pp. 00:46:37-00:47:38).

It seems that Ditte, on the one hand, chooses to participate in the board meetings out of a feeling of some form of duty – what she refers to as an ‘ought to’. Even though she says she has cut down on her participation in things she finds uninteresting (Ditte, 2016b, pts. 00:46:31-00:47:13), there still seems to be a feeling that board meetings, for example, are something she ought to attend. The other reason for participating is that the board occasionally decides on things she would like to be able to influence. So while the local group, on the one hand, seems differentiated, with the each entity handling its own tasks, there are decisions made by the board, e.g. about financial support, that influence the leaders quite directly.

National-level structure

The national level of the YMCA-Scouts is what binds all the local groups together and makes them part of the same association. While each of the 500 local groups is an independent legally entity, they all are at the same time part of an association with regional and national levels. The description below is based on the by-laws of the association, supplemented with descriptions from the national-level association’s website. See Figure 17 for an organisation chart.

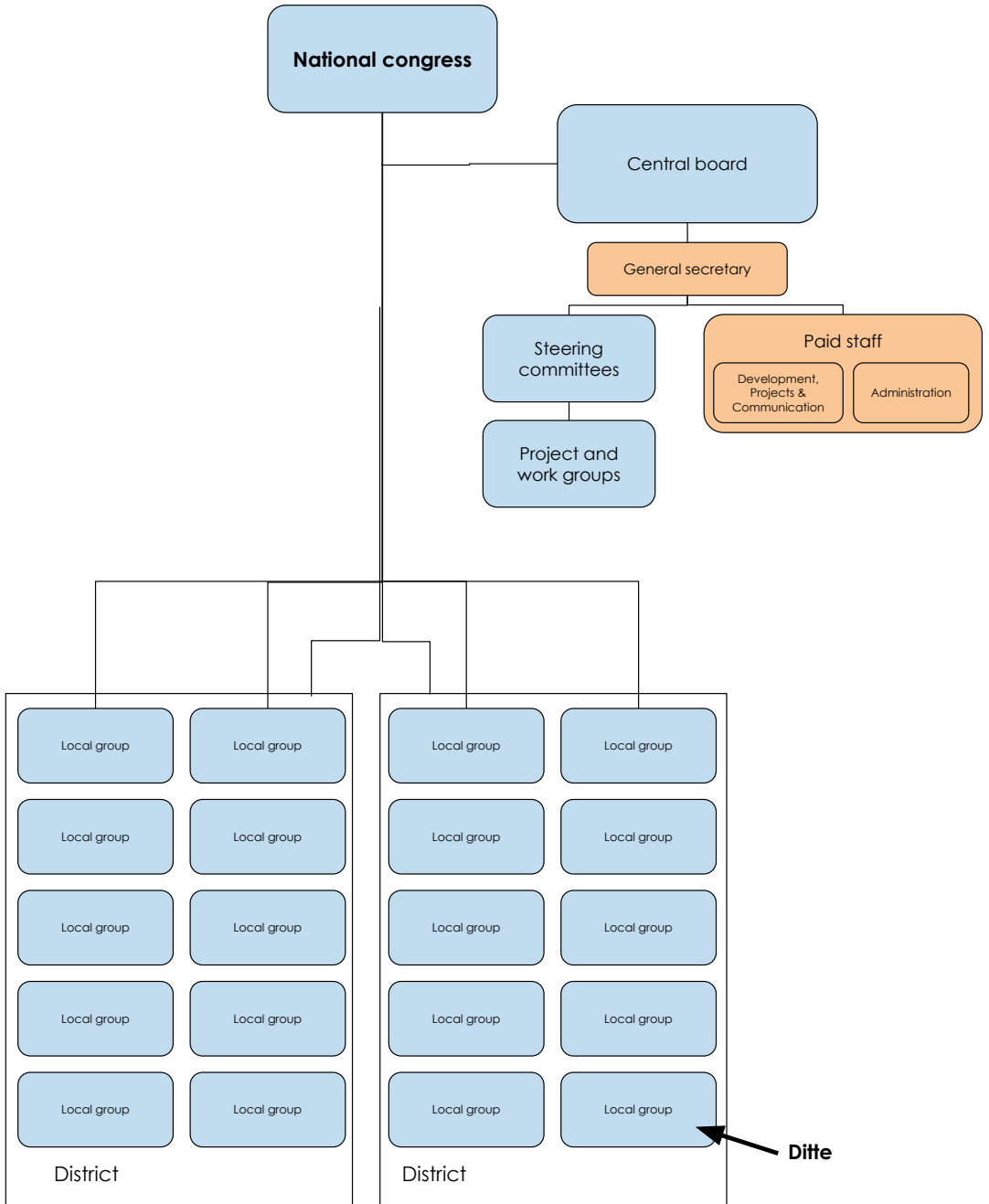


Figure 17. Structure of the YMCA-Scouts national and regional level

National congress and central board

The National Congress is the supreme authority of the YMCA-Scouts, and it takes place once every other year. According to the by-laws, the agenda must include annual reports and accounts from the past two years for approval, a budget for the coming two years, and plans for the future work and growth of the association. Proposals to be discussed at the congress can be made by any member, but must be recommended and signed by entities that together have five or more votes at their disposal. Finally, the central board is also elected at the congress, and it is their job to lead the association and make sure the goals decided upon by the congress are met. The central board is accountable to the national congress (The YMCA-Scouts in Denmark, 2016, sec. 34).

Paid staff

The association employs approximately 30 persons, some part time. These are the only paid workers in the entire association. The senior manager of the staff is the secretary general, and the association employs a manager of the administrative staff as well. Other than that, the staff consists of, among others, development consultants, project leaders, communication consultants, administrative office staff, janitors, and kitchen staff (“Medarbejdere,” 2018).

Steering committees

The steering committees have the task of realising some of the overall goals and strategies set by the central board. These committees are not to do the work themselves, but rather their job is to develop concrete aims and initiatives, and to then set up project and work groups. The association has four steering committees (“Styregrupper,” 2018).

Project and work groups

These groups carry out concrete initiatives based on instructions set out by the steering committees. Their job is to turn the overall strategy of the YMCA-Scouts into concrete results (“Styregrupper,” 2018).

Districts and local groups

At the bottom of the chart are the local groups, which are all part of the national association, but at the same time are legally independent associations with their own boards and annual general meetings. The districts are regional entities consisting of approximately 15 local groups in geographical proximity to each other (“Distrikter,” 2018).

The top-down perspective as a continuum

Going back to the top-down perspective, where some are seen as owners of an

organisation who set goals, and others as workers, who are to work towards these goals, I would argue that the same is the case here as it is in the DDS. We can see the national congress as the owner of the organisation, and the central board and secretary general as the ones setting more specific goals and being in charge of the workers working towards these goals.

Schematically, the top-down perspective would look like this, if we place the organisational entities on a continuum going from owners or controllers to workers:

Management

1. National congress
2. Central board
3. Secretary general
4. Paid staff
5. Steering committees
6. Project and work groups
7. Leaders like Ditte in districts and local Groups.

Workers, the ones being managed and controlled

However, as we shall see, we must combine this top-down perspective with the bottom-up influence present in the national congress.

Voting rights

Each local group participating in the national congress will have one or two votes, depending on its size, and each of the approximately 35 regional districts has two or three votes. Each member of the central board has one vote each (The YMCA-Scouts in Denmark, 2016, sec. 34).

Managers answer to the voters

Here too, we see that the managers in the end answer to the workers they are to manage, as it is representatives of the local groups and regional districts, who have the vast majority of the voting rights at the national congress.

In other words, we see the same tension 3 as in the national level of the DDS: a built-in tension between top-down management and bottom-up influence. See figure 18 illustration.

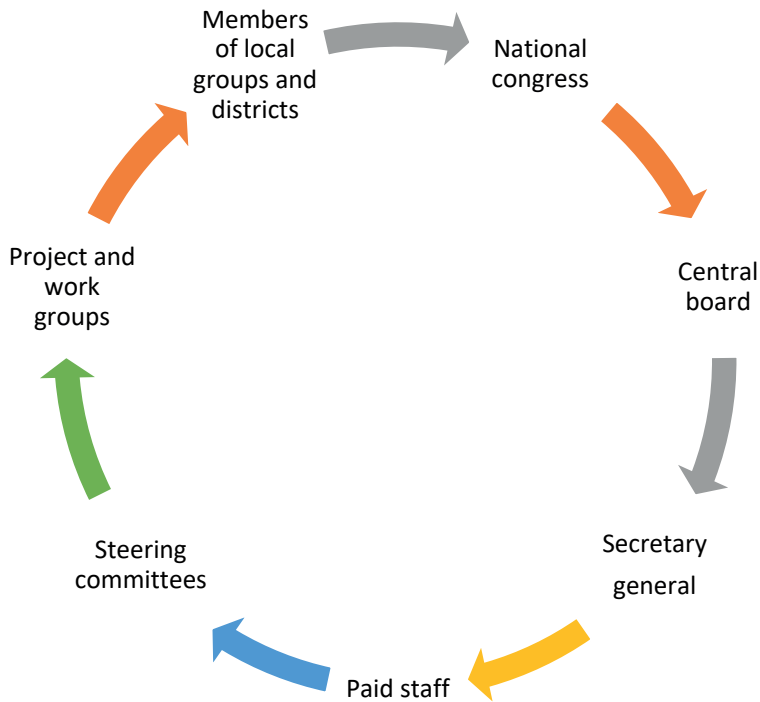


Figure 18. Tension 3 – Top-down and bottom-up

Ditte's perspective on the national level

Having looked at the organisation chart (figure 17) together, I ask Ditte if she uses the regional and national level for anything? She says:

Ditte: No. As a point of departure: I don't. The only thing I would be using the national level for, that would be seeking advice and directions via the website. I know that we have the national congress and I know it is not the same as the national meet, which – let me tell you – is already is a lot more than many others ...

Dennis: But you've never for example participated?

Ditte: No, I haven't ... its on the level of getting the news letter and knowing that we have a new Central Board and a new national chairperson. I've never really used them for much of anything.

(Ditte, 2017e, pp. 01:47:56-01:49:15)

Ditte seems to say that she doesn't know particularly much about the national and regional level of the association and also, that she never participated in the supreme authority at the national level (the national congress). She seems to see the national level as mostly somewhere to go for practical information and resources, and in the interview goes on to say that she doesn't actually think anyone from the local group participates in the national congress. (Ditte, 2017e, pts. 01:49:15-01:53:08)

Summary and discussion – Comparing the two types of work

Paid work: How is Ditte controlled as a human factor and how is the organisation differentiated?

- Control, in terms of requests and directives, comes from a number of different entities in the municipality, both below and above Ditte, if looking at vertically differentiated authority, and also from entities horizontally differentiated from Ditte, meaning they have no formal authority over her, or she over them.
- Ditte is a part of a large and complex organisation consisting of many vertically and horizontally differentiated entities, but she does not seem to be a small cog in a big machine the same way I argue Dorte is. There are six vertically differentiated entities above Ditte in the organisation, but, in contrast with Dorte, who does not experience most of the entities above her as having any direct influence on her everyday work, Ditte seems to know quite a bit about what these other entities do, as she is brought into contact with a number of them as part of her job. For example, she prepares motions for the politicians at the top, just as their decisions can influence her job quite directly.
- In a number of the tasks Ditte does, she does not seem to be controlled by someone else's request or directive. Instead she seems to act based on feeling responsible for making sure tasks she herself considers necessary are done.
- Ditte seems to feel she has a lot of influence on how she organises her working day, and she does this based on when things need to be finished, which meetings she has in her calendar, and a large to-do-list document with an overview of her on-going work.
- In contrast, when it comes to the content of the things she is working

on, she experiences very little influence, as she usually gathers professional insight from others, rather than providing it herself.

Volunteer work: How is Ditte controlled as a human factor, and how is the organisation differentiated?

- The local group is formally structured with a vertical differentiation, where the annual general meeting is the supreme authority, followed by the group supervisory board, and then the group leader.
- However, as all members of the local group (or their parents, in some cases) have voting rights at the annual general meeting, this means that the bottom entities in the vertically differentiated organisation also in principle make up the top entity, and so there seems to be built-in tension between the top-down and bottom-up perspectives in the local group.
- In practice, however, the bottom entities do not seem to exert much influence exerted at the annual general meeting, nor does the board or the group leader in Ditte's local group seem to exert much top-down influence over Ditte and the other leaders.
- Instead, the local group seems organised around more horizontal differentiations, where tasks are divided among different entities, which seem to share an interest in the wellbeing of the local group and an idea of which tasks need doing and who does what. Formalised vertical authority does exist, but it is rarely exerted.
- In the local group, Ditte is part of a much smaller and less differentiated organisation than in the municipality. There are significantly fewer vertically differentiated entities over her, and the ones there have little authority over her in practice.
- Ditte seems to feel she has a lot of discretion over how she chooses to organise her work in the local group and which tasks she will take on. As will be discussed below, she seems to expect a much high degree of autonomy in her volunteer work than in her paid work.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR RELATIONAL AND COMMUNICATIONAL ANALYSIS

Where the previous chapters have focused on the sectorial and organisational levels of Dorte and Ditte's volunteer and paid work, along with giving an overview of the types of situations found in their work seems to be made up of, this chapter will focus on specific situations I have observed and, in most cases, also video recorded. The selected situations have all been shown to Dorte and Ditte as part of an interview with them, where we, among other things, discussed the meaning and meaningfulness of the activities done in these situations.

This chapter begins with an argument about why this level of analysis is also relevant; this is followed by the presentation of a theoretical framework, which subsequently will be used in the analysis of the situations presented.

Communicative explanations supplementing sectorial and organisational explanations

Why include the situational and relation levels in an analysis that has already looked at how the sectorial and organisational conditions differ in volunteer third-sector and paid public-sector work? Koshmann points to the need for research on aspects of communication in volunteer work that cannot be explained as a direct result of contextual conditions, but rather exist primarily on an interpersonal level. He argues that these aspects could contribute new insights into volunteer work (Koschmann, 2010) and in a later article criticises a too-strong fo-

cus on abstract, structurally based explanations (sectors), which he argues ‘black box’ communication and mistakenly treat human interaction as linear and as just another ‘variable to be managed’ (Koschmann, 2016, p. 2). One aim of this chapter is to develop what Koschmann calls “uniquely communicative explanations for various nonprofit phenomena, and [to show] how these communicative explanations complement, challenge, and extend existing theoretical frameworks” (Koschmann, 2012, p. 139).

In this analysis, my primary aim will be to challenge and supplement the understandings we get from the sectorial and organisational levels of analysis, rather than the more general theoretical frameworks suggested by Koschmann in the above quote.

Theoretical framework – The inherent and instrumental perspectives

The theoretical framework for this part of the analysis consists of a number of theories, which, from different perspectives, seem to differentiate between two – to a certain extent – similar aspects. The differentiation, I will argue can be found in all of these, is based on distinguishing and discussing the relationship between doing activities and the purpose of doing these activities. For lack of better words (two unifying, grand terms that could contain all of the perspectives I will present below), I have chosen to label the two perspectives inherent and instrumental.

There are three reasons why I have chosen this distinction as an overall framework:

1. I would expect both types of work to be made up of activities that serve a purpose of some sort in relation to (one of) the goals of the organisations. In other words, these activities will likely in some way be instrumental in reaching these goals. I would expect both the activities and the way they support organisational goals to be different, and the analysis will explore how they differ.
2. During fieldwork I sometimes found it difficult to explain the reasons for doing certain activities, particularly in the volunteer scout work – they seemed to be almost without purpose. These activities, and their possibly distinctly volunteer work features will also be explored in the analysis below.

Inspiration from ideas of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

The terms ‘inherent’ and ‘instrumental’ are strongly inspired by Ryan and Deci’s (2000) self-determination theory (SDT). In SDT, motivation is seen as having both a level (i.e. amount of motivation) and an orientation. The orientation of motivation is also described as the *why of actions*, meaning the explanations for or reasons behind a given action.

The orientation of motivation behind a given action can be divided into two categories: intrinsic and extrinsic motivation.

Intrinsic motivation is understood as the orientation where an activity is done for the purpose of doing the activity in itself. Or, put differently, doing the activity is understood as the purpose of doing the activity – in contrast to doing the activity for a separable consequence or outcome. Intrinsic motivation is characterised by the activity being ‘inherently interesting or enjoyable’ to the person doing it (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 55). Intrinsic motivation exists *inside the individual*, on the one hand, as it is she who is experiencing interest or enjoyment. But on the other hand, it could be said to exist in the relation *between the individual and the activity done*, which brings into consideration the inherent qualities of the activity and not only the experiences of the individual. Ryan and Deci focus their theory on the ability of intrinsically motivated activities to satisfy what they argue are three basic human needs: autonomy, relatedness, and competence. This means that although doing an activity for its own sake produces a somewhat separable outcome in that human needs are satisfied, the important point is that these needs are satisfied by *doing* the activity in itself, and not by gaining some other separable outcome as a result of doing the activity, which then in turn would satisfy basic human needs (Ryan & Deci, 2000)

The inherent perspective

Having intrinsic motivation means doing something because it is seen as valuable and/or satisfying in itself, and I will refer to this as an *inherent perspective*.

In contrast to this is extrinsic motivation, which leads to the *instrumental perspective*, I will describe in the following section.

Extrinsic motivation

Being extrinsically motivated to perform an activity means doing the activity to obtain a separable outcome. Focus here is on the activity having an instrumental value – it is a way to achieve or reach something other or more than the activity itself. Extrinsic motivation is not seen as a completely non-autonomous (forced) behaviour. Rather, it is described as instances of intentional behaviour with varying degrees of autonomy related to them. Does the student do his

homework out of fear of his parent's sanctions or because he considers it valuable for his future career? Both reasons are extrinsic motivations, but they differ in how external or internalised the separable outcome is, to the person doing the activity (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 60).

The instrumental perspective

Across the different levels of autonomy described in the example above, the point I wish to emphasise about extrinsic motivation is that activity and outcome are separable matters, and that here the activity is (also) done intentionally to obtain this separable outcome. I will refer to this as the *instrumental perspective*.

Inherent and instrumental perspectives on activities in paid and volunteer work

I will now present and discuss a few other theories, which, I argue, share the trait that they differentiate between inherent and instrumental perspectives on an activity. I find this relevant to understanding the concrete situations found in and activities done as part of Ditte and Dorthe's volunteer and paid work because we can look at these instances of work as having both value or a reason for existing in themselves and as being instrumental to achieving something else. E.g. why does Dorthe act the way she does when a user comes into the library, and can (parts of) this activity be seen as having inherent or instrumental value to Dorthe? I will begin with Apter's theory of play.

Play and the protective frame

I have chosen to include Apter and his ideas of play for two reasons. First, because my initial interpretations of some of the activities done during Ditte and Dorthe's scout work were that they appeared to be playing. This was the case when Dorthe organised a game of hide-and-seek in the dark, or when Ditte included what seemed to be playful elements in an activity, although they were not explicitly communicated as playing. Second, because Apter rejects the idea that play can be defined by relating it to certain activities, which would then by definition be playing, while others would not.

Apter describes play as an activity that is done for its own sake, and explains how he gave up golf because, in his endless pursuit of a lower handicap, it ended up causing him stress and anxiety like nothing else in his life. In contrast, he immensely enjoys struggling with an intellectual problem as part of his paid work, and although this activity at some point does have a purpose outside the process itself, for a while he simply enjoys doing this activity, without considering these other purposes (Apter, 1991, p. 13). As this example shows, play in this sense

cannot be limited to something happening outside paid work time, based on the understanding that work is completely serious (un-playful) business. This rejection allows me to look at both paid and volunteer work as potentially playful, and gives me a framework for understanding activities across a priori assumptions of the seriousness of paid work or the unserious nature of scout activities.

Continuing this line of thought, Apter defines play as:

[A] state of mind, a way of seeing and being, a special mental 'set' towards the world and one's actions in it. It is therefore impossible to define play from the outside by relating it to particular activities or behaviours." (Apter, 1991, p. 13)

He describes this *state of mind* by saying that playing has to do with a certain *way of experiencing* what it is you are doing when you are playing, and argues that to understand play we must then ask the question: "What is special about the play experience, irrespective of its particular content at a given time?" (Apter, 1991, p. 14).

Being serious versus playing

Apter contrasts *being playful* with *being serious*, and argues that both of these states can be enjoyable or utterly boring, meaning that we cannot relate play to enjoyment and seriousness to boredom as defining features. Rather, the difference can be found in the relation to the world surrounding an activity or state of mind. A serious activity is understood as something that has a connection with the rest of one's life, with implications beyond the present moment. In contrast, 'in play, we seem to create a small and manageable private world ... in which, temporarily at least, nothing outside has any significance, and into which the outside world of real problems cannot properly impinge.' (Apter, 1991, p. 14). In this play world people will feel they are in charge, and that they are able to stop doing an activity at their own full discretion. If an activity is experienced as an obligation or duty, it is then by definition not playing. Apter argues this also goes for activities where one is playing a game against others, because it is still possible to leave if a person really needs to. He distinguishes between unavoidable and sometimes uncontrollable problems, which are experienced as necessary to deal with (the serious state of mind) and being in a state where you feel there is nothing you have to do (the playful state of mind). Although he seems to downplay the meaning of social commitments to each other, his point remains that playful activities are done for their own sake and for the expected enjoyment they bring in the moment. (Apter, 1991, pp. 14–15)

Playing takes place inside a protective frame

To experience playing as a freely chosen activity, one that does not have direct implications for a person's life or obligations, it usually takes place inside a protective frame. Although psychological and individual in nature, the frame is sometimes manifested as a physical barrier, e.g. the chalk lines on a football field, the walls of a scout hut, or the circle of benches around a bonfire. But it can also exist in the form of the rules of the game being played. This frame protects the person playing from the perils of the 'real' world outside the frame; inside the frame they feel safe (Apter, 1991, p. 15). This frame could be the thing that, for example, allows young people to dress up in wacky costumes as part of an activity in the scout hut, without fearing the ridicule or even bullying of their peers at school (school being part of the 'real' world to them).

Telic and paratelic

Apter describes how we move back and forth between serious and playful states, and introduces two terms from his own reversal theory that describe the two states perhaps more specifically than 'serious' and 'playful', and which also serve the purpose of avoiding confusion stemming from common-sense understandings of the difference between seriousness and playfulness.

The serious state it [reversal theory] refers to as *telic* (from the ancient Greek 'telos', meaning a goal or purpose) and the playful state as *paratelic* (incorporating the Greek word 'para', meaning alongside). (Apter, 1991, p. 15)

Using *para* as a prefix to the telic term, which describes the serious state, Apter seems to be describing the playful state as existing *along with* the serious state and not *instead of it* or *in spite of it*. This understanding of the two states co-existing is also found in Simmel's (1911/1949) concept of sociability, which describes the inherent value people find in being together for the sake of being together. Simmel also argues that this value and this type of enjoyment are dependent on some relation to what seems to be the same thing Apter describes as the 'real' world, which calls for the serious or telic state. Consequently, it seems that we cannot have either paratelic states or sociability without some connection to the rest of the world and its telic or instrumental matters.

In the telic state, a given activity will be the means to reach a desired end. Here the process begins with deciding on the desired ends, followed by finding activities deemed appropriate to reach these ends. In the paratelic state, the process or activity is in itself the most important thing, and this means that the ends of

this activity are only selected after having chosen the activity. When playing a board game, for example, there is a clear-cut goal of winning the game, but for a game to be played in the paratelic state, this goal must only serve the purpose of supporting the activity itself, e.g. by focusing attention on the game and energising the participants. If the main goal becomes to win the game, then the activity moves into the telic state, and can no longer be characterised as playing. In Apter's words, 'if the result matters beyond the game, then the protective frame is absent and the spirit of the encounter is no longer playful' (1991, p. 17).

Intense and exciting experiences

According to Apter, people in the paratelic state have a preference for 'intense, and particularly for high arousal experiences... Feeling excited, fascinated, intrigued or passionately involved in what one is doing are sure signs that play is being enjoyed' (Apter, 1991, p. 17). Where these serve to fuel involvement in an activity in the paratelic state, they work the opposite way in the telic state, where high arousal will often be accompanied by fear or anxiety, and will generally be avoided if possible. This underlines the need for the protective frame in the paratelic state, as that is what makes it possible to enjoy the rush of an activity rather than to fear it. An example of this is quite familiar to the author of this thesis. When doing traditional night activities during scout-like summer camps, children are woken at night and told (somewhat unlikely, in fact, fictional) stories about how all the food has been stolen from the camp kitchen, and that they must now sneak out and catch the thieves. For this activity to remain playful, it is important that the adult leaders maintain a protective frame in the minds of the children, allowing them to feel both scared and exhilarated (i.e. desired states of high arousal) when chasing the 'thieves' through the dark woods. If the activity and the story told by the leaders becomes too realistic, the children may leave the protective frame of the paratelic, enter the telic state, and thus become scared and feel anxious in an undesirable way. For this activity to work as intended, the children must know deep down that they are inside a protective frame where no real harm can come to them, but at the same time must immerse themselves enough in the story to experience the excitement of overcoming their fears and going after the 'thieves'. In an activity such as this, the goal of getting the supposedly stolen food back is primarily there to give the activity itself some direction, and that is what makes it paratelic.

An activity done in the paratelic state can easily have a stated goal; however, this goal should not be the primary purpose of doing the activity, but rather exist only to make the activity or process possible. I will categorise the telic state as instrumental and the paratelic state as inherent because in the paratelic state the activities themselves and the enjoyment they bring are the goals of doing the activities.

Playing as a practice and a mood

Another approach to understanding play comes from Karoff (2013b) who argues that in recent years play as a phenomenon has caught the attention of many, and that the term is now used as a metaphor for a number of different ways of looking at play, all understanding it as having a function – of it being instrumental to something else. She refers to this as a “colonisation of the play concept” (2013b, p. 76); in contrast to this, she proposes an understanding of play as having inherent value – that playing has its own merits without it leading to something other than the actual play itself.

Based on her empirical studies of children, Karoff has developed an understanding of play as consisting of two dimensions: *play practices* and *play moods*. She argues that different play practices are done in order to reach different play moods, and sees both dimensions and their connection as part of what playing *is*.

Play practices is the concept of all the doing in the playing activity and ‘play moods’ is the particular concept of sense and feeling of being, which is what we are drawn to when we play. The latter stems from a desire to re-think the notion of play as merely an expression of function, and instead to seek a perspective that understands play as a normal way for humans of being together and of taking part in the world. (Karoff, 2013b, p. 76)

Here we may note that Karoff suggests that the play moods are what attract us to playing, that they constitute a desired state. While this could lead us to view the playing activity as instrumental to reaching the desired play moods, this does not seem to be Karoff’s point. Instead, she seems to argue that both play practices and play moods are part of what playing *is*, which means we should understand both dimensions as inherent to playing. Although one is done to reach the other, they seem not to be separate matters, but rather two sides of the same coin. As I understand Karoff’s intention as being to describe an inherent quality of playing, I will categorise both her dimensions of playing as inherent, while the before-mentioned colonisation of the playing concept would belong in the instrumental category.

Karoff found four play practices and four play moods in her studies of children playing; these seem to be based on the children choosing what to play on their own. But as this study is looking at activities that most of the time are structured and organised by adults, and interactions that most of the time are initiated by adults, there seem to be some differences, making Karoff’s interesting points about children playing less relevant to understanding the data of this

thesis. However, one of the practices and one of the moods do seem particularly relevant, as does the connection between practice and mood. Below I will first present this practice and mood briefly, and then discuss how I will use the theory a little further.

The exceeding practice and the euphoria mood

The *exceeding practice* seems to be about breaking away from the expected and perceived normal ways of behaving. This practice stands in stark contrast to what Karoff calls the *sliding practice*, which is characterised by repetitive behaviour, where the same actions are done over and over again and where continuity and the feeling of flow are appreciated. The exceeding practice is about breaking the rules or the expectations tied to a certain situation, and it can involve a good deal of silliness, which is also expressed in the associated play mood *euphoria*.

The last type of play mood is called euphoria, and this is characterised by an intense expectation of silliness, where you are ready for both others' and your own silliness. There is an expectation for you to come up with new silliness in order to stay euphoric. Children often laugh a lot: once they start, they find it difficult to – nor do they want to – stop, and for people who are not involved the mood can seem manic. When children pull faces, have water fights or tease grown ups over and over again, the playing mood can be characterised as euphoric and the related commonest play practice is exceeding. (Karoff, 2013b, pp. 84–85)

Karoff connects the euphoric mood with the practice of exceeding, and although this may not show itself in exactly the same way in my data, there do seem to be quite a few actions that could be understood as exceeding. Karoff also argues that the silliness connected to the euphoric mood is likely marginalised by institutions, pedagogues, and adults, who find it difficult to understand the function of silliness (what is it good for?), and who may have problems accepting the sometimes noisy, messy, and disturbing nature of silliness. She argues that silliness needs to be taken seriously, as it, like other play moods, has value in itself (Karoff, 2013a).

Summing up

What I take from Karoff is the idea that certain ways of acting and playing are done in order to reach certain moods. Play practices are ways of acting in the world and ways of interacting with other people in the world. And when you are acting a certain way, you are also thereby creating certain ways of being, and consequently certain play moods. A particular way of playing leads to a particular

way of being in the world (Karoff, 2013b, p. 82). If we look at this mood as an integrated part of the activity, rather than a separate outcome (you are in this mood while doing the activity – the mood does not come afterwards), then Karoff seems to look at playing as an activity done for its own sake. Playing as one entity is seen as having two dimensions. In this understanding I will categorise Karoff's understanding of playing as inherent. Playing is done for the inherent quality it has of being able to produce certain moods – just as intrinsic motivation is the idea of enjoying an activity, rather than enjoying the *outcome* of an activity.

From two theories on play, we now move to a theory on enjoyment stemming from being together with others.

Sociability

Definition

Georg Simmel describes the term sociability the following way:

To be sure, it is for the sake of special needs and interests that men unite in economic associations or blood fraternities, in cult societies or robber bands. But, above and beyond their special content, all these associations are accompanied by a feeling for, by a satisfaction in, the very fact that one is associated with others and that the solitariness of the individual is resolved into togetherness, a union with others. (Simmel, 1911/1949, pp. 254–255)

Sociability seems to describe a basic human satisfaction in being associated with others. Simmel argues that regardless of the needs or interests that otherwise serve as the reason for joining an association,¹ it will typically also be characterised by people enjoying the fact that they are together. This sense of enjoyment however, is not guaranteed:

Of course, this feeling can, in individual cases, be nullified by contrary psychological factors; association can be felt as a mere burden, endured for the sake of our objective aims. But typically there is involved in all effective motives for association a feeling of the worth of association as such, a drive which presses toward this form of existence and often only later calls forth that objective content which carries the particular associa-

1 Simmel exemplifies what he refers to as associations as economic associations, blood fraternities, and robber bands, which indicates that he does not differentiate between what I refer to as public, private, and third sector when referring to associations. (Fint)

tion along. (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 255)

Simmel on the one hand distinguishes between what he calls the *objective aims* of associating and the *feeling of worth* that comes from this instance of associating (i.e. sociability). But while this could lead us to understanding these as two different phenomena, he at the same time writes that there is an *objective content which carries the association along* – that sociability seems to happen on an occasion or under circumstances for which people meet. Sociability and human interaction seem to be something requiring – or at least usually happening around – some sort of situation, with some sort of objective aim.

Activities as the carrier wave of sociability

Metaphorically, we could describe the relationship between the objective content and the satisfaction of being associated with others, like a radio signal transmitting music to listeners but needing a *carrier wave* (which contains no music), to make the transmission possible. Carrier waves only serve the purpose of making sure the music can actually be delivered or indeed carried to our radios, but contain none of the music we actually hear when switching on the radio. In the same sense, sociability seems to need something to carry it before it can start to play (out).

Relation to reality

Simmel argues that sociability differs from objective aims, which we also find in associations, but does this mean sociability will have nothing to do with these aims?

And as that which I have called artistic impulse draws its form from the complexes of perceivable things and builds this form into a special structure corresponding to the artistic impulse, so also the impulse to sociability distils, as it were, out of the realities of social life the pure essence of association, of the associative process as a value and a satisfaction. It thereby constitutes what we call sociability in the narrower sense. (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 255)

Simmel here defines more specifically what we could call the core of sociability. The impulse towards sociability, the thing that drives humans towards it, is based on the realities of social life, but it is not the same thing as all of this reality. Sociability is seen as a distillate of these realities of social life, making it what Simmel calls the *pure essence of association*, which he specifies is both a value and a satisfaction. In other words, sociability is not an independent phenomenon

detached from the rest of this world. It is described as part of the reality of the social world, and thereby it has a relation with this reality. Sociability is then not something people can fake or create out of the blue when associating with one another.

Inasmuch as sociability is the abstraction of association ... it demands the purest, most transparent, most engaging kind of interaction – that among equals. It must, because of its very nature, posit beings who give up so much of their objective content, who are so modified in both their outward and their inner significance, that they are sociably equal, and every one of them can win sociability values for himself only under the condition that the others, interacting with him, can also win them. It is a game in which one “acts” as though all were equal, as though he especially esteemed everyone. This is just as far from being a lie as is play or art in all their departures from reality. But the instant the intentions and events of practical reality enter into the speech and behaviour of sociability, it does become a lie – just as a painting does when it attempts, *panorama fashion*, to be taken for reality. That which is right and proper within the self-contained life of sociability, concerned only with the immediate play of its forms, becomes a lie when this is mere pretence, which in reality is guided by purposes of quite another sort than the sociable or is used to conceal such purposes – and indeed sociability may easily get entangled with real life. (Simmel, 1911/1949, pp. 257–258)

For an interaction to have the value and satisfaction of sociability, Simmel argues that all parties in the conversation must treat each other with a mutual high level of respect, and, importantly, that this is not something people can simulate or feign in order to reach a goal other than that of sociability.

One way to understand this ideal is that we must leave titles and formal positions by the door before being able to enjoy sociability. When looking at this idea in relation to third-sector associations, it interestingly seems similar to what Karen Lisa Salamon argues was historically both characteristic and perhaps also part of the attraction of joining associations in the late 1700s in Denmark (and to some extent still today): although membership was certainly not open to all, it was still the case that inside the associations, the formal roles, based on economic strength and class, were downplayed in favour of appearing and associating with each other as equals (Salamon, 1992).

In the above quote, Simmel goes on to say that there is a democratic principle in sociability, in that the amount of satisfaction any person must get from the

impulse to sociability must be the same as all others get from taking part in the same conversation. For sociability to be sociability, no individual can be allowed to get all the enjoyment from a conversation, while others just take part without enjoyment or even are the deliverers of this enjoyment at the cost of their own. Simmel compares this with Kant's principle of law: 'that everyone should have that measure of freedom which could exist along with the freedom of every other person' (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 257). In other words, there must be a balance of enjoyment among all involved in the conversation, or, as Hammershøj phrases it, the individuals participate exclusively for the sake of fellowship and the fellowship exclusively exists for the sake of the individuals (2001, p. 34).

Consequently, I would argue that for a conversation to have sociability, it cannot be shaped by either pure selfishness or pure altruism. Selfishness could cost others their enjoyment, and altruism could cost the altruistic person their enjoyment. If we were to look at volunteering as an altruistic activity done only or primarily for the sake of helping others, this would challenge the possibility for achieving the enjoyment of sociability.

Good form

This requirement of balance, Simmel says, can be particularly burdensome and difficult to achieve between members of different social classes, and under all circumstances is not something which will happen automatically. In forms of association not governed by ideals of sociability, there are ethical imperatives that direct people to reciprocate and to maintain some form of balance between them, but with sociability these (perhaps also formalised) imperatives do not exist in the same way. With no formal rules to govern the interaction, Simmel seems to argue that sociability relies on good form, as we cannot rely on concrete motives having to do with life goals (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 255).

He makes a distinction by saying:

At the moment when people direct their association toward objective content and purpose, as well as at the moment when the absolutely personal and subjective matters of the individual enter freely into the phenomenon, sociability is no longer the central and controlling principle, but at most a formalistic and outwardly instrumental principle. (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 256)

This would be one way to understand what constitutes good form. Another way comes from Erving Goffman.

Goffman and Simmel

Sociability seems to share certain traits with Erving Goffman's terms *face* and *line* from his theory on *facework* (Goffman, 1955/1972). Goffman argues that most interactions (in Anglo-American society) will be characterised by people exercising *impression management* – that is, they are actively engaged in trying to give a certain impression of themselves. Conversation partners will do this by tending to:

act out what is sometimes called a line— that is, a pattern of verbal and nonverbal acts by which he expresses his view of the situation and through this his evaluation of the participants, especially himself. (Goffman, 1955/1972, p. 5)

In other words: whenever someone in a conversation says something, they are at the same time implicitly expressing their understanding of the situation they are in, including how they understand and evaluate especially themselves, but also others taking part in the conversation. According to Goffman, all participants in an interaction will take on lines regardless of whether they intend to or not. It is a basic feature of any conversation that we will form an impression of others and also that we will try to infer what kind of impression people form of us. This term, 'line', is one way of explaining how conversation partners show each other what they consider to be good form, and it can likely also tell us something about the before-mentioned balance between the personal matters and the objective content.

Where line characterises what will happen when people meet with each other, 'face' is an expression of an ideal or value that underlies the way people meet – one that Goffman connects with his line term:

The term face may be defined as the positive social value a person effectively claims for himself by the line others assume he has taken during a particular contact. Face is an image of self delineated in terms of approved social attributes—albeit an image that others may share, as when a person makes a good showing for his profession or religion by making a good showing for himself. (Goffman, 1955/1972, p. 5)

Goffman seems to be arguing that whenever we meet other people we implicitly claim that others treat us in a way that gives us positive social value, based on the impression these people perceive that we would like to give. When Dorthe is working desk duty in the library, and she asks a person walking in, if she can be of assistance, this can be seen as a line where she demonstrates that she sees

herself as a person who can help library users with their needs. Following Goffman's argument, this would likely mean that the library user entering the library in most cases must respect this line by e.g. answering that they need help or not, and if they need help, to accept Dorthe as a person able to give this help. By doing so they would then be accepting Dorthe's line as someone who asks people if they need help and is able to give help, and this maintains the initial positive social value Dorthe claims in the situation. Goffman refers to this as *maintaining face* (Goffman, 1955/1972).

Goffman is sometimes criticised for reducing human interaction to strategies for ensuring everyone keeps up positive appearances towards each other, but while I don't think that critique is entirely fair, Simmel's idea of sociability seems to deviate from Goffman's ideas in the following way. Goffman argues that conversation partners will attempt to appear in a way that gives them positive social value, and that others are required to maintain this appearance of positive social value in all parts of the conversation. He describes this as maintaining equilibrium between the interaction partners – something that requires co-operation between the people talking with each other (1955/1972, p. 19). Simmel also describes how sociability relies on a balance between the conversation partners, as none of them are to gain more from the conversation than others – for sociability to occur, all must benefit an approximately equal amount from the conversation.

Goffman could be seen as arguing that the motivation for giving others face (positive social value) is so that you yourself can also receive it, but Simmel's description seems less calculated, as the motivation, or what he calls the impulse to sociability, gives the conversation partners 'joy, relief and vivacity' (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 257) Also, Simmel's description does not seem focused on something being claimed as such from the other parties. Sociability does not come out of a somewhat calculated give and take as such – if the conversation started becoming (too much) about making sure everyone appeared with positive social value, it would lose the impulse to sociability.

In addition to being used here to further understand Simmel and sociability, Goffman's terms line and face will also be used in the situational and relational analysis.

Sociability and play

Whereas the above descriptions of sociability could lead us to understand sociability as a deeply respectful and extremely cautious way of interacting, where participants are careful not to overstep each other's boundaries and to meticulously respect each other('s lines), this should not be mistaken for participants

not being allowed to challenge each other. While sociability does seem to entail a deep sense of respect towards each other, Simmel also describes it as a form of interaction in which play and social games have a role.

It is an obvious corollary that everything may be subsumed under sociability, which one can call sociological play-form; above all, play itself, which assumes a large place in the sociability of all epochs. The expression 'social game' is significant in the deeper sense which I have indicated. The entire interactional or associational complex among men: the desire to gain advantage, trade, formation of parties and the desire to win from another, the movement between opposition and co-operation, outwitting and revenge – all this, fraught with purposive content in the serious affairs of reality, in play leads a life carried along only and completely by the stimulus of these functions. For even when play turns about a money prize, it is not the prize, which indeed could be won in many other ways, which is the specific point of the play; but the attraction for the true sportsman lies in the dynamics and in the chances of that sociologically significant form of activity itself. (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 258)

The movement between challenging each other and co-operating with each other – tricking your opponent one minute, and feeling her revenge the next – these dynamics of interaction and being together seem to make up part of the attraction of sociability. As mentioned already, they are part of reality outside of sociability, but they *are* not this reality, making it important that the movement between these phases and the playful element this entails is the purpose of sociability and not e.g. the actual action of winning over someone else or tricking them into doing something.

The next theory has to do with the relation between people communicating in terms of whether they are each other's goals with the conversation, or if they are using each other to obtain something outside the conversation itself.

Communication as content and relation

The analysis in the following chapter, includes looking at the communication between Dorte and the people she is in contact with at work. This analysis will be conducted based on the idea that regardless of the subject of a conversation (here happening in one of the selected situations), an on-going establishment and negotiation of interpersonal relations always takes place. When looking at the aspects of communication that primarily exist on the interpersonal level, Madsen (1996) offers a communication model that describes communication as

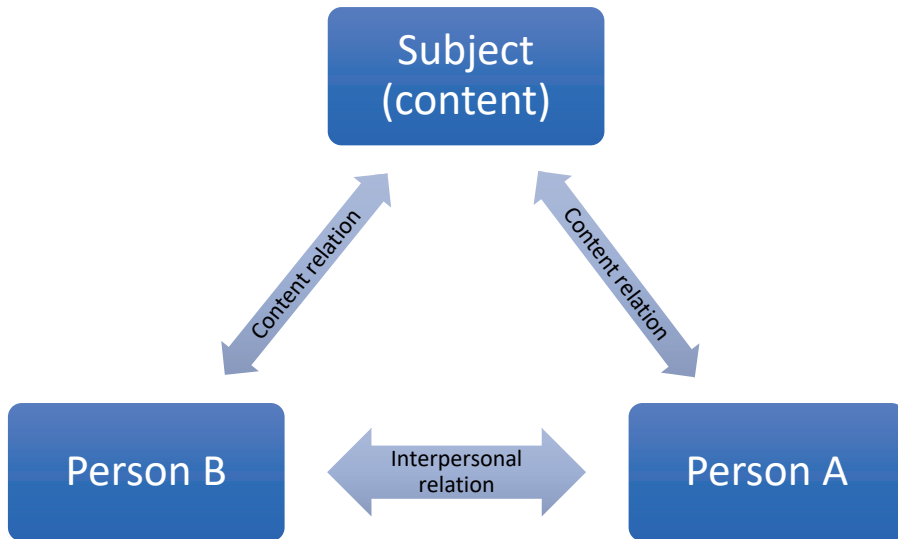


Figure 19. Madsen's communication triangle

a process containing both content and relation between communicators.

The model (figure 19) depicts two people (Person A and Person B) talking with each other about something (the subject or content). As this takes place, the communication between A and B can be said to contain at least two dimensions. On the one hand, the two people show their perspectives on the subject of the conversation. This is their relation to the *content*. At the same time, the relation between the two people plays a role in the conversation as well, and it can both be addressed directly as the subject of the conversation and changed and negotiated in the way the two people talk about the subject of the conversation. Madsen argues that there is interplay between the relation to the subject being addressed and the relation between the people talking about this subject (Madsen, 1993; 1996).

Personal and professional relations

Madsen (1993) differentiates between personal and professional relations by arguing that personal relations are relations where the people communicating are each other's goal or cause. This results in the subject of their communication being the relation between them and their communication with each other. Madsen does not seem to understand this as a conversation with the explicit or locutionary content being about a relationship or about the way the two people are talking to each other (metacommunication), but rather that the communicated

intention – the illocutionary level of the utterances – is directed towards the people involved in the conversation and the relationship between them. If there is a subject outside of the people themselves, this will, according to Madsen, serve the function of solidifying the relation, if the interaction is to be understood as coming out of personal relations.

I understand the idea of personal relations as belonging to the inherent perspective, as the people involved are talking about themselves; i.e. there is no separable outcome, as we see below with professional relations.

Professional relations are defined as being *instrumental* in the sense that the communicating people here are together to perform a specific task outside of themselves and their relations – and not because they are seeking each other's company. These relations exist on the basis of external goals and instrumentality, but according to Madsen, this does not mean that affection, friendship, or conflict cannot arise in this professional context. Where many conversations may seem to be about the instrumental, they will almost always have a relational component to them as well – the difference being whether relational component is the primary aim or subject of the conversation or not (Madsen, 1993, pp. 51–53).

I understand the idea of professional relations as belonging to the instrumental perspective, as the people involved are communicating about and working towards an outcome separable from themselves. I find this differentiation interesting, as we might expect paid work to be more instrumental and volunteer work more personal.

Theory used for interviews: Meaning and meaningfulness

Where the above theories on play, sociability and, personal and professional relations will be used in the analysis of an interaction in the next chapter, Ditte and Dorte have also been interviewed about the situations, and to understand their perspective on these situations, they are asked about the meaning and meaningfulness of them.

In their review of the meaning of work, Rosso, Dekas, and Wrzesniewski (2010) argue that meaning and meaningfulness can best be seen as two distinct ideas, but that they are often confounded or used interchangeably in the literature. The authors suggest the following distinction:

Meaning

Meaning, according to Pratt and Ashforth (2003), is the output of having made sense of something, or what it signifies; as in an individual interpreting what her work means, or the role her work plays, in the context of her life ... Perceptions about meaning are ultimately determined by each individual, although they are also influenced by the environment or social context (Wrzesniewski et al., 2003) (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 94)

Meaning here seems to be understood 1) psychologically, as stemming primarily from the individual having primary agency in perceiving if something makes sense to them, and 2) as stemming from worldviews that are culturally or socially influenced. This aligns with the perspective of this thesis, where I seek to understand the two kinds of work based on 1) both Ditte and Dorthe's individual understandings of them and on 2) the organisational and structural circumstances surrounding these more psychological understandings, in which I also argue (cf. critical realism) that humans – including in our perceptions of meaning – are influenced by complex objects that may be unobservable, and whose influence we not always aware of.

Rosso et al. primarily looks at meaning as a positive term, arguing that this is the way it is used in the literature they review. I have used the term the same way, both when asking questions in interviews, where I seek to understand how Dorthe and Ditte perceive the meaning or purpose of certain actions, as well as in my subsequent analysis. For discussing a perceived negative sense made of something, I will use the term *unintended consequence*, from Jaffee (2001, p. 34).

Meaningfulness

Meaningfulness refers to the amount of significance something holds for an individual (Pratt & Ashforth, 2003). ... “Meaningful work” is therefore work experienced as particularly significant and holding more positive meaning for individuals. (Rosso et al., 2010, p. 95)

The difference between meaning and meaningfulness then comes down to the question of whether we are discussing what work signifies or how much it signifies this. Work can be considered to have meaning, but that will not automatically mean it also is considered meaningful. Meaning is *why I am doing this*, and meaningfulness is the *significance or importance this holds for me*. In interviews, it is the difference between asking Dorthe why she does something, and asking whether this is important to her or holds a particular value to her.

Communication as action – the theory of speech acts

Finally, I will present a theory used to analyse conversations. This is the theory of speech acts. This theory comes from pragmatic speech act theory (Alrø, Dahl, & Schumann, 2016; Searle, 1969; Vagle, Sandvik, & Svennevig, 1993) In the pragmatic approach to communication analysis, the relationship between language, language users, and context is studied as this is where the meaning of utterances can be interpreted. Language is not studied semantically as a system in itself. Instead language is studied by looking at how language users use it in a certain context to create specific meaning in actual use of the language. When a library user asks “do you have this book” – the user will usually not just expect the librarian to say: “yes” if they do, and then leave the conversation. Rather, the library user would probably expect the librarian to go and help find the book. Similarly if a person visiting a house says “it is cold in here”, they might have the intention to have the host close a window. In both these cases there is a difference between the actual uttered words, and the meaning they represent, in the context of the situation. But without knowing the context – e.g. that we are in a library, or that the utterance is said by a library user to a librarian – then we cannot easily interpret the meaning of the utterance.

Three levels of an utterance

The actual utterance in form of the words said are called the *locutionary* level. This level consists of the words and actions we can see and hear. The intention with an utterance is called the *illocutionary* level, and if the utterance and intention has an effect on a receiver, then that effect is referred to as the *perlocutionary* level.

So the locutionary level of the utterance “it is cold in here” is just that – it is the exact words we can hear or read in this case. The illocutionary level is the intention the speaker has with the utterance – in this case to *ask* or *persuade* a person to close the window. The perlocutionary level is the effect the first two levels has on the person being spoken to. If the person is persuaded to close the window this is the effect, and if the person is annoyed by the implicit request, then this can also be the effect.

Communication as action

When attempting to communicate our intentions to each other through the illocutionary level of an utterance, the theory suggests that we do not only speak, but that we perform actions, and thereby change reality. In this sense utterances such as demanding or persuading someone to do something are seen as actions. Vagle, Sandvik, & Svennevig have made the following classification of illocution-

ary speech acts.

Representatives

This includes actions such as claiming, informing, telling or explaining. For an utterance to have a representative nature, it has to be possible to understand its content as either true or false.

Directives

Attempt to make the receiver of the utterance do something. This includes actions such as requests, questions, demands, orders, invites and giving advice.

Commissives

Utterances where the speaker herself commits or promises to do something.

Expressives

Utterances where the main intention is to express a psychological state of mind such as congratulating, apologising, complimenting or condemning.

Declarations

Utterances which under specific conditions in themselves create a new reality. For a utterance to a declarative, it must be uttered by a person with the correct mandate. If e.g. a (non-ordained) dentist would say “I hereby pronounce you husband and wife” in the middle of the super market, this would not make two people lawfully married, but when a pastor does the same (in a church in front of witnesses) the effect of the same words is different.

(Vagle et al., 1993, pp. 89–92)

These five categories will be used to interpret the intentions expressed in the conversations, and they will be combined with the other theories presented in this chapter.

After having presented these the theories, it is now time to start analysing.

[17]

RELATIONAL AND COMMUNICATIONAL ANALYSIS

Why?

It makes no sense at all. On the field note I record on my phone (while trying to shield it from the rain) I literally find myself laughing at the notion that anyone would do this voluntarily. What I am able to observe here does not add up to something worth doing:

The weather is absolutely terrible now. Now it is actually snowing. Before it was more sleet and rain. It is also really cold – we are close to the freezing point. (Field note 8B, March 5, 2016)

What is going on, I wonder? Dorthie is taking part in her local scout groups' annual weekend campout, where all age groups in the local group are invited. At this point, she is standing outside the camp hut trying to gather (and keep) all the children in one place, while making them listen up, so they can begin the afternoon activity – a hike themed around 'A Journey into History', with four different stations, each based on a period in history. As I stand there, wearing layers upon layers of clothes, I am already freezing. I continue my field notes:

Seen in isolation – this really isn't a lot of fun – I mean at all :-)

(Field note 9C, March 5, 2016)

If I compare this with Dorte's work in the library, it seems to make even less sense.

The library is a nice, warm place, with a roof over our heads, making it quite a bit more physically comfortable to be standing there. On the other hand: although in a down-to-earth way the work is very different (groups of young people, outside, and camp setting vs. individual or small groups, inside, and library setting), the work Dorte does in the library during desk duties doesn't really seem to be that different from the work she does when running a station on a hike like this one. In both situations she seems to be the person holding knowledge about something either library borrowers or participating scout members need, making it her job to convey this knowledge to them, either in the form of finding a book for a borrower or by instructing scouts on the activity they will be doing at her station and how to do it. As we shall see below, the way Dorte communicates with borrowers and scouts also seems similarly focused on the task at hand – on initial inspection it seems to be quite instrumental, in the sense Madsen describes. In contrast to what I might expect when comparing it with the warm, dry library, Dorte does seem quite happy being outside in the scout setting. I am just not sure I understand why. On top of this, I notice something about the hat she is wearing:

Dorte is wearing a hat, with a piece of cardboard placed on it, with the word 'yes' written on it. In other words, it is a 'yes hat'. Besides this it is a classic scout hat (Baden-Powel style, I would think).

(field note 3, March 5, 2016)

Wearing a 'Yes Hat', is a Danish expression for someone who has a positive outlook on things, and says yes to new ideas and initiatives they encounter. Its opposite is the 'No Hat', which signals a person who says no to everything and has a generally negative outlook. I don't see her wearing a hat like this in the library. So maybe there is still something going on that this initial look cannot entirely grasp.

What is going on here, then?

Does Dorte actually enjoy being in situations like these, and does she consider it meaningful? Would she really much prefer being inside with a hot cup of tea in this particular situation, and what does she consider the purpose of the activity she is doing?

The 'why' question becomes no easier to answer when looking at *Ditte* and her work. I have also found myself standing next to her outside, deliberately about 500 metres *away* from a nice warm camp hut. It was around midnight and as we

were near the ocean it was an extremely cold and very windy environment. Ditte was standing there for a couple of hours, asking scout children to balance a large wooden disk so that a ball would go through a hole in the middle and not fall off the edge. When comparing this with having seemingly pleasant and stimulating conversations with her colleague Ulla while at work in the municipality, which is indoors, warm, not windy, and well-lit, I end up with the same question: Why?

What I am describing here is the paradox inherent in understanding the merits of doing this work voluntarily – that is what I am referring to when asking why. The current chapter will seek to explain how doing this type of activity can still have meaning and be considered meaningful by the people doing it. This will, as before, be done by looking both at what characterises the work and how the work is experienced.

In contrast with the previous chapters, this chapter will only contain analysis of Dorte's work. The instrumental pattern we shall see in Dorte's paid work and the playful and sociable one we shall see in her volunteer work, are very similar to what happens in the conversations Ditte has had in her work. As these types of analysis are page-consuming and the result would be quite similar, I have only included the one.

The chapter is based on the analysis of concrete video-observed situations taken from Dorte's paid and volunteer work, combined with her own understandings of these situations from interviews in which we watched the videos together. Observed situations that were not video recorded are also to a small extent included, based on field notes and to a small extent the combined memories of myself and Dorte.

The chapter presents analysis of two situations from Dorte's paid and volunteer work which will be analysed, compared, and discussed. The chapter will finish with a broader discussion of the analyses.

At the beginning of each analysis of a specific conversation is a full transcript of the analysed portion, followed by analysing and explaining the conversation in more detail.

Dorte doing paid work in the library: Desk duty

Dorte is a good hour into a morning desk duty as she is standing at the desk in one of the library branches working on the computer there. Voices are heard talking in the background – there are a couple of users in the library already, but none of them are near Dorte. The desk is placed facing the entry door to the library, meaning Dorte can see when people enter and leave. Jens, a white-haired man in perhaps his sixties, walks through the door.

Transcript

1 Dorthé: Hello there. (.) Can I help you?

Dorthé: Davs. Kan jeg hjælpe dig?

2 Jens: That could well be – this is the first time I have come in here.

Jens: Det kan godt tænkes. Det er første gang jeg er her.

3 Dorthé: Okay, in that case, I am quite sure I can help you.

Dorthé: Ja, så tror jeg da godt jeg kan hjælpe dig.

4 Jens: I see. How do you go about, er...?

Jens: Nårh. Hvordan gør man sådan oh?

5 Dorthé: Well, if you haven't borrowed from the library before, then we just need to register you as a borrower and then we use your national health card these days ... and we will just do that over here by me. We can begin by doing that, at least.

Dorthé: Altså hvis du ikke har lånt på biblioteket før så skal du lige oprettes som låner, og så bruger vi dit sundhedskort nu om dage ... og det gør vi bare herovre ved mig. Det kan vi i hvert fald starte med.

6 Jens: We can begin by doing that – that's a beginning for sure.

Jens: Det kan vi starte med - så er vi da i gang.

7 Dorthé: Yes, yes.

Dorthé: Ja ja.

...

While Dorthé is registering Jens as a borrower, a woman (Britta) has entered the library and walks up to the desk and is now standing next to Jens. Britta and Jens seem to know each other, as neither of them takes special notice of the other person standing next to them (as one would likely do with a stranger).

8 Dorthé: Yes, [smiles] and you are an adult, I can see.

Dorthé: Ja (smiles) og så er du voksen kan jeg se.

9 Jens: Completely. [smiles]

Jens: Fuldstændig (smiles)

10 Dorthé: [laughing] Yes. You need a four-digit pin code that you know you will be able to remember if you need it in self-service or from the computer at home.

Dorthé: (laughing) ja. Du skal have en pinkode på fire tal som du ved du kan huske hvis du skal bruge det i selvbetjeningen eller hjemme fra computeren

11 Jens: Can I choose whatever I want?

Jens: Er det lige meget hvad det er for et?

12 Dorthé: Absolutely. Four digits that you just know you will be able to remember.

Dorthé: Fuldstændigt. Fire tal som du bare ved du kan huske.

13 Jens: [Says numbers]

Jens: [Says numbers]

14 Dorthé. Yes. And then is it possible for me to message you via e-mail or text,

if you use that?

Dorthe: Ja. Og så har jeg mulighed for at skrive beskeeder til dig på e-mail og SMS hvis du bruger det?

15 Jens: I don't.

Jens: Det gør jeg ikke.

16 Dorthe: You don't? Not any of those?

Dorthe: Det gør du ikke? Ikke nogle af delene?

17 Britta: You do text.

Britta: SMS bruger du da.

18 Jens: Well yes, I do that.

Jens: Nårh ja, det gør jeg.

19 Dorthe: It is if you reserve something and it arrives here, then you will receive a text on your phone about it.

Dorthe: Det er sådan hvis du reserverer noget og det kommer hjem så får du en SMS på telefonen om det.

20 Jens: [reads out phone number]

Jens: [reads out phone number]

21 Dorthe: All right then. Now you are registered as a borrower.

Dorthe: Sådan der. Så er du oprettet som låner.

22 Jens: Okay.

Jens: Okay.

23 Dorthe: Yes.

Dorthe: Ja.

...

24 Jens: Very well. Let's give it a try then. [they walk off into the library]

Jens: Det er godt nok. Så prøver vi. [they walk off into the library]

(Dorthe, 2016a, pt. 00:12:21-00:15:02)

Nine minutes later (10:56 - 11:05) Jens and Britta return to the desk after having spent time in the library.

25 Jens: What do I do then? [walking towards the desk, holding books in his hand]

Jens: Hvad gør jeg så? (walking towards the desk holding books in his hand)

26 Dorthe: You found some things you needed or could use?

Dorthe: I fandt lidt I skulle bruge eller kunne bruge?

27 Jens: Yes.

Jens: Ja.

28 Dorthe: Yes.

Dorthe: Ja.

29 Jens: Are you able to see if you ever had one of these? [showing Dorthe a note] Carsten Jensen; Vi de druknede [Book title]

Jens: Kan du se om I nogensinde har haft sådan en? (showing Dorthe a note) Carsten Jensen; Vi de druknede.

30 Dorthe: Yes, that we have for sure. It is likely out on loan, I would think. But

let me just try.

Dorthe: Ja det har vi da i hvert fald. Den er sikkert lånt ud vil jeg tro. Men jeg prøver lige.

31 Jens: Okay, yeah, because I cannot find it up there.

Jens: Nårh ja for jeg kan ikke finde den deroppe

32 Dorthe: No, I will just try and see if I can find it [types on keyboard]. It is quite popular still.

Dorthe: Nej, jeg prøver lige og finde den engang (types on keyboard) Den er rimeligt populær stadigvæk.

33 Jens: Okay, well what do you know.

Jens: Nårh, jamen ved du hvad.

34 Dorthe: Er no, it is supposed to be here actually.

Dorthe: Øh nej den skulle stå hjemme godt nok

35 Britta: Oh?

Britta: Nårh?

36 Jens: It is supposed to be here?

Jens: Skulle den stå hjemme?

37 Dorthe: Yeah. Let me just try and see if I can't find it then.

Dorthe: Ja. Jeg prøver lige og se om ikke jeg kan finde den så.

(Dorthe, 2016a, pt. 00:21:48-00:22:15)

Dorthe walks off into the library, looking for the book.

Analysis of communication

When Jens walks through the door, Dorthe greets him by saying, 'Hello there', while Jens continues walking, turning further into the library. He then stops and turns towards Dorthe, at which point she says, 'Can I help you?' I interpret this as being directive and commissive in the situation, as Dorthe is prompting the man to state whether he needs help, while at the same time communicating her willingness to help him. I will also argue that Dorthe establishes a line in which Jens has entered into an area where she sees herself as sort of a host – as someone who welcomes people into this area, and in which it is her job to help them out. Jens responds, 'That could well be – this is the first time I have come in here.' With this he seems to be accepting Dorthe's commissive offer, with a slight reservation: 'could well be'. He then informs her that this is his first time in the library, which I interpret as him asking Dorthe for further help, as the information he provides implicitly seems to function as a directive here if he sees Dorthe as someone who ought to help people who are in the library for the first time. Dorthe seems to accept this line, as she responds with what I interpret as another commissive, in which she emphasises that she is able to help him, while at the same time responding to his slight reservation: 'Okay, in that case, I am quite sure I can help you'. Dorthe seems to inform him that he was right in his assumption, and that she

does not have any reservations in regard to being able to help him. With Goffman, I would argue that Dorthe is taking on a line as someone who is good at helping people who have never been in the library before – *I am quite sure I can help you* – which could be said to differ slightly from Jens’ initial line, in which he seems a little uncertain of whether Dorthe is the right person to help him. Jens then continues, *‘I see. How do you go about, er...?’*. Having now communicated his intention of using the library’s services somehow, he seemingly does not know exactly what to do, and asks Dorthe for help.

This is followed by three instances of representative speech acts in which Dorthe informs and explains some aspects of how the library system works, combined with directive acts towards Jens as she asks him for some information and gives him certain choices. The communication between Jens and Dorthe seems focused on completing a task outside themselves in these instances, which indicates that their relation is *professional* and the purpose here *instrumental*.

Dorthe begins by saying, *‘Well if you haven’t borrowed from the library before, then we just need to register you as a borrower, and then we use your national health card these days ... and we will just do that over here by me. We can begin by doing that, at least.’* Jens repeats the last part of Dorthe’s sentence as he seems to commit himself to being registered: *‘We can begin by doing that – that’s a beginning, for sure.’*

I interpret this as Dorthe speaking with a voice representing the library system here, and that this voice has a certain authority in this conversation. Dorthe understands how the library borrower records system works, and informs the man using the imperative form that they ‘need to register’ him as a borrower, and that this is done using his national health card. As we know from the organisational analysis, Dorthe does not have a choice in this, as she has to follow the formalised rules for borrower registration. I would also argue that she consequently does not give him any choices, but simply informs him of how things are. In this way she adds something to the initial host line, as she here seems to define her own role as also involving conveying information about the library systems to Jens. This continues in the second instance, where Dorthe seems to inform and direct Jens through another part of the process: *‘You need a four-digit pin code that you know you will be able to remember if you need it in self-service or from the computer at home.’* Jens, seemingly accepting Dorthe’s host line as a form of owner of the library system, asks her about how this part of the system works: *‘Can I choose whatever I want?’* Dorthe responds, *‘Absolutely. Four digits that you just know you will be able to remember.’* And Jens then says the numbers he has selected. This is followed by the third instance, in which Dorthe explains how the library can send Jens messages if he reserves something, which then arrives (Lines 19-20). As this seems to follow the

same pattern as the two already detailed above, I will not elaborate further here. There is, however, one utterance that falls outside the pattern described above. As Dorthe is typing what must be information about Jens into the computer, she looks at him, not changing her tone of voice from the previous interaction, and says, 'Yes, and you are an adult, I can see', while smiling. Jens answers, 'Completely', with his expression also turning into a smile. As Jens in no way at all resembles a child, it seems Dorthe is making a joke here. She likely needs to register in the system whether the borrower is an adult or a child, but there is no need for her to ask Jens about this, if we look at the instrumental purpose of ascertaining his status as an adult man. I will argue that this is a short departure from the otherwise seemingly instrumental pattern of the conversation, and that this short moment seems paratelic and playful in the sense that it seems to serve no purpose outside the bit of enjoyment they both seem to gain from this short exchange. (They both smile, and Jens does not respond with confusion, but seems to accept and somewhat enjoy the joke. He seems to give what conversation analysts would call a *preferred answer* (Nielsen & Nielsen, 2005, pp. 67–68) to Dorthe's joke.) The remark does not seem to serve an instrumental purpose in terms of registering Jens or finding library materials for him. Rather, it could be seen as an instance of what Karoff (2013) calls the *exceeding* practice, where Dorthe is breaking away from the expected way of acting and from the communicative pattern she has followed up to this point and returns to afterwards. Karoff argues that in children's play, the exceeding practice is associated with the play mood of euphoria. In the adult world of Dorthe and Jens, this seems to have been reduced to a mere chuckle, but the silly remark from Dorthe does seem to change the mood to something perhaps cheerful, as the interaction before and after this situation involves less smiling than what we see during the joke.

This first part of this segment finishes with Dorthe saying, 'All right then. Now you are registered as a borrower', which I argue has some declarative in it, as Dorthe, as a librarian, with her knowledge of the systems, is the one who has the mandate and ability to make people borrowers. Thus she also is empowered to inform Jens that they have now completed the process of registering him. After Britta asks a question about the usage of the pin code for the library's online services and Dorthe answers, Jens finishes off the interaction by saying, 'Very well. Let's give it a try, then', followed by the two of them walking into the library.

Nine minutes later

After having spent time in the library, Jens and Britta return to the desk. Jens is now carrying two books. Jens first asks what to do next, and Dorthe asks Jens and Britta if they found what they needed (line 26). Jens then shows Dorthe

a note and says, *'Are you able to see if you ever had one of these? Carsten Jensen; Vi de druknede'*. Jens asks Dorthé about something he possibly presumes she will be able to find in the library system. Dorthé responds, *'Yes, that we have for sure. It is likely out on loan, I would think. But let me just try.'* I interpret from Dorthé's answer that she knows the title quite well (*'for sure'*), and that she draws on her experience about which titles are popular when saying, *'likely out on loan'*. Jens was unable to find the book, but Dorthé looks it up on the computer and sees it should be on the shelf. She walks out into the library, finds the book, and returns to the desk, upon which Jens says:

38 Jens: Well I never [smiling]. That's a big one.

Nårh for katten (smiling) Det var en stor en.

39 Dorthé: That's a big one, yeah. That's enough for quite some time

Dorthé: Det er en stor en, ja. Der er til et stykke tid.

40 Jens: Yeah, then I will just have to make an effort

Jens: Ja, så må jeg jo ligge mig i selen

41 Britta: Then you will just have to, yeah; and it wouldn't hurt you to sit down and read.

Britta: Så må du ja; det gør heller ikke noget du sætter dig ned og læser

42 Jens: No no, now there is a little something happening.

Jens: Nej nej, nu sker der da lige lidt

43 Dorthé: If you were to have; what's the word – not being able to get through it in 30 days, then you also have the option of calling in here and asking us if we can renew it. There were two checked in at the other libraries also ... so it isn't – there isn't that high of a demand for it. It is in circulation, but there are no reservations on it.

Dorthé: Hvis du skulle få, hvad bedder det; ikke kunne nå igennem den på 30 dage så kan du også godt ringe herind og spørge om ikke vi kan forny den. Der var to hjemme på de andre biblioteker også udover den her, så det er ikke; så meget efterspørgsel er der ikke på den. Den er i omløb, men der er ikke reserveringer på den.

(Dorthé, 2016a, pt. 00:22:48-00:23:16)

I interpret Jens' use of: *'Well I never'* as an expressive speech act. Jens seems surprised that Dorthé found the book, and perhaps slightly embarrassed that he was not able to find the book himself. He then continues by representatively noting that the book is big, which Dorthé seems to agree with him on, as she repeats his words: *'That's a big one, yeah'*, followed by pointing out that the book is *'enough for quite some time'*. When Jens first says that the book is big, this could be seen as a line where he is perhaps slightly overwhelmed by its size. Jens then commissively says he will *'just have to make an effort'*, thereby seeming to commit himself to read the book regardless of its size, and also possibly adjusting his line to being someone who can overcome this challenge. In Goffman's words, Jens is then saving

face as he communicatively expresses that he is able to manage. Britta seems to agree with Jens having to make an effort, as she begins by repeating his words (line 41) and adds a *'yeab'*. She then says, *'and it wouldn't hurt you to sit down and read'*, both parts of which I interpret as directives; Britta seems to be telling Jens that she thinks he should sit down and read. At the same time, the last part can be seen as threatening Jens' face, as Britta, with her line, seems to place herself as someone who can tell Jens what he needs, and thereby also challenges a line from Jens as a man who is able to make these decisions on his own. Jens responds, starting with *'no no'*, which could indicate that he is not willing to commissively accept the directive from Britta as such, and that he is keeping face.

As the last part of the above transcription, Dorte then explains how it is possible to extend the loan period of 30 days. There doesn't seem to be any directives from Jens and Britta directed at Dorte at this point in the conversation, so in that sense Dorte's utterance could be seen as unprompted by them. But I still interpret Dorte's words as a form of response to their previous utterances. I would argue that Dorte likely heard – both from Jens noting the size of the book and from the exchange between Jens and Britta – that the book seems larger than Jens had expected, and that it might prove a challenge for him, although he might not be happy to project an image of himself as someone having problems with this. Dorte knows that this book will be checked out to Jens for 30 days, as this is the standard amount of time for that kind of library material, and she perhaps considers whether this is enough time for Jens to get through it. Dorte, having understood the potential face threat, seems to only carefully bring up the possibility of Jens not managing to read the book within 30 days, as she says, *'If you were to have; what's the word – not being able to get through it in 30 days'*, thereby seeming to only bring it up as a possibility, which I would argue is further downgraded by her rephrasing of her sentence. In other words, Dorte seems to hear a potential need in the conversation between her, Jens, and Britta, and then representatively informs Jens about both how many days he will have the book, and the option to extend this time period. Here she is again speaking with the voice of the library and its systems, but doing so in a way that seems focused on speaking to Jens in a way he would like to be spoken to (respecting his line, and thereby not being face-threatening). Summing up, I would argue that Dorte acts in a service-minded way in this situation, and that she does so while respecting the library user's face. As a final note, it can be seen that Dorte is also committing the library to future actions as she promises that not she personally, but presumably any librarian will extend the loan if Jens calls in. In other words, Dorte seems to rely on her colleagues treating a certain borrower request in a

certain way.

In the library, Dorte communicates with individuals

Another way to look at this type of library work is to look at whether it seems focused on individuals or groups of people. In this situation, Dorte seems to be primarily addressing individuals. Even though Britta also takes part in the conversation, Dorte does not seem to talk with Jens and Britta as a group doing something together, but rather as two individuals receiving instructions about something they each can do in parallel with each other. For the most part it is Jens receiving instructions. Dorte seems to primarily refer to herself in the singular, using 'I' or 'me' – e.g. when talking about whether she can help Jens (line 1). Dorte does, however, talk about a 'we' when referring to things she will be doing together with Jens. When registering him as a borrower, she refers to that this as something 'we' (i.e. they) will do together. (line 5) Finally, she seems to be referring to the library as an institution a number of times as well. Once using 'we', when answering the question of whether the library has the book Jens is looking for (line 30), and a few other times using the passive voice with no personal pronoun – e.g. when explaining how Jens will receive a message if he has reserved something (line 19). In that sentence, Dorte does not specify a person or institution that will send this message, but simply states that when something arrives at the library, Jens *'will receive a text'*. This could be said to underline the fact that she is in some instances speaking with the voice of the library, and not just her own voice as an individual.

Overall, I will argue that borrowing books is, as a point of departure, an individual undertaking. It is not an activity that seems to require or incite co-operation. Even when talking to Jens and Britta using the plural you, Dorte seems to be doing so in such a way that she is still referring to doing something as an individual. As I shall return to below, this differentiates the activity from the scout work we see Dorte do.

Patterns: Summing up so far

Communicatively, Dorte seems to primarily be:

- informing about and explaining how the library systems work (representatives).
- asking Jens and Britta about things the system needs to have registered and directing them into acting in certain ways (directives).
- offering and giving her help, and expressing commitments that in some cases will not be fulfilled by herself, but by another, unspecified librari-

an (commissives).

- addressing library users (here Jens and Britta) as individuals.
- being aware of how people wish to be addressed and respecting this (facework).

Dorthe seems to express an understanding (line) of the relation between herself and Jens in which she has the mandate or the authority to explain to Jens how the library borrowing system works and to direct him into this system. This line seems to be initiated by Dorthe, and it is not challenged by Jens, who also seems to share it, as his initial statements involve asking her for help. I also see a pattern in Dorthe representing the library as a system here, meaning that there are a number of things about how the library works that it is not up to her (or Jens) to decide.

Communication: Professional <-> personal relation

If we look at the situation with Madsen's (1993) distinction between the professional and personal, the relation seems *professional* between Dorthe on one side and Jens and Britta on the other. The content of their conversation focuses on Jens' needs as a new library user. The relation between them is not in focus, nor does the conversation seem to take place with the purpose of solidifying or building up the relational dimension between them. Dorthe's joke seems to be the only exception to this, and what this implies for the interpersonal relation will be discussed further below.

State of mind: Telic <-> paratelic

I will interpret the situation in the library as what Apter (1991) refers to as serious or *telic*, as the activity intentionally has implications beyond the current moment. Dorthe is not registering Jens as a borrower for the inherent qualities of the activity, but rather so that Jens is able to borrow materials from the library; the same is true of finding the book Jens was looking for. These are means to other ends. Also, the library does not seem to function as a protective frame from the telic, but rather as a frame wherein certain types of telic activities are conducted.

Dorthe's thoughts on this situation – Meaning and meaningfulness

I show Dorthe the video recording of the above situation, after which I ask her some questions inspired by the previously described distinction between meaning and meaningfulness (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010). My aim is to understand:

1) what this type of activity signifies to Dorthe; how she makes sense of its reason for being the way it is (what its *meaning* is)

2) whether she considers this important, particularly valuable, or indeed *meaningful* to her as a person.

I start by asking about the meaning:

Dennis: Why do you do things the way you do them here? So, I know a lot of different things are happening, but what is actually the purpose of doing things like this as a librarian?

Dorthe: That is to try and offer the best possible service you can. So to help of course – there is a book he has been looking for. He cannot find it, and then I find it because it luckily turned out to actually be here. And help them self-help also – when they come outside service hours, then they are also themselves able to use the screen and gain entrance and so on. And then to equip people so that they can help themselves, but at the same time also to help them. When I actually am present and am able to go and find the book, then I of course should do that.

(Dorthe, 2018, pt. 01:02:42-01:03:39)

Dorthe's answer seems to point towards the instrumental purpose of the interaction with Jens and Britta, both in terms of helping people find materials (a library-related need) when she is present, and also in terms of making it possible for people to enter the library and hand in or borrow materials when she is not present.

I follow up on this answer by trying to identify whether she considers this activity meaningful:

Dennis: So what are your thoughts on an activity like this one? Isn't this fairly standard?

Dorthe: Yes. To register a borrower and to just guide them a bit? Yes.

Dennis: ... Is this the kind of thing where you think, 'Ahh, this is actually – this is nice, this is'?

Dorthe: I do like it, because I like having the contact with people. And I have been a [super market] check-out assistant for many years, you see, and I actually also liked sitting at the check-out, even though you were to just sit there and pass products through – because there always was a bit of ping-pong, or there could be, if people were in a mood for it. It is fun to talk with people, and I usually also approach this with a bit of humour.

Here I just noted that the sweet older gentleman, that he was an adult, you see?

Dennis: Yes exactly, yes.

Dorthe: That doesn't hurt, and there are some where you can tell, 'Here we just need to be completely straight', you see. But with most people, you can do one thing or another to have a bit of fun together.

(Dorthe, 2018, pt. 01:08:27-01:09:14)

Dorthe seems to find value in having this concrete type of contact with borrowers, but in contrast to her above description of meaning, which seems to focus on the instrumental value of these actions towards goals of allowing people to get their materials and to access and use the library outside of service hours, she seems to understand the meaningfulness of the activity in terms of the relations she has with the borrowers.

What Dorthe describes actually seems quite similar to Simmel's description of sociability. Dorthe seems to describe a satisfaction coming from being associated with other people – a satisfaction that accompanies the other reasons for being together with other people, both when working at the supermarket and at the library. This begs the question of whether she will feel and seek this satisfaction in all her endeavours, both paid and volunteer, or if we are able to find differences. We will return to this question in the discussion later in the chapter.

At another point in the interview, I asked her whether she could see herself doing library work without getting paid for it. She says that she could continue doing some of the things she does today paid. I ask:

Dennis: What would you keep?

Dorthe: I would really like to keep the desk duties and the teaching – so the culture and teaching events. So all the things with people, and then there is probably some paperwork that I could do without, actually.

(Dorthe, 2018, pt. 00:55:24-00:55:10)

Dorthe says she would like to keep the activities involving contact with other people, which would also be the activities where the enjoyment of sociability would be possible. She says she would like to do without some of the paperwork, which seemingly is not an activity from which she takes the same satisfaction. In other words it seems to be a telic or extrinsically motivated activity, where the outcome is somewhat external to Dorthe.

Summing up, the work would seem to be primarily instrumental, but with Dorthe

valuing what seems to be an inherent value in the potential sociability of it.

Sociability

While Dorte has described that she likes these activities involving contact with other people in a way that sounds like sociability, there does arguably also seem to be what Simmel calls *objective aims* with the interaction in the library (the telic state and professional relation described above). The question is if the above interaction (and others similar to it), would also have the qualities Simmel describes as being sociability in the narrower sense?

Simmel's narrower understanding of sociability seems to require that the interaction not be guided by 'intentions and events of practical reality' (Simmel, 1911/1949, pp. 257–258), which do seem to guide library interactions. Sociability is described as unity, as free-playing, interacting interdependence, and as in opposition to practical reality. The telic and professional-relations state of the library conversation does not seem to meet these requirements. These conversations do seem to have the *objective content and purpose* that Simmel argues can prevent sociability. The conversations do not seem to be about '*absolutely personal and subjective matters*' (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 256) for any of the individuals in the conversation, and rather than being oriented towards unity among them, they seem oriented towards library matters. These people might very well enjoy being together, but there is nothing to indicate that their primary goal in this interaction is the enjoyment of each other's company. Jens does not seem to talk to Dorte with the goal of talking to Dorte; and although she says she likes the contact with people (Dorte, 2018, pt. 01:08:27-01:09:14), Dorte also describes the activity as being focused on offering a good level of service to these library users, as we also see demonstrated in the conversation. This is not to say that the conversation partners are faking their politeness towards each other. They do not seem to be pretending to be sociable or to be faking any enjoyment of associating. They also seem respectful of each other's face, but this seems not to be in the sociable sense of it.

Finally, it could be argued that there are formal rules guiding how Dorte is to address Jens. As a representative of a public library she must offer him the same service as any other person entering the library, meaning it is not up to her own discretion how she talks to him or what she offers to do. In other words, their interaction does not seem to be primarily reliant on good form. Dorte is required to act in certain ways here.

Summing up, it could be argued that some of the conditions for sociability are present, but the activity seems too telic or based on goals outside the interaction

itself to contain sociability in the narrower sense.

After this initial analysis of the situation from Dorthe's paid work, we will turn in the following section to her volunteer work.

Dorthe doing volunteer work as a scout – Weekend camp

The selected part of Dorthe's volunteer work comes from the camp described in the introduction to this chapter. Dorthe is taking part in her local scout groups' annual weekend camp, where all age groups in the local group are invited to join in. She is one of six adult scout leaders present at the camp; they are there with approximately 30 children. The camp runs from Saturday to Sunday. The selected situation is from Saturday after lunch, when the children are sent on a hike themed around 'A Journey into History'. The hike consists of four different stations, each revolving around a different period in history. The children are divided into four groups, and take turns visiting each of the four stations. The selected data is from the first group visiting Dorthe's station, 'The Viking Age', where the children make Viking swords using duct tape and foam. The temperature is just above 0 degrees Celsius, and the weather alternates between rain and sleet. The selected situation starts with Dorthe having gathered the first group of children for her station. She begins by reading a text she prepared about the Viking age.

Transcript

1 Dorthe: The Viking Age lasted from the year 800 to the year 1050. The Vikings were the people living in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden during this period of time. The name of the period of time does not, in other words, say anything about the materials people made their tools and weapons out of, in the way that the names of the stone age, bronze age, and iron age do. Instead, the name tells us that the people living at this time were called Vikings. ... The Vikings were mostly known for their raids, but not everyone went raiding during this time period. Most people in the Viking age were peaceful farmers or traders. Still, the sword was important for most Vikings, regardless of whether they were raiding in England or at home in the longhouse. So we will be making Viking swords [U], and we will make them as duct tape swords, so now you will just get the instructions.

Dorthe: Vikingetiden varede fra år 800 til år 1050. Vikingerne var de mennesker der boede i Danmark, Norge og Sverige i denne tidsperiode. Tidsperiodens navn fortæller altså ikke om hvilke materialer folk lavede deres redskaber og våben af, sådan som det er tilfældet med navnene på stenalderen, bronzevalderen og jernalderen. Navnet fortæller istedet at de mennesker der levede på den tid blev kaldt vikinger. ... Vikingerne blev mest kendte for deres plyndringstogter, men ikke alle på vikingetiden tog på tog. De fleste mennesker i vikingetiden var fredelige landmand eller handelsfolk. Dog var sværdet vigtigt for de fleste vikinger nanset om de var på tog til England eller hjemme i langhuset. Så vi skal lave vikingesværd [Incomprehensible] og det laver vi så som gaffasværd [Incomprehensible] så nu får I lige en instruktion [UF]"

2 Child: Will we get to bring it home?

Får vi det med hjem?

3 Dorth: Er, I think you will be able to make approximately two, so it will be the patrol that gets it. Er, this one you will use as a template, when you draw after on the roll mat. You must make three pieces, which look like this; in the middle piece, you just have to cut a hole in it, you can see it here, in the middle one here, you must cut an oblong hole [UI] so that the conduit pipe becomes the core of the weapon so it doesn't break, and you will fix that all together with double adhesive tape – these three things here [UI], and here is the template, which must be used inside the sword. This you must use for cutting after, when you saw your pipe, and you will start by making two, so we need someone to draw and cut on the roll mat, and we need someone to saw pipe.

"Øhm, jeg tror I kan lave cirka 2, så det, så det bliver patruljen der får det (.) øhm, den her det er den I bruger som skabelon, når I skal tegne efter på liggeunderlaget. I skal lave tre stykker, der ser sådan her ud, I det midterste stykke så skal I lige skære hul I det, I kan se den her, I den midterste her, der skal skæres et aflangt hul [UF] sådan at elektrikerroret bliver våbenets kerne så det ikke knækker, og det limer man så sammen med dobbeltklæbende tape de her tre ting [UF] og her er den skabelon, den skal bruges inde I sværdet, den skal I bruge til at skære efter når I saver I jeres rør og I starter med at lave to, så vi skal have nogle til at tegne og skære I liggeunderlaget og vi skal have nogle til at save I et rør."

4 Child: I want to saw the pipe!

Jeg vil save rør

5 Child 2: I want to saw the pipe!

Jeg vil save rør

6 Child 3: I also want to saw the pipe.

Jeg vil også save rør

7 Dorth: We will start with the two of you, so you can take this, and you can take a pipe.

Vi starter med jer to, så kan I tage den her og I kan tage et rør

8 Dorth: It is probably better if there are three on this, so there are some who can hold the pipe and someone who can saw. You must do it on the table over there [points].

I må nok hellere være tre om det, så der er nogle til at holde roret og nogen til at save. I skal gøre det på bordet derhenne (peger)

9 Child 1: Dibs on sawing!

Helle for save

10 Child 2: No, I want to saw!

Nej, jeg vil save

11 Child 1: You will saw one time.

Du saver en gang

12 Child 2: Okay.

Jarh,

13 Child 1: You will saw one.

Du saver en

14 Child 3: I also want to, I also want to, I also want to!

Jeg vil også, jeg vil også, jeg vil også

15 Child 1: But we have to hold first.

Men vi skal holde først

(Dorthe, 2016b, pt. 00:06:32-00:09:18)

Analysis of communication

Dorthe starts by reading the introduction text (line 1), which finishes with the following: *Most people in the Viking age were peaceful farmers or traders. Still, the sword was important for most Vikings, regardless of whether they were raiding in England or at home in the longhouse. So, we will be making Viking swords [UI] and we will make them as duct tape swords, so now you will just get the instructions.*

The introduction text seems to be representative, as this is Dorthe informing the children about what the Viking age was. The last sentence differs from the rest of the intro, as I interpret this as being both representative and directive in the situation. Dorthe is basically *informing* the children about how things *are* in terms of what they will be doing now. She is not suggesting an activity, nor is she asking the children if they agree. Instead she *directively* tells them what to do next. Secondly, the use of ‘so’ implies a connection between the parts before and after this word. Dorthe seems to be saying that the description of what the Viking age was, and perhaps in particular the information that swords were important to all Vikings, is the *reason* for making Viking swords, which here will be made as duct tape swords. I am detailing this line of reasoning because this is something I will return to when discussing the inherent or instrumental nature of the activity.

The children seem to accept this overall relation (line), where Dorthe can legitimately inform them about what they will do here. We can at least see that no one questions the overall task they have now been given, but rather they ask more specific questions about what will be taking place. One child responds, ‘*Will we get to bring it home?*’ The child is asking Dorthe about what will happen with the sword they make, and he is thereby also recognizing that this is something Dorthe decides on. At the same time, I would argue that he implicitly also accepts that this is the activity they will be doing, i.e. that Dorthe decides this for them.

Dorthe replies to the question by saying, ‘*Er, I think you will be able to make approximately two, so it will be the patrol that gets it*’, which again is her *representatively informing* them about how things are. At the same time, she hesitates while saying this, which I interpret as apologizing slightly for not fulfilling the hope of the child who wanted to bring the sword home. With Goffman we could say that she is protecting the child’s face, as his line seemed based on the idea or hope of getting to bring the sword home. Dorthe continues by *explaining* how a duct tape sword is made (line 3). The initial explanation can be said to both have a representative

and directive function. On the one hand, Dorthé is informing. She is conveying information about how a duct tape sword is constructed. On the other hand, this also seemingly functions as a directive, as she is here detailing what the children are supposed to do next. The last part, with the explicit directive, specifies how the overall task of building the sword will be divided into smaller tasks, and how many children are needed for each part. Dorthé does not say who should do what. Instead the logic seems to be that the children can choose themselves. We see this as three children quite quickly, one after the other, respond by saying:

Child: I want to saw the pipe!

Child 2: I want to saw the pipe!

Child 3: I also want to saw the pipe.

The children say which task they want with the expressive ‘*I want to saw*’ which I would also argue has a directive function here, as they are asking to be chosen for this task. Dorthé first directly decides that two of them should saw: ‘*We will start with the two of you, so you can take this, and you can take a pipe*’. She then seems to change her mind and directly ask all three of them to work on this task: ‘*It is probably better if there are three on this, so there are some who can hold the pipe and someone who can saw. You must do it on the table over there [points]*’. Dorthé again decides who gets to do what, and the children accept her legitimacy to make this decision.

Dorthé gives directives, and the children seem to know that they themselves can negotiate and discuss who does what among themselves, but they do not question what the activity will be about. Their questions and requests are regarding what the framework of the station is, not if it can be changed. This pattern continues during the activity: Dorthé sets out a frame, and the children ask her what they are to do, and who is allowed to do which task.

As can be seen here, Dorthé communicatively primarily explains (representatives) and decides (directives). She explains how to make the sword and decides how this will be done and by whom. The children do not ask if this is something Dorthé wants to do or not; in fact, Dorthé’s role as an unpaid volunteer is never mentioned, nor does it seem to be an implicit part of the conversation taking place. (The same is the case in the library, where Dorthé’s status as a paid employee is never mentioned.) The children are not asking Dorthé what she would like to do, and I would argue that doing so would be out of place, as Dorthé has already framed the relation between her and the children in a way where she informs and directs and they follow her directives, but have some freedom in asking what the frame is, and in deciding which task to take on.

A group-based activity

The activity seems to be oriented towards the children as a group more than towards them as individuals, in a number of ways. First, Dorthe begins by noting that ‘we’ will be making swords, which seems to include the entire group, including herself. In the next phrase, however, she says ‘you’¹ will be getting the instructions, indicating that she herself is the one giving the instructions, as she has the knowledge needed. When one of the children asks if they will get to bring it home by using ‘we’ (line 2), I would argue that he likely assumes that they will be making one sword per person in the group, meaning that ‘we’ here refers to everyone being allowed to bring what would then be their own sword home. In other words, the child seems to be asking from an individual point of view – where he would end up with a sword of his own – but Dorthe answers this by referring back to the children as a group, when she says ‘you’ when telling them how many swords they will be able to make. As the production of the swords begins, we see that Dorthe begins referring to individual children and smaller fractions of the entire group, e.g. when deciding who will get to saw (*‘we will start with the two of you’*). So when directing how the work will be done, she makes decisions about who will do what part of the work, and seems focused on everybody taking part in the production at one time or another. In this process of organising the work, she refers to the children as individuals who are taking part in the group effort of making the sword. An additional example of this can be seen in the following excerpt, which takes place approximately five minutes after the situation in the transcript above.

Holding the milk-carton scout figure

Before beginning the activity and going from station to station, the groups of children were told to make a miniature scout out of cardboard and an old milk carton. This milk carton scout is to be carried around with the group as they go through the afternoon activities. In the interaction below, also taken from Dorthe’s station, Peter is carrying the figure, as the others are working on making the swords. Peter addresses Carl, saying:

16 Peter (child): It is your turn to hold this.

Peter (child): Det er din tur til at holde den her.

17 Carl (child): Why?

Carl (child): Hvorfor?

1 In Danish the word *you* is different in its plural and singular forms. *I* refers to more than one (plural), while *du* refers to an individual (singular). Because of this, I will not describe in detail how I have interpreted what the use of ‘you’ refers to in the analysis, as this is self-evident when looking at the Danish original text.

18 Peter (child): I don't know.

Peter (child): Det ved jeg ikke.

19 Carl (child): Well then that's too bad, because I won't do it.

Carl (child): Jamen så er det ærgeligt jeg ikke gør det.

20 Dorthé: Couldn't it be someone wearing gloves who could hold it?

Dorthé: Hvad med en, der har vanter på, der holder den?

21 Oscar (child): I don't want to; my hands are freezing like crazy.

Oscar (child): Jeg gider ikke; jeg fryser helt vildt mine hænder. #00:12:41-7#

[Peter puts the scout figure on the table. It tips over, and he quickly picks it up again.]

22 Carl (child): What are you doing?

Carl (child): Hvad laver du?

23 Peter (child): I'm cold.

Peter (child): Jeg fryser.

24 [Carl (child) takes the scout figure from Peter.]

(Dorthé, 2016b, pt. 00:12:30-00:12:44)

Peter is standing outside with the rest of us in the freezing cold weather. He isn't wearing any gloves, and now he seems to want Carl to take the scout figure as he with a directive says, *'It is your turn to hold this'*. Rather than simply accepting, Carl asks, *'Why?'* and as Peter doesn't seem to know of a reason, Carl rejects responsibility for the figure: *'Well then that's too bad, because I won't do it'*. Dorthé is standing next to them at the table pushing down on a roll mat, so some of the other children can mark it up and cut out parts for the swords. She looks towards them as the exchange above happens, and then suggests, *'Couldn't it be someone wearing gloves who could hold it?'* which could be seen as Dorthé responding to an understanding that perhaps several of the children have cold hands. Here, rather than just directly pointing out who should do it, Dorthé seems to suggest to the group that they could fix the current problem in this way. Oscar, who is wearing gloves, seems to refuse committing to this implicit directive: *'I don't want to; my hands are freezing like crazy'*. After this, Peter puts the figure down; it tips, and he picks it up again. This prompts Carl to first ask, *'What are you doing?'* which I interpret as a way of saying Peter is doing something wrong. Peter responds with *'I am cold'*, which seems to be his way of explaining why he finally put the figure down; in the end, Carl takes the figure from Peter. Dorthé's role in this discussion between the children is not, as we have seen before, to directly make a decision about who will do what, but rather to suggest a way of handling this problem inside the group. She addresses the group with her suggestion instead of choosing an individual to take on the task.

Patterns: Summing up so far

Communicatively, Dorthe seems to primarily be:

- informing the children about what they will be doing (representatives and directives)
- explaining to them how a duct tape sword is made (representatives)
- deciding who will do what (directives)
- helping the group solve a problem with a task they were given by suggesting a solution.

Inherent <-> Instrumental

Communication: Professional <-> Personal relation

The content dimension of the communication seems solely focused on completing the tasks of producing the sword and holding the milk-carton scout figure. It takes approximately half an hour for the patrol to finish making two swords, and the communication pattern mentioned above seems to continue. As I have argued is the case in the library, this would make this a professional relation, as the people involved do not seem to communicate in a way where they are each other's goals, but instead focus on the task at hand. At least, that is what we see when analysing the conversation using the five types of speech acts to interpret the intentions communicated by Dorthe and the children. I would argue, however, that underneath this manifested professional relation, with a communicated focus on the instrumental purpose of producing two swords, there may be a less observable pattern of focusing on each other, on the paratelic, and on sociability. Although not detailed in the above analysis, here there are also brief exceptions similar to Dorthe's joke about Jens being an adult in the library. For example, Dorthe explains why one of the children is not allowed to saw the pipe used as a template in half by saying, *'then the others will end up making oddly short swords'* "så bliver det nogle underlige korte svær de andre de får lavet" (Dorthe, 2016b, pt. 00:12:19-00:12:29), which I interpret as a form of *exceeding practice*, where Dorthe breaks away from the expected way she otherwise acts by joking rather than just saying no to the child. Dorthe could have just said no, or said no but given a rational explanation, but she seems to say something more with this break in the pattern.

Still, the argument I am making is that though they may be talking about making the swords, and the children may seem very interested in completing certain tasks as part of this, in reality, they are each other's goals here.

State of mind: Telic <-> paratelic

Following analysis of the communication found in the above interaction, the activity seems telic, as Dorthe seems focused on the production of the swords. But if we try to understand the activity as means to the end of producing swords (which would make it telic), there are some potential problems:

First, Dorthe explains to the children that they will be making Viking swords *because* swords were important to the Vikings.² This explanation seems difficult to connect with the rest of the children or Dorthe's 'real' life, just as it seems difficult to imagine potential implications of producing these swords beyond the current moment. If there were such a goal for this activity, Dorthe could also have stated it when explaining the activity.

Second, if the goal was to produce a number of duct tape swords (as quickly as possible), Dorthe could have sent away the children who were not contributing and focused on the ones who seemed particularly skilled in the production. She does not do that.

Third, Dorthe doesn't once mention the quality of the produced sword or the importance of learning to make a sword, and nor do the children. Although all communication seems to focus on the production of the sword, it does not seem to include any quality criteria for these swords, again pointing us away from the swords being the end goal.

In other words, it does not seem likely that Dorthe or the children see the production of the swords as the goal.

I ask Dorthe what she would consider a criterion of success for the activity with the swords, and she seems to confirm this notion, as she says:

Dorthe: It is actually first and foremost that they are working together. It isn't really the product in itself as much as it is the thing about helping each other get it done. It is the production or working procedure that is the thing that needs to work. ... [T]hat they are all are allowed to take part so they all feel they have a share in the product they end up with. That's the important part.

(Dorthe, 2018, pt. 00:14:29-00:15:08)

It seems that Dorthe values the process of producing the sword because it in-

2 The explanation even resembles a logical fallacy, but likely stems from a presumed shared assumption of what it means to work within a theme on a scout camp. Having a theme in itself could be enough explanation for doing something related to the theme.

volves working together, helping, and feeling you have a share in the finished product – that you took part in making it.

I ask her if the sword could then be seen as kind of a by-product?

Dorthe: It is more of a by-product, yeah. It is more a frame around the story. There needs to be a reason for having this station about the Viking age, and then we will just make this kind of sword.

(Dorthe, 2018, pt. 00:15:30-15:51:07)

Dorthe seems to talk about the concrete activity the children are asked to do as almost a mere circumstance, only needed because the children need something they can work together on.

If the production of swords has little instrumental value as the means to another end, this points towards the activity being paratelic. The production of the swords would then be an activity done for its own sake – for the expected enjoyment it would bring in the moment. The children will not get to take the swords home with them, but still seem deeply engaged in the activity – for example, when three of them, with apparent excitement, discuss who gets to saw first. The activity seems to engage the children, and energises them in a common pursuit. But as Dorthe sees the sword as a by-product, and the children know they will not get to bring the sword home with them, it seems the swords do not really matter to any of them beyond the process of producing them together. The swords are then considered a goal inside the protective frame of a themed scout camp, with the participants well knowing that this stated purpose has no meaning in the ‘real’ world outside this protective frame of the paratelic state.

How this can be seen as a paratelic activity and what role sociability can be said to play will be discussed further at the end of the chapter.

Dorthe’s thoughts on this situation – Meaning and meaningfulness

As before, I showed Dorthe a video recording of the above situation and then asked her some questions about the meaning and meaningfulness of the activity. I begin with the meaning:

Dennis: So why are you actually doing this activity? I mean, what is actually the meaning of or idea with doing an activity like this one?

Dorthe: Well, there are several meanings. ... [T]here needs to be a unifying framework for the group camp, a theme, which you then sort of immerse

yourself into. So we go on a journey into the history of Denmark. That we chose exactly that time period then has to do with the fact that at the same time as the group was going on group camp, I was in the middle of taking Culture and Society [an official DDS badge] where we also, among many other things, were to go through a period in the history of Denmark. And so I thought: ‘Well, it’s a perfect fit that those scouts are in the middle of that badge work – they can get that time period on the group camp and then the entire group gets the experience of ... time travel.’ So those are the thoughts behind it.

(Dorthe, 2018, pt. 00:08:04-00:09:25)

Dorthe seems to refer two things: the need for a theme and the connection with the official DDS badge requirement.

National level influenced Dorthe’s work

Dorthe explains that she was already in the middle of doing the badge Culture and Society with the children in her branch during the weekly meetings, so this was an opportunity to do one the activities they were required to do as part of that. In other words, this is an instance of the national level of the association influencing Dorthe’s scout work quite directly through these badge requirements. One part of the *meaning* behind doing the activity, in other words, is to fulfil one of these nationally defined requirements.

The importance of having a theme for the camp

Secondly, Dorthe says, ‘there needs to be a unifying framework for the group camp, a theme, which you then sort of immerse yourself into’. I ask why, and she answers:

That has to do with sort of exceeding yourself a bit, that you aren’t just there as a scout doing a few knots, and then just doing some, um, lighting a fire ... it shouldn’t just be that now we will just show what we are able to do. It isn’t just an examination of what we are able to do. There needs to be something more, something adventurous about it, and you need to show that you are able to do some things that can be used in practice in different contexts. Imagination is very important also in the scout work. Also playing.

(Dorthe, 2018, pt. 00:09:33-00:10:18)

It seems that to Dorthe, the idea of doing the activity has to be more than demonstrating that you can do something. An activity with the purpose of demonstrat-

ing or testing a skill would lack something, and she seems to indicate two things. First, with *'used in practice'*, Dorthé seems to be saying that a skill demonstrated needs to be practically applicable. Skills are not just to be mastered with no apparent instrumental purpose in doing so. At the same time, Dorthé seems to be arguing that these skills do not hold (enough) *inherent* value in themselves, as doing the activity itself is also not enough. The activity needs to be more than just this. Secondly, Dorthé mentions the 'theme' or *'unifying framework'*, which seems to add this 'more' she is referring to – this adventurous part, where you use your imagination and immerse yourself, will add something important to scout work. In other words, this theme is part of the meaning behind doing the activity.

When talking about doing activities with practical applicability, I would argue that these types of activity would be done in a telic state of mind, where an activity has implications beyond the present moment. However, at the same time, Dorthé speaks of a theme as adding something adventurous to the activity, something that seems to have an inherent value in itself. Hence, the themed element would point more towards the paratelic state. It does not seem to be organised based on an aim outside the present moment it takes place in, although Dorthé does mention in the interview that you also learn when you are having fun (Dorthé, 2018, pt. 00:10:47-00:11:14). I would argue, however, that this is not the main reason Dorthé includes a theme – rather, the decision seems to be based on the theme being a natural part of a scout activity in its own right. When Dorthé initially says they need the *'unifying framework'* and explains the need for this, she contrasts it with demonstrating specific skills, and only later does she also mention the learning benefits of having fun. It seems that the activity itself is the most important thing here, and that the ends or instrumental value of the activity is a form of afterthought, or at least is something the activity itself was selected as the means to reach.

I ask Dorthé if they couldn't just make the sword without the theme, and she says:

Dorthé: Well, yeah. But what good would that be? There has to be an idea behind it, you see. A bigger idea than just making a sword.

(Dorthé, 2018, pt. 00:11:20-00:11:28)

In other words, Dorthé sees no inherent idea in producing the swords if it is not accompanied by a theme. At the same time, I would argue that the production of the sword is an example of a type of scout activity that does not seem to represent a very practically applicable set of skills (being the other type idea behind an activity mentioned by Dorthé). Where building a fire, for example, can help a

scout with the practical task of preparing a warm meal, the same cannot be said of making a sword out of duct tape and conduit pipe. This would make both the activity itself and the surrounding theme something done in a paratelic state. Even if the activity did have practical applicability, the theme would still point towards a paratelic state of mind while doing the activity.

As before, I also ask Dorthé about the meaningfulness of the activity

Dennis: [A] station like this one, would you say – is this meaningful to you, or does it have a value of sorts?

Dorthé: Yeah. Well, I suppose it does, yeah. I don't know if it has enormous giant value, but it does have a value as part of it all. So as part of the thing with learning to work together and learning to be good friends and learning to use your imagination and all those bits and pieces, which together make up good scout work. It is of course a part of it. It is only a small part, but there are many small parts, you see.

(Dorthé, 2018, pt. 00:16:01-00:17:11)

Dorthé hesitates a little in her answer, and then says: '*I suppose it does, yeah*'. She does not seem to consider this one activity as having that much value in itself, but when seeing it as part of what makes up good scout work, she does seem to value it. I ask if it is all of these bits and pieces that together make up the importance, or if it is rather the case that certain activities are especially important to Dorthé? She answers:

Dorthé: I actually think I have that feeling with me most of the time – in most of the things we do. Once in a blue moon, where some of the kids ... ruin everything for the others, then I have to get myself into gear and scold and shout loudly and then I do find it tiresome, but I don't feel that way very often. Most of the time I think the things we do, however silly they may seem to be – that they add up; that it is a part of working towards the bigger goal of making good citizens out of these scouts – someone who wants to be good a friend and think of others before themselves, and who doesn't give up.

It seems Dorthé here says she values these activities for their instrumental value in reaching goals such as learning to be good friends. In my interpretation, this is also what Dorthé then expresses she finds meaningful in the end: that the children learn '*to be good friends*' and become '*good citizens*'. There are, however, also certain activities she especially values:

Dennis: Yeah, okay. So they are all small building blocks, then?

Dorthe: Yes. Yeah. It is the many small blocks. It could well be, that it feels really good when you, after a long day with lots of challenges and quarrels during the day, are sitting together around a campfire, and just feeling really relaxed and comfortable together with everyone. Where you sort of really feel: **this**, the community that provides this warmth and this friendship and this mutual connection you are really working towards.

(Dorthe, 2018, pt. 00:17:32-00:18:39)

What Dorthe here mentions seems to be the idea that the little building blocks that together make up experience of meaningfulness also can culminate, and seemingly result in a more intense feeling of what I interpret as an appreciation of the warmth, friendship, and mutual connection she sees as the goal. So while meaningfulness, on the one hand, is something she feels most of the time – *‘in most of the things we do’*, as she says, she also talks about moments where this is perhaps felt more intensely. It should also be noted that Dorthe uses ‘we’ when talking about the things she finds meaningfulness in. Meaningfulness seems not to be based on her individual actions, but to stem from a commonality. When describing the intense feeling of warmth, etc., she also uses the indefinite form of ‘you’, meaning she is not talking only about herself or only about someone else.

Sociability

The feeling Dorthe describes in the above seems very similar to one of Simmel’s descriptions of sociability: ‘a feeling for, by a satisfaction in, the very fact that one is associated with others and that the solitariness of the individual is resolved into togetherness, a union with others’ (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 255) Dorthe seems to be describing this satisfaction stemming from being together as a form of culmination of the ongoing feeling she says she has during most of the scout work she does. If we accept the interpretation that the production of duct tape swords is paratelic – that the swords do not constitute the instrumental purpose of producing them – this would also point towards the interaction involving sociability. Simmel says that the objective aims of the outside world will prevent sociability if they enter into the conversation as actual aims of the participants, but at the same time that having objective content in some form is what carries the association along (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 255). Following this line of thinking, I would argue that the production of the swords is what carries the association along in this case, making it a potential *carrier wave* of sociability. We did also see, however, that the communication between Dorthe and the children seemed to take place in what Madsen (1993) calls a professional relation between them, as the interaction seems instrumentally directed at producing the swords. This would

contradict my argument, so where does that leave us?

Simmel says that outwardly:

[T]wo conversations may run a similar course, but only that one of them is sociable in which the subject matter, with all its value and stimulation, finds its justification, its place, and its purpose only in the functional play of conversation as such, in the form of repartee with its special unique significance. (Simmel, 1911/1949, p. 259)

I would argue that what Dorthe and the scout children seem to be doing is having a conversation where the subject matter of making swords is valuable and stimulating to them, but at the same time does not find its legitimacy in the instrumental goal of having made duct tape swords, but rather in being engaged in this stimulating activity together. As the swords do not seem to be the instrumental purpose of the activity, we cannot expect the conversation to have the instrumental purpose of facilitating production of swords – although that does seem to be what the conversation revolves around.

But as sociable conversation still needs subject matter, and as the paratelic state also happens *alongside* the telic state, there needs to be an activity carrying the sociability forward. Just as games played in the paratelic state are not about winning, but about the engaging activity of trying to win, so the conversation here seems to be carried forward by being together around the task of producing a sword – not actually producing it, but being together while producing it. When understanding the activity as driven by doing something together, and by having a share in something common, I also interpret the conversation as having qualities of sociability in the narrower sense. As the communication between Dorthe and the children has to do with dividing the tasks among them, in a sense that is what allows them to be equals in this activity. It allows them to do something together. The idea that everyone is allowed to contribute, and consequently that no one person is allowed to have too many of the tasks, seems to match the democratic principle of sociability, in which no one person can enjoy the activity any more than all the others. It is important that the participants in the conversation are not in it to gain something external to the conversation itself. It seems to function as a way of doing something together – and to do this in a way where all gain something from the interaction relative to the amount the others gain. We understand deep down that the swords are not really important, but enter into a paratelic state where they are important – where they are an activity we can join, through which we interact with others.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this thesis has been to explore how volunteer third sector work seems to differ from paid public-sector work through an in-depth look at both kinds of work in the two cases of Ditte and Dorte.

The thesis seeks to answer the following research questions:

- A. What characterises doing volunteer work in the third sector and doing paid work in the public sector respectively?
- B. How do people doing these two types of work experience them and differentiate between them?
- C. What do the differences and similarities between the two types of work tell us about the particular characteristics of volunteer and paid work respectively and why does that seem to be the case?

Answering these research questions has been done by analysing the two cases independently of each other – focusing on comparing the two different types of work as they were done by the *same one* person.

The focus in these analyses has been on what characterises and differentiates the work on three different, but interconnected, levels:

1. Structurally, by looking at the sectorial and organisational levels of the

work.

2. Situationally, by looking at the concrete tasks the work seems to consist of and how it seems to be organised and managed.
3. Relationally, by looking at the ways people communicate and relate to each other while doing the work.

Common to all three of these aspects is that they have been studied as:

Structures, situations and relations ontologically existing in the world, partially independent of how the workers understand them, and at the same time as something the workers experience and understand in certain ways.

The analyses have sought to answer:

1. *How* the work took place, by describing and seeking to understand what the work consisted of, and how it was experienced
2. *Why* that seemed to be the case, by looking for causality and possible reasons for the work to be the way it was and for it to be experienced the ways it was.

Three concluding sections

In the following three part, the thesis will be concluded by seeking to summarise and discuss its findings.

Part 1 will begin with summarising the characteristics found to differentiate work in the two sectors. This is focused around the question, *What is this a case of?*

Part 2 will seek to further interpret these results and with emphasis on discussing them on the background of the existing research reviewed in chapter 9

Part 3 will conclude by highlighting three key findings of the thesis, followed by brief notes on the overall contribution of the thesis, methodological reflections, limitations and which avenues for future research the thesis could point towards.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

PART 1: SCHEMATIC SUMMARY OF THE ANALYSES: WHAT IS THIS A CASE OF?

In the chapter on case studies I argue that *cases analysed should be a case of something*, and in the following summary I will seek to outline what those characteristics could be in these two cases. This summarisation will be done at the expense of the details of how the work took place. Readers interested in these details are advised to read the analyses in chapters 10-15 and chapter 17. In addition to summarising specific differences found in the analyses, the aim is to give a schematic overview of the distinctive features of paid and volunteer work found in the two sectors.

Reading guidelines

The analyses are summarised in three tables, which contrast paid/volunteer characteristics in the two sectors, derived from the three levels of analysis. As they are a combination of the analyses of Ditte and Dorthe's different types of work, the listed aspects are not necessarily mutually exclusive of each other. When the characteristics refer to sizes, degrees or distances, these should all be understood as *relative* to the other type of organisation (public or third sector) and thus not as absolute specifications.

For example: The public-sector organisations studied were cases of organisations that – in comparison with the third-sector associations studied – seemed *highly* differentiated, both vertically and horizontally. The third-sector associations, in turn, seemed only *somewhat* differentiated when compared with the public-sector organisations.

Sectorial and organisational level

Ditte and Dorthe's paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work seem to be cases of:

Public sector organisations	Third sector associations
Formalised structure	Formalised structure
Highly differentiated organisations, both vertically and horizontally	Somewhat differentiated associations, both vertically and horizontally
Cover a broad range of areas and tasks	Cover a far narrower area and range of tasks
Long distance between top and bottom and many horizontal specialisations	Short distance between top and bottom and far fewer horizontal specialisations
Vertically differentiated positions of authority have both formal and actual authority based on the position alone	Vertically differentiated positions of authority have some formal but less actual authority based on the position alone
Supreme authorities of the organisation are able to influence all vertically differentiated entities under them quite significantly , if desired.	Supreme authorities of the association only have limited influence on vertically differentiated entities under them.
Decisions are qualified using specialised professional expertise and are not based on individual's subjective assessments.	Decisions are based on personal experience and individual discretion in relative autonomy, but can require agreement from others.
A number of decisions are approved by higher entities in the organisation, including politicians.	Most decisions can be made at the discretion of the person doing a task . There is no formalised structure for seeking approval of most things.

Sectorial and organisational level

Ditte and Dorte's paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work seem to be cases of:

Public sector organisations	Third sector associations
<p>To ensure integration of services between separate parts of the public sector, some work must be done following commonly agreed-upon mandatory and fixed procedures.</p>	<p>Work is usually not integrated with other entities in a way requiring common procedures. Few, if any, mandatory and fixed procedures exist.</p>
<p>Public-sector organisations are owned by the entire population of a municipality and/or country, and are ultimately accountable to these populations.</p>	<p>Third-sector associations are owned only by the much smaller part of the population who are their members. They are primarily accountable to them.</p>
<p>Public sector organisations must be able to document that public funds are spent efficiently and productively. Full transparency in administration is required by law.</p>	<p>Third sector associations must act in accordance with their core values (not necessarily profit, productivity and efficiency).</p>
<p>Public sector decision makers are not necessarily familiar with the type of work they make decisions about.</p>	<p>Third sector decision makers will usually be familiar with the work they are making decisions about, as they are members of the associations, as are the people they are making decisions for/about.</p>
<p>Individuals working in the public sector have almost no influence on their overall working conditions through their right to vote in local and national elections.</p>	<p>Members of third sector associations have a more direct influence on their overall working conditions through the supreme authority of the local level of the association and – through representation – also much more directly at the national level than we see in the public sector.</p>

Sectorial and organisational level

Ditte and Dorthe's paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work seem to be cases of:

Public sector organisations	Third sector associations
Staff share an interest in the survival of the organisation, but feel less personally responsible for its survival.	Members share an interest in the survival of the association and feel personally responsible for its survival.
Staff identify somewhat with the organisation . They are individuals working in the organisation.	Members feel they are integral part of the association . They are a part of the association.
Political-level supreme authorities have more candidates than seats. Elections are usually contested .	Political-level supreme authorities have fewer candidates than seats. Elections are usually uncontested , and active encouragement of candidates is needed.
Staff can be fired for a number of different types of misconduct or negligence. Relatively low tolerance and high specificity in demands .	Members can be expelled or not re-elected for a few gross types of misconduct or negligence. Relatively high tolerance and low specificity in demands .
Difficult to gain access to organisation (get a paid job)	Easy to gain access to association (become a volunteer)
Organisation is part of established paid job market where more people than needed apply for positions	Association relies on network-based recruitment and on directly encouraging people to become active members. More positions than people to fill them .
Staff replacements are relatively easy to find .	Staff replacements can be relatively difficult to find .

Situational level

Ditte and Dorthe's paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work seem to be cases of:

Public sector organisations	Third sector associations
Decisions made can have significant consequences for a large group of people and involve big budgets .	Decisions made can have some consequences for a smaller group of people and involve quite small budgets .
Planning, approval and execution are somewhat separated between horizontally and vertically differentiated entities. Work is based on standards and approval from higher-placed entities in organisation .	Planning, approval and execution are kept together . Work is based on rules-of-thumb and individual experience and people will make most decisions themselves .
Staff are reliant on others doing their part of a task before and after them (like on an assembly line).	Staff can and will do most parts of any task themselves .
Systems, fixed working procedures and management have a higher degree of responsibility than the individual.	The individual has a relatively high degree of responsibility.
Which tasks an individual takes on is decided by managers and through negotiation with peers .	Which tasks an individual takes on is primarily decided by the individual herself and through negotiation with peers .
Managers help and prioritise when person working has too many tasks	Person working must prioritise themselves when they have too many tasks or potentially find someone else who can take over
Person working is controlled by requests from other entities or managers to do certain tasks	Person working is doing so based on own initiative and sense of what it is necessary to do

Relational and communicational level

Ditte and Dorthe's paid public-sector work and volunteer third-sector work seem to be cases of:

Paid public sector work	Volunteer third sector work
Activity and outcome are clearly separate matters and activity is done to intentionally obtain separate outcome	Activity and outcome are closely connected , and activity is to a lesser degree done to intentionally obtain separate outcome
Activities are instrumental to achieving something in the practical reality outside the situation in which they take place.	Activities have less practical utility (if any) outside the situation in which they take place.
Activities intentionally have implications beyond present moment	Activities to a lesser degree have implications beyond present moment
Activity organised to achieve separable outcome	Activity organised for the sake of the people involved in the activity
Activities are legitimised based on outcomes outside the activity itself	Activities are legitimised based on the activity itself
Activities focused on individuals and their needs	Activities focused on groups doing something together
People working address individuals who come with individual requests	People working address groups concerning things they are doing together
Individuals are not encouraged to engage with other individuals.	Cooperation and participation in the group is encouraged.
Organisations manifest only present-day working priorities and carry out very few rituals (if any).	Associations manifest present-day working priorities but also their history . They carry out a number of traditional rituals.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

PART 2: CONTRIBUTION TO EXISTING RESEARCH

Each of the previous analyses concluded with a summary of the results and findings of its first interpretation of the data. The following chapter will seek to further interpret these results and to discuss them in relation to the existing research reviewed in chapter 9.

The significance of being publicly or privately owned

As described in the literature review and from Klausen's (2001) society sector model, some argue that difference in ownership (public vs. private) is not a key factor distinguishing work in the public sector from work in the third sector. Others argue ownership does make a difference, for example, in the way boards work, and the consequent difference in the level of decision-making discretion this gives workers.

Agency problems and the third sector

Ben-Ner and Ren (2015) seem to take a top-down perspective in assuming that third-sector board members have some level of dedication to the overall goals of the organisation, along with having their own individual ideas about which goals the organisation should pursue. They argue that because third-sector boards could have multiple goals and because their members may be reluctant to pursue or have difficulty pursuing their particular ideas, this could lead to a higher degree of discretion experienced by front-line staff. In other words, the staff would be able to make their own decisions as a result of little top-down control. Ben-Ner and Ren seem to base their argument on the notion that board membership is desirable (i.e. is something one could *owe* to the manager of the organisation).

The current study shows a different reality. While Dorte and Ditte do experience (and expect) a high level of decision-making discretion in their third-sector volunteer work, I argue this does not stem from their boards not being able to pursue their particular ideas or goals. First, the national level of the third-sector organisation has very little direct influence on work done at the local level. Second, the local-level board positions are, in Dorte's case, characterised by people

being ‘really afraid of being elected’ (p 189), and in Ditte’s case filled primarily by the same people year after year, with only a few new people showing up occasionally, wanting to lend a hand. Third, the Annual General Meetings, which are formally the supreme authority of the local groups, are no crowd pullers. Having decision-making power seemingly does not attract people to the meeting, just as the possibility of board membership does not lead to contested elections with numerous candidates. Instead, it seems more likely that board members participate out of a sense of obligation to an association their children benefited from, and perhaps feel morally obliged to support with their time and effort (as noted by Sørhaug, 1989/1996). At the same time, as Castor and Jiter (2013) also found, board members may have substantial formal responsibility (what I refer to as on paper), but in practice may have little everyday insight into the organisation of which they sit on the board.

In Ditte’s local third-sector organisation, very little authority seems to be exercised in general. Instead, the group seems based on commonly accepted horizontal differentiations, where tasks recognised as needed are divided among the board, group leader and other leaders, who then have a lot of discretion in deciding how to handle these tasks. Ditte expects the board to make sure that the local group’s finances are in order, the scout hut is maintained and other practical matters are attended to, but she does not consider it their legitimate role to, for example, approve the programme she has devised for her unit (although *on paper* this responsibility falls to them). While this study does not show as such whether the board of Ditte’s local group would like to exert influence downwards in the organisation, it does show that 1) although *on paper* the board has certain decision-making rights in the local group, these are not in practice exerted on the organisation and 2) if the board were to exercise its influence, Ditte would not accept its right to do so. Ditte sees the fact that her volunteer work is in demand as reason enough not to accept interference from the board concerning her scout work. Knowing that there is always a lack of leaders, she will not stand for others making decisions on her behalf. Because it would be difficult to find someone else to take over the work she performs, she expects to have a high level of decision-making discretion. This attitude seems to be based on her understanding of what it means to do this type of work more than on her board’s opportunities for exerting influence.

While the result – a high level of decision-making discretion on the ground – may be the same, the cause may differ, as it seems to do in the cases of Ditte and Dorthe. It may not make much sense to discuss board agency for a local-level board in this type of association. Board members do not necessarily have

particular goals they are there to achieve, so difficulty in exerting influence or communicating their desires clearly may be a non-issue. At the same time, the people in these organisations doing front-line work would not necessarily accept attempted influence by the board. Consequently, I challenge the top-down way of thinking about agency problems, as the causes may be different in these democratically organised membership-based organisations. Finally, this could also be the case, because organisations like the ones studied are structured around what I call *tension 3*: the co-existence of a top-down perspective, where a select group has the task of managing others, and a bottom-up perspective, where the objects of management are also the owners of the organisation, as they have a vote in the organisation's supreme authority (see also Horch, 2018). These organisations seem to exist in a tension between these two perspectives, making the board's role as top-down managers even more complex.

Agency problems and the public sector

Ben-Ner and Ren (2015) argue that citizens and the officials they elect are limited in their opportunities for direct influence on specific organisations in the public sector; this study's findings supported this idea to some degree. Both municipalities studied were large, complex and highly differentiated organisations, both horizontally and vertically. Members of the city councils were elected in contested elections, which indicate that these seats are considered desirable. However, the city councils' direct influence on Dorthé and Ditte's work had its limitations. The least top-down influence from the city council was found in Dorthé's case. In her job in the public library, there were eight vertically differentiated organisational entities between her position and the elected city council. With the exception of the annual budget negotiations and overarching decisions about e.g. the number of (staffed) library branches in the municipality, Dorthé did not experience them influencing her work in any direct way, nor did other parts of the analysis find signs of this. Perhaps surprisingly, this did not mean her work was characterised by a high degree of decision-making discretion, especially as compared to her third-sector work. Rather, her paid work was found to involve very little discretion on her part. During desk duty, Dorthé has to help with what the library offers, what the users request, what her colleagues are unable to find, and what the library reservation systems and other nation-wide library systems require of her. Her work may be varied, but what she does during desk duty is rarely of her own choosing or at her own discretion. Another part of Dorthé's paid work, programmes and events, followed a similar pattern. There she described herself as just one of the 'worker bees' who let others do the 'big

thoughts', which she was then happy to help with carrying out in practice.

As I have argued, a combination of the system-based tasks, the reactive state Dorte is placed in and the understanding of her work as being a small cog in a big machine, makes Dorte's work a form of diverse and specialised assembly-line work, where formalised rules and guidelines direct her work. Control or management does not seem to come from one specific position or to consistently come in a top-down manner. It is not the director of the city libraries alone, or her deputy, who seems to direct Dorte's actions, nor is it direct influence from the city council that controls her actions in any level of detail. It could even be argued that Dorte sees the library as an entity so separate from the rest of the municipality that it does not matter to her that the rest of the municipality is there. Control seems distributed among systems, colleagues in charge of certain things, common decisions made among the librarians, Dorte's own choices and her immediate managers. Future studies of board agency (problems) and its influence on the level of worker discretion would benefit from considering the numerous factors that may influence workers' decision-making discretion in these front-line types of work.

In the case of Ditte, a higher degree of top-down influence was found in her paid public sector work, which I will argue stems from her job being different from Dorte's. Ditte does not do the same type of front-line work as Dorte. Rather, her job is part of the inner workings of the municipality, as she e.g. prepares motions for politicians. This also seems to be the reason Ditte knows a lot more about other organisational entities in the municipality than Dorte does, as doing her job puts her in contact with many of these. There are six vertically differentiated organisational entities between her position and that of the elected city council, and while Ditte must often seek approval for her work in entities above her in the organisation, the type of influence the city council exerts is still limited in that the politicians would often just agree to the suggestions made by Ditte's department. Again, while the council formally has the right to decide, in practice they rely on the organisation below them to have the expertise needed to make sound and feasible recommendations, which they will then agree to. As we also saw in the case of Dorte, the politicians are not experts in all the areas they are making decisions over and must rely on and trust the expertise found further down in the organisation.

Although Ditte on the one hand must seek final managerial or political approval of many of the things she does, on the other hand, she experiences a high level of decision-making discretion in how she organises her everyday work, in the ways she completes specific tasks and in the content of e.g. memos she writes.

She is not an expert on the subject matter of her department, but she collects information and expertise from others and passes it on in a format and with a focus she chooses. In other words, both at the political level and in Ditte's everyday working life, having knowledge and expertise ultimately means having influence on decisions.

As a contribution to the studies of agency problems, I would argue that not only the sheer size and complexity of the public-sector organisation, but also the level of expertise required for decision-making, make it difficult for politicians to exert direct top-down influence, as they are not experts in everything the municipality does. Interestingly, while the politicians are consequently perhaps not able to exert direct influence downwards, this does not automatically give workers like Ditte decision-making discretion in their jobs, as we might otherwise expect. It seems that '*knowledge is power*' here, in the sense that the level of decision-making discretion a person or entity is afforded is based on the level of expertise this person or entity has in regards to the subject matter at hand. To sum up, the level of decision-making discretion a worker has in this type of job is not first and foremost the result of how much the city council will allow this worker to decide, but instead of how much expertise the worker has regarding the decision to be made.

Agency problems in comparison

There are a number of organisational entities between Dorte/Ditte and the supreme authority of their public organisations, just as there are a large number of other entities dealing with all the different tasks performed at the municipal level in the public sector. Their scout groups are much less differentiated both vertically and horizontally.

If we were to imagine moving from the third sector into the public sector, people doing that would be coming from an organisation which, in comparison, is narrowly focused on one type of work, which from the national level at the top to the local level at the bottom consists mostly of people with knowledge and experience of this kind of work, and which has a high degree (and expectation) of decision-making discretion for the people doing front-line work, using non-standardised rule-of-thumb approaches, often based their on own experience combined with training courses. They would be met by an organisation where they were a small cog in a big machine doing numerous and diverse tasks, where most people in the organisation would not necessarily have first-hand knowledge or experience with their type of work, and where their decision-making discretion was limited by either formalised rules and regulations controlling how work was allowed to be done or by a requirement to have specific expertise in the subject matter at hand to be able to make decisions.

The nature of goals, tasks and the possibility of public scrutiny

In addition to the above discussion of the potential top-down influence of boards, three other aspects related to ownership have been used to differentiate the sectors from each other. These will be discussed together in the following section.

Public sector

As described in chapter 8, the public sector is required by law to fulfil a large number of tasks and to offer its services to everyone in a society. The nature of these tasks, Klausen argues, will be much more complex (*wicked problems*) than the relatively *tame problems* of the third sector. The argument seems to be that third-sector associations will be oriented towards specific problems or tasks, which they legitimately can offer only to select groups. Because the public sector is based on the principle of equity and on electoral control from a political level which will disagree, its goals and concrete tasks will have a higher degree of complexity and ambiguity. Hence, in the public sector we will find less agreement on what the problems are and how they can be solved than in the third sector. This thesis found that while it does seem likely that disagreements at the political level influence the overall goals of public-sector organisations, this does not seem to affect the reality of doing front-line work in the sector, nor does it seem to do much to differentiate the work from that of the third sector.¹

A lot of the work Dorte does in the library seems to constitute a number of tame problems. The work, which I describe as *diverse and specialised assembly-line work*, is standardised, and consists of Dorte reacting to a user's specified need using one of the readily available solutions at her disposal. While there may be political disagreement about the role, budget or size of public libraries in Denmark, this does not seem to trickle down to the everyday front-line work Dorte does. Although Dorte's work is controlled by rules and regulations, these do not seem to stem from potential public scrutiny and a consequent need for transparency, nor does it seem influenced by ambiguous political-level goals or overall complex tasks solved by the public sector. Rather, her work seems influenced by a desire to integrate all public libraries in Denmark into the same system, and to

1 The same could be said concerning the equity principle, which also does not seem to influence the concrete work done. Although not included in the analyses, fieldwork clearly showed that Ditte, Dorte and many of their scout colleagues place great value on their organisations' ability to include everyone. Although they legally have the right to refuse a child membership, this would seem to go against a very basic ideal for them.

offer a consistent level of service to users across a number of different librarians working there. In other words, the benefit of sharing materials among all 98 Danish municipalities and thereby offering better service to all citizens across the country seems to be what controls Dorte's work. While the way her public-sector work is organised does differentiate it from her third-sector work, this does not seem to be the result of the ideal-typically defined differences in goal complexity or ambiguity described by Klausen.

In contrast, the tasks Ditte performs in her paid public-sector work seem more complex and wicked. Solutions are not standardised, and often involve Ditte gathering information and making her own judgements in situations where 'the right solution' is not delimited to one specific thing. However, this does not seem to (primarily) be the result of political-level disagreement leading to ambiguous goals. Rather, it seems the ambiguity comes from the task of creating integration between different parts of the municipality. When e.g. writing a requirement specification for a staff security system for one of the institutions, Ditte has to balance input from the institution itself, from her own social welfare department and from the building department in the municipality. These three entities may all have particularistic and opposing ideas about staff security systems based on their specialisation, and this can lead to ambiguity which it then becomes Ditte's job to handle when writing up a final requirement specification. In summary, we do see goal ambiguity and wicked problems in Ditte's public-sector work, but these do not seem to be the result of political-level disagreements, but rather potentially particularistic and opposing perspectives from different parts of the large and complex organisation involved in staff security systems.

Third sector

Dorte's third-sector work does not seem to consist of tamer problems than her paid public-sector work. The different tasks she solves as a scout also seem quite delimited, specific and familiar to her in the sense that she seems to have a solution to most of them readily available. These solutions, she says, come from her own experience, along with what she considers legitimate reminders from e.g. national-level training courses of the way scout work is supposed to be done. Ditte seems to solve similar types of tasks, and she also considers herself a skilled and competent scout leader, who has readily available solutions to the types of problems she encounters.

Comparison

In both sectors, when Dorte is met with a problem or task, she seems to know what to do. The public-sector solutions are to a certain extent defined by some-

one else, where this seems to be the case to a lesser degree in the third sector, where her personal experience plays a big role. Rules and regulations also guide Dorte's public-sector work to a degree not seen in her third-sector work. Ditte's third-sector work is also done based on her personal experience, and it consists of considerably tamer problems than her public-sector work.

The possibility of public scrutiny is not found to make a difference to Dorte, as it is not found to influence her public-sector work, and is not a requirement in her third-sector work. The possibility of public scrutiny does exist, and if she were to break the rules of her public-sector job, the consequences would likely be much more severe than in the third sector, where fewer rules exist. To Ditte, the possibility of public scrutiny makes up parts of her actual job, as she e.g. handles public records disclosure requests and is required to keep records of her work – just as e.g. working with tenders on building projects is regulated by legislation she must ensure the municipality complies with.

In summary, in the case of Dorte, it seems the specific working conditions 'on the floor' matter more than conditions defined eight (or more) organisational levels above the person working. In that sense, ownership does not seem to be a particularly defining characteristic when looking for differences between work in the two sectors. Whereas Klausen's ideal-typical description of goals and the possibility of public scrutiny does seem to describe overall conditions of the public sector, this thesis finds that these conditions are perhaps not key to understanding the kind of front-line work Dorte does. As a final note, it could be argued that this is primarily the result of the standardised type of work Dorte does, and that social workers, for example, or the nurses in Ben-Ner and Ren's (2015) study, who are also doing front-line work, are handling wicked problems on a day-to-day basis, thereby supporting Klausen's distinction for front-line work as well.

In the case of Ditte, who isn't doing public-sector front-line work in the same sense as Dorte, we also see that it is not the conditions set by potentially ambiguous political-level goals that influence her work the most and make her tasks somewhat wicked and complex. Rather, it is the fact that the public organisation is so complex and differentiated, and requires someone to actively work on integrating the different perspectives, that leads to wicked problems. At the same time, ownership does seem to matter in differentiating between her public- and third-sector work. The possibility of public scrutiny influences Ditte's public-sector work quite directly, e.g. when she documents her work to enable transparency.

Job constraints and worker well-being

Level of decision-making discretion and level of hierarchy were also themes of the review by virtue of their possible connection with constructs such as job satisfaction, job involvement, red tape, task clarity and role ambiguity.

The following are the summarised findings from the studies as written in the review:

- Both public- and third-sector managers' job involvement decreased in accordance with perceived red tape and hierarchical culture.
- Job satisfaction was only found to be associated with decision-making discretion, high task clarity and low role ambiguity for third-sector managers, whereas these did not seem to influence public-sector managers.
- Third-sector managers had a higher level of decision-making discretion, job satisfaction, organisational commitment and job involvement than public-sector managers.

Some of the explanations given for these differences were argued could be less hierarchy, less red tape and a higher degree of decision-making discretion found in the third sector. In most cases, however, these potential explanations were not studied empirically in the reviewed literature. They will now be discussed in context of the analyses of this thesis.

Public sector

As discussed above, Dorte's public-sector work is much more hierarchical than her third-sector work, and when she is perhaps frustrated because someone changes the configuration of her desk in the library or when she is not allowed to use certain tables in the library anymore, this could be seen as perceived red tape and as a limitation of her decision-making discretion. On the one hand, this thesis finds support for the idea that discretion was only found to increase job satisfaction in the third sector, as this also seems to primarily be the place where Dorte expects to have (the most) discretion. As she says, she is 'not the patrol leader' in the public library, and consequently seems to accept her immediate manager making decisions on her behalf, while also feeling less overall responsibility or ownership for the library. In terms of tasks, desk duties probably involve the least decision-making discretion of all her tasks, but Dorte says she greatly enjoys and prioritises desk duty, as analysis and fieldwork also seem to confirm. In terms of programmes and events, there seems to be a similar pattern. Dorte is carrying out work that others have planned. She is good at being an outgoing

face and enjoys doing this, but she at the same time considers herself a ‘worker bee’ in these projects. She lets some of the others have the ‘big thoughts’ that set the content of the programmes, and then she, happily, carries out specific tasks. This begs the question of what people think when asked about their level of influence, highlights how we value different kinds of influence, and illustrates how not having influence can also be desirable and satisfactory.

Ditte’s public-sector work is also much more hierarchical than her third-sector work, and it is part of her job there to act as an intermediary between different parts of this hierarchy. The level of hierarchy does not seem to frustrate Ditte; rather she sees simply it as a working condition. The rules, regulations and hierarchy, which others might perceive as red tape, are in a sense what Ditte’s job is about handling. When, for example, she is asked by an institution if staff is allowed to clean inside residents’ apartments using the residents’ own cleaning supplies, Ditte must first ask someone in her department with more expertise than she has in this area, and that person then has to ask a third person with specific knowledge about cleaning agents, before Ditte is able to funnel a correct answer back to the institution. This may seem like a lot of work for a relatively minute detail, but this does not seem to bother Ditte – she considers this a natural part of her job and says she generally experiences a high degree of discretion in terms of how she organises her work day, how she solves specific problems and in deciding on the content and framing of memos she writes. For a person with an understanding of the inner workings of a hierarchical and highly differentiated organisation – what others would see as red tape she sees as working conditions. Rather than decreasing her involvement or satisfaction, the red tape and hierarchy is what Ditte is involved in. As she understands the inner workings of this hierarchical and highly differentiated organisation, she does not perceive its structures as red tape, but rather as working conditions. These two cases could be seen as cases of the difference between being at the bottom or the middle of a complex and hierarchical organisation.

Third sector

In her third-sector work Dorthe says her word ‘is almost law’, but that she also seeks to let others make decisions. No examples were found of Dorthe not having decision-making discretion when she seemed to want it. This is one way we can understand why public-sector workers’ job satisfaction may not be influenced by their level of decision-making discretion: as we see in Dorthe’s case of Dorthe, public-sector workers may not consider it important to have more discretion, and are able to enjoy their work anyway. Along similar lines, we could also argue that with the primarily tame-problem tasks Dorthe handles in the

library she is able to enjoy task clarity and low role ambiguity without a high degree of decision-making discretion.

In line with the reviewed studies, Ditte experienced a much higher level of decision-making discretion in her third-sector work compared with her public-sector work, and she expected this difference. In a rare case where one of her decisions was questioned by the board in her third-sector work, she was frustrated by what she considered undue interference, saying that if the person interfering was so unhappy with Ditte's way, she could just come do the task herself. This also supports the findings in the review, as limited discretion did not cause frustrations (the opposite of job satisfaction) in Ditte's public-sector work, but definitely did in her third-sector work.

Task clarity and role ambiguity

However, while we could expect Dorthé's third-sector work to have less task clarity and higher role ambiguity (as found in the reviewed studies), this does not seem to be the case. In both types of work, she completes a number of quite different tasks (see page 156-157 and 139-140 for an overview). The number and complexity of these could lead to low task clarity and possible role ambiguity, but this does not seem to be the case in practice. The systems of the library and the project descriptions written by colleagues guide her work in the public sector, while her own personal experience, along with a few training courses, guide her work in the third sector. It seems to be clear to Dorthé how to act and what to do in both cases. In other words, while the level of hierarchy and decision-making discretion clearly differentiates the sectors from each other, these aspects do not seem to influence Dorthé's job satisfaction. For an experienced and competent third-sector worker like Dorthé, the lower level of control (higher level of discretion) does not necessarily lead to low task clarity in third-sector work.

Ditte's public-sector work was found to be hierarchal and to involve limits to her decision-making discretion, but in contrast with the connection suggested by the reviewed studies, this did not lead to a higher degree of task clarity as compared to the non-hierarchal nature of her third-sector work, which should have a lower degree of task clarity. Ditte's public-sector work involves unclear tasks with some ambiguity to them because she functions as an intermediary between different departments and perspectives in the public organisation. Ditte's third-sector work involves clear tasks with little ambiguity to them, not because the organisation has low hierarchy and allows Ditte a high level of decision-making discretion, but because she (like Dorthé) is an experienced and competent third-sector worker. Thus, a case like Ditte's challenges the proposed connections among hierarchy, discretion, task clarity and role ambiguity.

Person-organisation value congruence

Finally, Peng, Pandey and Pandey (2015) found a higher level of person-organisation value-congruence in third-sector organisations than in the public sector. They argue this could be caused by a higher level of decision-making authority in public-sector organisations, which may reduce workers' opportunities for experiencing the organisational values being advanced as part of decision-making processes.

In both cases, this thesis does find support for a higher level of person-organisation value-congruence in third-sector work compared with public-sector work. However, the suggested connection with the level of decision-making authority (discretion) was not found to be the most fitting explanation. When asked, Dorthe adds an explanation differentiating between the two sectors that is not fully encompassed by the studies reviewed or the discussion above: while Dorthe does associate certain values with the public libraries in Denmark, and while these do hold significance for her, she says that the scout movement lies closest of all to her heart – an explanation that seems to run deeper than congruence between herself and certain values of the scout organisation as such. Dorthe is not just a member of this organisation. She sees herself as a deeply embedded part of this third-sector organisation, in a way that she does not see herself as part of the public library. Ditte describes valuing the feeling of community associated with being part of the scout group and contrasts this with her paid work, where the focus is more on the tasks at hand. She also says that when enacting the many traditions of the scout organisation, she ascribes value to this and I argue this can be seen as a way of solidifying the mutual connection and feeling of community between the scouts.

To be paid or not to be paid – Is part of the question

Having focused on ownership, sector and organisational structure above, in the following section I will turn to the question of pay.

Commitment – Salaries and contracts

Vuuren, Jong and Seydel (2008) studied whether 'the stick of paid work' increased commitment of paid workers as compared with volunteers in the same organisation, and were unable to find support for this idea. In fact, their study found higher levels of commitment among volunteers than paid workers. Similarly, Dorthe seems to feel more committed to her third-sector volunteer work than to her paid public-sector work. In contrast with the idea of contractual paid

employment leading to higher commitment, this thesis contributes two other reasons for finding higher volunteer work commitment. First, Dorthé sees herself in a formal position of leadership in her third-sector work, but not in the library. Having this formal position of leadership means she feels a certain level of obligation and accountability to the board, the parents, the other leaders and the scout children. Second, while the library has a system in place such that others could take over if Dorthé were unable to work, the same system does not exist in the scout organisation.

Dorthé feels more committed to her volunteer work than her paid work, but this seems to have less to do with being paid or not, and more to do with the role of being ‘the patrol leader’ or not. Where Dorthé does not associate payment as such with obligation, Ditte says she would feel a much greater sense of obligation to do her scout work if she were paid for it, and that this would ruin some of the freedom she experiences in being able to choose which meetings she wants to attend in her local group, for example (Ditte, 2017, pts 02:06:22-02:09:54). In other words, Ditte seems to consider paid work to be a form of stick.

The instrumental meaning of being paid

Von Essen (2008; 2015) found that it was important to volunteers that they were able to leave their volunteer work if they actually wanted to, and that the notion of being paid money for doing volunteer work was strongly rejected. He argues both of these aspects were important for the volunteers to see their work as meaningful. Payment would make the work instrumental, and consequently not entirely the choice of the volunteers themselves, and this would make them feel they were making less of a genuine and sincere effort.

On the one hand, Dorthé says that if she didn’t have to earn money, she would prioritise doing scout work over most other things. But on the other hand, she also rejects the idea of being paid to do scout work, as she says that absolutely goes against everything she stands for. In other words, being a scout is something Dorthé *is* – not something she could see herself being paid to become. Understanding Dorthé’s work from this perspective puts less emphasis on the sectorial and organisational aspects of the differences in how her work is organised between the two sectors. It seems that although these sectorial and organisational aspects are different in the two kinds of work, perhaps one of the key differentiations lies in Dorthé seeing scouting as part of who she is. In a sense, this also supports the findings of Overgaard (2016), as I will argue that it is not the fact that Dorthé is a volunteer *per se*, but rather that she is a scout, that holds importance for her. While being paid or not does make a difference, as it would

seemingly take something away from her scout work if it were a paid job, payment is not the opposite of volunteering in Dorthé's case. Rather, being paid is the opposite of being a scout, when being a scout is seen as enacting part of who you are as a person.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

PART 3: KEY FINDINGS

This third and final chapter will conclude the thesis by highlighting three key findings, followed by brief notes on the overall contribution of the thesis, its limitations and avenues for future research.

In the third sector: We are in this together

In the public sector: I am here to help you

This first section summarises and explains key findings using analogies. I propose that a number of the characteristics found to differentiate the two types of work studied can be summarised by using two unifying statements as analogies. This approach is inspired by Buch-Hansen and Nielsen (2012) who suggest using analogies in retrodution to interpret which possible connections or causalities could be present in the unobservable part of the domain of Real. I argue that although these analogies are likely not directly applicable as a specific mechanism leading to specific observable phenomena or events in the domain of Actual (or Empirical), they nevertheless hold a lot of explanatory power as a way of understanding how (sometimes unobservable) interactions between complex objects lead to the associations we are able to observe.

The unifying statements

In the following, I will describe working in the two different sectors using the following two statements:

- **The third sector: We are in this together.**
- **The public sector: I am here to help you.**

Volunteer third-sector work

When doing volunteer work in the third sector: **We are in this together.**

Why does this seem to be the case?

The associations studied seem to be communities or *fellowships* made up of the same type of people dealing with the same types of things. The people working in these associations seem to consider themselves part of a fellowship of like-minded people, who are also members of the same association. In the analysed cases, these associations only deal with scout-related things, and almost everyone

in the organisations, from top to bottom, are scouts themselves. Although some members primarily participate in activities organised by other members, they are all still members – they are still the same type of people (here, scouts). Similarly, it seems the activities organised are almost all geared specifically to groups of people doing something together. It could be said that taking part in activities in this association actually cannot be done alone because it is by nature a fellowship.

The associations seem to, not only through their basis in membership, but also in their structure - to be a fellowship the members, as a *we - are in together*. The co-existence of top-down and bottom-up influences is not only a matter of the bottom level of the association being able to decide over the top. This structure also means that active members are both the owners of the association and the workers of the association. They are a structurally integral part of the association. As a member, you are not working *for* someone else; rather, you are doing something in an organisation of which you are structurally an integral part. In other words, there is no clear distinction between planning and execution of activities; members are not recruited by managers wanting them to execute specific plans already made by the managers or to work in specific ways guided by intricate systems. Along similar lines, since it is not part of the public sector, the association does not exist because a law defined it had to. The workers are not there because law-makers at the top of a highly vertically differentiated organisation decided that the particular tasks they undertake needed to be done. Although there are formalised positions of authority in the associations, they in practice have much less legitimate decision-making power than we see in public-sector organisations. Being *in this together* differs from being *a part of something that someone else owns or is in charge of*.

Finally, when the members sing century-old songs and perform traditional rituals, when they enter their buildings, full of memories from before they were born, they seem to be focusing on the members who came before them. Instead of focusing on themselves as individuals or on their future, they seem to focus on themselves as part of a group of people that came before them – on something bigger than themselves. I would argue that part of what they *are in together* is their common history.

Paid public-sector work

When doing paid work in the public sector: **I am here to help you.**

Why does this seem to be the case?

The public organisations studied are found to be large and highly differentiated organisations that cover a broad range of tasks and thus have a number of

specialised departments and staff groups. Although people working in the public sector often have colleagues close to them who are similar to themselves, a public-sector organisation in its entirety can be seen as a collection of individual specialisations, each responsible for specific parts of what the organisation does. This is also why the metaphorical statement begins with *I*. Although they work in the same organisation, the workers do not all share backgrounds or subject areas, and are thus individual parts of the organisation.

The second part of the statement, *here to help you*, refers to how, in many ways, the work studied seems to consist of individuals helping other individuals with their requests, both when doing front-line work – for example, helping citizens with their requests, and when working in a back-office capacity, and mostly being in contact with other staff members. There was a pattern of individuals helping other individuals, and also that there was a distinction between the helper and the helped. The people in these roles – the helper and the helped – were not seen as being *in something together*, but rather as distinct from each other. Moreover, the help offered was found to often be geared towards individuals, as opposed to the groups found in the third-sector associations.

Structurally, there seemed to be clear distinctions between the planning and the execution of the work done in the studied public-sector organisations. There were a number of positions of authority in the organisations, which were found to legitimately be able to make decisions about what work was to be done and how. One of the reasons the work matched this analogy, *I am here to help you*, was that the political leadership in the sector was accountable to the population, thus the politicians ultimately had to be able to account for how the resources spent benefitted the population. In that sense, the organisations studied were actually determined by being able to help citizens in a way the political level has decided they should be helped – the work was there, because a law defined it had to be. Although top-down authority was not often explicitly exercised, the workers had to perform their jobs in ways that would ultimately help the population. Otherwise, their jobs could not legitimately exist in the public sector, and management would likely sanction or even fire them, were they not there to help others.

Finally, workers in the public-sector organisations studied were not found to focus very much on the history of their workplaces, nor was this history part of their daily work.

Activities done for their inherent qualities or their instrumental value

A key finding in the relational and communicational analysis was that the activities in the volunteer third-sector work studied seemed to be done primarily for their inherent value, as opposed to being instrumental to reaching separable outcomes or having intended implications beyond the present moment in which they took place. In contrast, the activities of the paid public-sector work were found to be instrumental to reaching separable outcomes.

Interestingly, in both sectors, activities were *talked about* as being instrumental to reaching separable outcomes. The big difference, however, was that unlike in the public sector, the outcomes talked about in the third-sector association were *fictitious*.

Public-sector communication was about, for example, helping a library user find a book or discussing the design of a questionnaire before sending it out, thus making it instrumental to achieving something separable, something outside the conversation itself. The people working performed tasks that were instruments for achieving something the population needs. When performing these tasks, workers were in a sense also each other's instruments, as they were helping each other with tasks that in the end met the needs of citizens. They were engaging with each other to achieve something they needed in order to do their jobs.

In contrast, third-sector communication was e.g. about making a bandage for a zombie whose arms were about to fall off or about building a duct tape sword because time travelling had now brought everyone back to the Viking age.¹ As these explanations were made up for the benefit of the activity itself, this made the separable outcomes non-existent, and I argue that their primary purpose instead was to carry the conversation along and to increase everyone's enjoyment in being associated with each other. In other words, these activities seemed to be done primarily for the inherent value of being associated with other people – for the feeling of fellowship or community. They primarily served the purpose of having something to carry along sociability; they functioned as a centre of attention in a fellowship existing for the sake of fellowship. Fellowship cannot exist in a group of people sitting around a table silently staring at each other.

Why do these non-instrumental activities take place, and how are they made possible?

1 While only one situation from the third-sector work is analysed in detail, many other activities (see programmes on p. 153 and p. 241) were also found to not have – or not be primarily focused on – separable outcomes.

First, these activities are possible only because they take place in the third sector. The public sector is sector-bound to create outcomes; the third sector is not. At the same time, while the public-sector organisation has the ability to exert actual top-down control in the organisation, this is not possible in the third-sector associations in the same way, as the formal roles of authority have less actual authority to direct others.

Second, while made possible by being in the third sector, what causes these types of activities to be organised, could first of all be *tradition*. The analyses found that traditions are both valued and maintained in the third-sector associations studied, and that they guide the kind of work the volunteers do. Having a fictitious theme and using this theme to explain why activities are done seems to be one of these traditions, which influence the work done in the association a great deal.

Third, in addition to continuing a tradition of having a fictitious theme, the non-instrumental nature of these activities is argued to fulfil the role of carrying association and fellowship along. This is not a fellowship of sitting quietly around a table looking at each other, but rather a fellowship centred on doing things together, which enable the participants first and foremost to enjoy being associated with other people.

Finally, I would argue that these associations make a distinct contribution to society by virtue of being spheres where people can be together just for the inherent enjoyment of being together. As argued, this would not be possible in the studied public-sector work. This can be seen as the difference between an organisation defined by its specific tasks and a third-sector association.

Public sector formalised hierarchical structure matches observed structure

Third sector formalised hierarchical structure deviates from the observed structure

Both public- and third-sector organisations were *on paper* found to be formalised hierarchical organisations where each person or entity was in principle under the supervision and management of all entities placed higher than them in the organisational hierarchy. In the third sector, this top-down management principle was combined with a bottom-up principle, where people at the bottom of the hierarchy also constituted the very top of the hierarchy, as they together formed the supreme authority of the association. In other words, the third-sector associations were structured around a top-down/bottom-up tension (as also noted by Horch, 2018), making the top of the organisation formally accountable to

the bottom and thereby differentiating the association from the public-sector organisations studied.

The thesis found that the observed reality of the public-sector organisations studied seemed to match their formalised structures as they existed *on paper*. But interestingly, this was not found to be the case in the third-sector associations studied. There, the way work seemed to actually be organised deviated a great deal from how the organisation was formally described on paper. The thesis found that the people and entities *formally* in charge were, especially in the case of boards, seldom the people *actually* in charge. In one of the cases, the local group of the association studied even worked without having a leader for the active volunteers – a role existing on paper, but not in practice. As no one wanted that position, they simply carried on their work without.

At the same time, the easily accessible bottom-up influence on the supreme authorities of the associations (afforded by the top-down/bottom-up tension) was seemingly not considered desirable or worthwhile to seek out, likely because people, first, experienced having the decision-making discretion they wanted regardless of the formal possibility, and, second, did not necessarily consider the formal top of the association as having legitimate authority anyway.

Why did this discrepancy between formalised and actual structure exist?

I would argue that the high level of decision-making discretion expected by, and afforded to, active volunteers in the associations is the most important reason behind this discrepancy. I argue there are two main mechanisms causing this level of discretion in volunteer third-sector work.

1) The unspoken trade between time given and decision-making discretion afforded

Active volunteers know they are doing work that is in high demand, and this seems to give them a form of leverage. Associations are always in need of more volunteers than they have, and thus I argue that a form of unspoken trade between time given and general decision-making discretion afforded seems to take place. On account of this unspoken trading system, volunteers are given a high level of personal decision-making discretion, both by leadership (if any exists) and by peer volunteers. This seems to be true both as a general matter and for specific tasks: the person making the effort and spending time on a task is the person who gets most of the decision-making discretion regarding that task. As planning and execution of tasks were often found not to be separate matters, this also means that a person with an idea and a willingness to back the idea with time and effort is allowed a high degree of decision-making discretion. Had the for-

malised structure of these associations been more respected, this would perhaps not have been possible to the same degree.

2) The connection between feeling competent and expecting decision-making discretion

Most volunteers in the third-sector work studied had a long history with the association they were a member of, and the two people followed specifically both felt very competent and confident in their work there. The analysis found that this feeling of competence could also translate into being disinclined to accept others making decisions about their work, as this could be seen as questioning their competence and limiting the decision-making discretion commensurate with their level of competence. In an association where most active volunteers have many years of experience, this makes it particularly difficult to limit volunteers' decision-making discretion, and consequently this also challenges the formalised hierarchy.

In the public sector, planning and execution of tasks were often separated, in the sense that people in positions of authority in the formal organisational hierarchy made decisions or direct requests that translated into work tasks for the people working in lower positions in the hierarchy. For this reason, wanting to put more or less effort into a task, or being more or less competent, would not automatically grant the person working more or less decision-making discretion.

CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS, CONTRIBUTIONS, LIMITATIONS AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this last section the philosophy of science and the choice of case and research question will be discussed. The chapter finishes with contributions, limitations and avenues for future research.

Analytical implications of the philosophy of science approach

The methodology of this thesis is based on a combination of critical realism, case studies, philosophical hermeneutics and the DiaLoop model, as described in chapters 3-6. Where some examples of the implications of critical realism and hermeneutics are provided in these chapters¹ in particular critical realism, will now be discussed further.

Critical realism

The starting point behind making the interpretations leading to this finding, was the ontology of critical realism which makes a distinction between the world as it exists and our human knowledge of the world. Because there are also some aspects of the world, that are unobservable, there is a need to make interpretations not only of the observed, but also of the unobserved and unobservable.

As understanding of the world will not be the same for everyone (as Gadamer also argues cf. the historically effected consciousness – see p. 68, we cannot just interview the individuals studied, as they only see certain aspects of the world, and do not have full access to, or full understanding of, aspects which affect their life and work. Also, we cannot just ask ourselves as researchers, as we are also limited to a certain perspective. Rather, we must actively seek out different sources of observable data, as several of these together, can lead to a given interpretation of an unobservable mechanism or explanation. Different data sources make

1 Critical realism on pages 37-39, 41-43, 47 and 49-50. Philosophical hermeneutics on pages 68-69 and 69-70 and as operationalised through the DiaLoop model throughout chapter 6 (pages 75-86)

up observations of some parts of the world, as seen from different perspectives. The analytical implications of using critical realism are then twofold. First, because the world as it exists is partially unobservable and differs from our knowledge of it, I epistemologically will have to make qualified guesses (retroductive interpretations) about how the world is made up. Secondly, to substantiate these qualified guesses, I need to include several data sources, to be able to triangulate my way towards possible unobservable explanations (mechanisms). The aim is to find (at least partially) unobservable explanations to observed phenomena.

Example

The analytical implications of using critical realism, will now be exemplified using one of the key findings of this thesis, and the process of how this was reached. For presentation purposes, the explanation given below makes the process of analysis seem linear, but the actual process was a quite complex intertwining of the aspects mentioned below, likely combined with things I was not aware of influenced the process.

The key finding chosen is: *The unspoken trade between time given and decision-making discretion afforded* - which I have argued is one of the reasons why formalised on-paper structure deviates a great deal from practice in the studied third sector associations.

An unobserved explanation

This connection between time given and decision-making discretion afforded, was not directly observed, nor was it something the studied persons mentioned during participant observation or interviews. So how was this reached?

When I first read the formalised description of the associational structure, I was surprised because the structure described, did not seem to match what I had observed during participant observation. It was my impression, that the volunteers I followed around, had almost full decision-making discretion themselves, and that neither the Annual General Meeting nor the board made decisions about their work. I followed up on this discrepancy in interviews with the volunteers, and their perspective was similar to my impression. This did however not give me an explanation as to *why* the structure did not match the observed reality, I had only established, using triangulation of observed (empirical) data, that this was the case.

The next step was to try and retroductively find possible explanations as to *why*. Retroduction is in a sense an *interpretative leap of faith*, as I could not observe my way towards a satisfactory explanation, meaning I had to make a qualified guess, also based on aspects I had not or could not observe. The qualified guess I made,

was based on, among others, the following data sources and perspectives

- Document analysis of formal descriptions of the structure of the two third sector associations studied.
- Participant and video observation of volunteer workers, working.
- Participant and video observation of board meetings
- Interviewing volunteer workers about their understanding of the role of the board.
- Interviewing volunteer workers about their understanding of their own decision.
- making discretion (no top-down control of active volunteers observed, and very little, if any, talked about)
- Existing research on board positions being e.g. desirable or possibly done primarily out of feeling obligated.
- Participant observation and interviewing point towards planning and execution often being done by the same person.

Although I cannot recreate the process entirely as it happened, I think it was going through interviews, that made me think about how they seemed guided by the notion that being willing to do the work, meant you had the right to make your own decisions about this work. This explanation seemed coherent with the abovementioned perspectives, and although it could not explain everything I observed (e.g. whether the board was there out of a feeling of obligation or not) - it made it possible for me to explain how decision-making discretion was negotiated. Before I reached this conclusion, I worked on many other possible interpretations in a trial-and-error style of analysis, where potential explanations were discussed up against the other data sources and perspectives available. The actual process moved back and forth numerous times.

In summary, this explanation was based firstly, on finding a discrepancy in the observed data. Secondly, on triangulating different data sources which supported the existence of the discrepancy. Thirdly, by including a number of other data sources and perspectives (including previous research), on making a qualified guess as to what the explanation for this could be. In that way, the analysis is guided both by the ontological and epistemological conditions set out by critical realism. In this case, the explanation found was relatively concrete. The analogies presented in the conclusion, are also aimed at providing explanatory power, but to do so from a more abstract point of departure. They were reached based on

the same process though, a complex intertwining of data sources, perspectives and theory – which is met by an *interpretative leap of faith*.

Philosophical hermeneutics and the DiaLoop model

Furthermore, the thesis includes philosophical hermeneutics as part of its philosophy of science approach. This is done because, although the retrodution approach of critical realism explains in some detail how the researcher is to analyse, it still could be seen to ‘black box’ the concrete process of analysis and interpretation somewhat. What I have tried try to take away from philosophical hermeneutics, is how we as humans and researchers are able to understand and interpret the world on a more basic level.

As written on page 73: We cannot use the fundamental conditions of our understanding as a certain approach for reaching suitable interpretations. But we can use his insights into the basis of understanding to develop methods and methodology in which the researcher is aware of these fundamental conditions of understanding. When we as researchers know that we cannot leave our historically conditioned prejudices at the door (or in the car on our way home from fieldwork, for that matter), this will influence how we argue and what we claim to have interpreted. The ontological basis from Gadamer is detailed and elaborated further using the DiaLoop model, which details how the process of analysis as a concrete activity done by me as a researcher can occur, and which steps need to be taken for it to have scholarly value or indeed truth in it. Where critical realism had not been exemplified in detail before now, the DiaLoop process is described in detail throughout chapter 6. To avoid too much repetition, I will refer interested readers to revisit that part of the thesis.

The generic vs. the specific: Strengths and weaknesses of having an open research question combined with specific cases

This thesis is based on what I below refer to as a relatively open research question, combined with case choices that can be seen as quite specific, and this might seem like an unfortunate combination of two opposites. Below I will discuss the reasons for this combination followed by reflecting on its strengths and weaknesses.

The open RQ

This thesis is based on a quite open and actually somewhat unspecific research question. It for example asks, *what characterises doing volunteer work in the third sector* and does so, without specifying what type of volunteer third sector work this

would be or which aspects of this work are of particular interest to the thesis.

This, could be argued, is much too generic, and needs to be specified, so the thesis becomes focused on something and it becomes clear to readers, what they can expect to learn from reading it.

The specific case choice

At the same time, the cases chosen could be seen as quite specific. Although chosen to match the ideal-typical sector descriptions of Klausen (2001) and thus be a good example of the two types of work - they still have specific characteristics, which would differentiate them from other third- and public sector types of work. As an example, we see that the two instances of public sector work studied, are organised quite differently, and that this naturally influences what the work is. Choosing two scout associations as the third sector cases could also be seen as a quite specific and narrow choice of case.

This, could be argued, is too specific, and the distinctive characteristics of the chosen cases will limit the applicability of the results in relation to other types of public- and third-sector organisations.

The questions

The above begs two questions, which will be used as a point of departure for the discussion:

1. Why does the thesis have this very open and seemingly generic research question, when the cases chosen seem that specific?
2. How does the thesis address the potential criticism of being either too generic or too specific?

Why does the thesis have this very open and seemingly generic research question, when the cases chosen seem that specific?

The answer is that with the case-study approach, these are not necessarily irreconcilable opposites.

On the one hand, the ambition with the case-study approach used in this thesis was:

- To study a phenomenon in the uncontrollable realm of everyday life, where the borderline between phenomenon and context isn't self-evident and exploring this border, is part of the study.
- To explore which differences actually stood out during field work and in interviews, rather than to rely too heavily on specific potential ideas about what would be worth noticing.

- To convey a complete idea of something in a way which descriptions of individual parts of it cannot do
- To keep the case study open in the sense of being careful not to summarise and close up the study too much, as this may limit the possibilities different readers with different interests have in learning from the case study.
- To offer the reader potential explanations based on depth of understanding. Not only in terms of explaining differences found in specific cases studied in the thesis - but also in terms of offering potential explanations which may hold explanatory power for other cases, because the reader understands not only the differences found, but also the conditions and circumstances these differences were found to be part of. Case-study knowledge is context-dependent knowledge.

Where the above may point towards open research questions and open answers to these, I also presented the following set of case-study ambitions:

- To focus on the particular, and not the general by studying a case in depth and from many different angles with the aim of understanding and describing the uniqueness of it.
- Case studies should be cases of something. This means that just describing what happens in case, does not make a very interesting case study in itself. Rather, the analysis must demonstrate what the specificness found in the case, could be examples (or cases) of. 'The goal is not to make the case study be all things to all people. The goal is to allow the study to be different things to different people' (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 238) When formulating what the case studied can be a case of, this is a way to illustrate to different people, what they might take away from the study they are reading. If trying to be all things to all people, the study will lose its explanatory power.

What I have tried to do in this thesis, is to strike a balance between these two aspects of the case study. The open research question was chosen to match the open and exploratory data collection and analysis done as well as to match the ambition of a case study being *many things to many people*. At the same time, the ambition was to strike a balance between on the one hand, being able to explore and let myself be led by the different data sources and perspectives, and on the other hand, to be specific enough for the case study to be about *something* and not just everything.

In the discussion and conclusion chapter, I have tried to include this balance by including something generic and open along with something more specific and narrow. To move focus away from the specific cases and over to what they *could be cases of* or *potential explanations for*, the language in the first and last parts of the chapter also deliberately avoids mentioning the specific work studied too much, and thereby tries to direct the readers attention towards how this can also be potential explanations for other cases.

Discussion and conclusion consists of three different aspects

1. Schematic summary of the analyses with the aim of presenting all differences found using a table format to give an overview of the many aspects. This matches the openness of the research question in that it, in an unfocused manner, presents the differences, the study found.
2. Discussion of the analyses with specific focus on where it expands, contradicts and contributes to existing quantitative and qualitative research. This is a more focused effort.
3. Presenting specific qualitatively based findings, seeking to make qualitative contributions similar to those of Knutsen (2013)

Somewhat generic, but not generalisable

One last important note to make, is that the research question should not be understood as looking for a *generalisable* answer being applicable to the comparison of any public- and third-sector types of work. The research question is deliberately kept *open*, but this should not be mistaken for a question looking for a *generalisable* answer.

Contributions and avenues for further research-

er

- As a case-study the thesis offers a detailed qualitative insight into the numerous and complex ways, the two types of work differ from each other in the selected cases. This is done with the aim of offering its readers a rich and context-dependent understanding of the two types of work studied.
- By asking the question: What is this a case of ? The thesis seeks formulate a number of possible distinctive differences between the two types of work, which are less embedded in the specific cases studied, and could perhaps be easier to apply to other organisations and persons.
- The thesis has had the ambition of making a contribution towards Koschmann's call for: "developing uniquely communicative explanations for various non-profit phenomena" (2012, p. 1) The analysis of transcribed conversations which lead to the interpretation that the scouts focus on the inherent value of the activities, and that it seems key, that activities allows them to enjoy being together - is a contribution towards this ambition.
- The thesis combines critical realism, case-studies, philosophical hermeneutics and DiaLoop with the goal of explicating the process of analysis and thereby moving beyond "black boxing" how the researcher reaches his conclusions. At the same time, it seeks to demonstrate how critical realism can contribute to analysis of communication by supplying an ontology which includes unobservable structures.
- The thesis combines the theory of sociability and of the telic/paratelic states, with the study of volunteering and in particular the actual communication taking place during volunteering, which details the complexity of these theories as it plays out in practice. With only limited data material analysed in the thesis, this calls for more research.
- The focus on history and traditions found, could be quite specific to the scout associations. While this does play a role in the thesis, the significance of this particular trait could be studied further, including if it is very specific to this type of association and which role it plays in their practice.

Limitations

In addition to the limitations discussed already, two more are presented below.

- Communicatively, I am looking at a relatively narrow aspect of the two types of work studied. With the knowledge of the different types of situations I have from the other analyses, other situations could have been analysed, which could point to other conclusions as well, or inform the practice studied further.
- The strengths and weaknesses of the research design where the same person is followed in two different types of work, could have been discussed further. In the review, I criticise Knutsen (2013) for only looking at one organisation empirically, but as a form of study, which requires a lot from both the researcher and the people studied, it would be useful to evaluate whether it is *worth the trouble*. In theory I have avoided self-selection issues regarding specific kinds of people choosing specific types of work, but did this give particularly good results? Would my current results be weakened, had the work been done by different people in the two sectors?

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