



AALBORG UNIVERSITY
DENMARK

Aalborg Universitet

Recognition in Leadership under Budget Pressure

Jørgensen, Simon Laumann

Publication date:
2024

Document Version
Other version

[Link to publication from Aalborg University](#)

Citation for published version (APA):
Jørgensen, S. L. (2024, Feb 4). Recognition in Leadership under Budget Pressure.

General rights

Copyright and moral rights for the publications made accessible in the public portal are retained by the authors and/or other copyright owners and it is a condition of accessing publications that users recognise and abide by the legal requirements associated with these rights.

- Users may download and print one copy of any publication from the public portal for the purpose of private study or research.
- You may not further distribute the material or use it for any profit-making activity or commercial gain
- You may freely distribute the URL identifying the publication in the public portal -

Take down policy

If you believe that this document breaches copyright please contact us at vbn@aub.aau.dk providing details, and we will remove access to the work immediately and investigate your claim.

Recognition in Public Leadership under Budget Pressure

By Simon Laumann Jørgensen

PhD, Associate Professor, Department of Politics and Society

Aalborg University

Denmark

Simonl@dps.aau.dk

A translation of "Anerkendende offentlig ledelse under budgetpres" IN

***Samfundslederskab i Skandinavien*, 2014, 29(3), s. 245-287. Reprinted in *Lederskabelse i spændingsfeltet mellem staten, professionerne og borgerne*. Preben Melander (red.), Djøf Forlag, 2014, s. 313-360**

Abstract

When and why is NPM difficult to reconcile with recognition in leadership? How could budget management and recognition in leadership be combined? Recognition in leadership of frontline workers in the welfare state requires awareness that frontline workers have to manage a difficult balancing act in *their* recognition relationships with citizens. It can be difficult in itself for a public leader to acknowledge the complexity of the frontline worker's work, especially if they have not been in it themselves. In cases where frontline workers' recognition is material and their discretion in specific cases can affect budgets, there is pressure on the leader to ensure that expenses don't get out of hand. NPM has been introduced for the purpose of budgetary control in cases where frontline workers must exercise discretion and judgment with some autonomy from management. For the frontline worker, the middle manager's budgetary focus limits the ability to exercise autonomous judgment on a professional and ethical basis. This can create mistrust towards the leader. This is especially true when the leader tries to coach and acknowledge the employee in ways that are strategically intended to appear trustworthy and appreciative. What are the possibilities for recognition in leadership within this framework?

Introduction

Can leadership through recognition of welfare state frontline professionals go hand in hand with NPM? The question is central, as it is impossible to avoid some form of budgetary management in the public sector, and as NPM is a leading response to this challenge. At the same time, NPM seems to create distance between management and employees when management systems are perceived as an expression of distrust. When this distance makes leadership difficult, there is a need to heal the wounds, and trust- or recognition-based management comes into play. At the same time, it is difficult to be against recognition in leadership. The ideal of relational understanding and handling of complexity, which recognition in leadership can be understood as (Andersen, G. 2008), is also intimately connected to the ideal I will defend and assess the possibilities of at the end of the article. Since the article is not meant to defend an all-or-nothing answer, the question becomes more precisely when and why NPM is difficult to reconcile with recognition in leadership; and how budget management and recognition in leadership could be combined.

This article will point to challenges in this combination that cannot be read from the literature on NPM or on recognition in leadership understood as *Appreciative Inquiry*. Only when we understand how the welfare state has institutionalized a complex and partly contradictory combination of recognition relations, we can see why NPM understood as one way of dealing with the welfare state's permanent budget management pressure can make it difficult to perform recognition in leadership of the welfare state's frontline staff. In many ways, the struggle between leaders and frontline staff is about the employee's relative autonomy to exercise professional and ethically-based judgment and discretion in specific cases. On the one hand, management is dependent on employees continuing to perform their functions, which requires them to exercise judgment in relative autonomy. The ability to exercise judgment is thus a defining characteristic of the job function of frontline employees (Lipsky 1980, 13). On the other hand, management relies on being able to manage frontline workers without taking direct part in the work (Lipsky 1980, 24).

In many contexts, management and employees are separate entities when it comes to understanding the goals of the work (cf. Majgaard 2013, 72f, 82). From the employee's perspective, there is often a feeling that management does not understand the complexity of the dilemmas the employee faces. It can frustrate employees if they feel that management does not understand the dilemmas *as dilemmas* and does not understand that they contribute

to making the cross-pressure dilemma-filled. Some of the employee's choices can feel tragic and unsolvable within the framework set by management. This is where time- or project management technologies are fundamentally unhelpful. If the employee is under cross-pressure from conflicting objectives, the leader is often the one who limits the employee's ability to exercise full judgment in the situation. It is the relationship between the leader acknowledging judgment and limiting judgment that makes the relationship with the leader difficult.

Thus, there is a potential conflict between the professional judgment of the frontline worker and the leader's desire to limit the scope for judgment in order to ensure management's desired results (Lipsky 1980, 19). This is a *potential* conflict also because it can result in a relatively close relationship between frontline workers and management, where legal certainty and professional ethical ideals are mutually concealed.

This conflict perspective, as described by Michael Lipsky among others, is useful as a starting point, as it opens up an understanding of the loss of meaning that employees can face, and it also gives meaning to employees' different coping strategies. Cross-pressure and lack of understanding can alienate employees. Apparently, something like this can lead to management getting their way and experiencing less resistance. Employees give up the fight against organizational pressure and become more bureaucrats than client advocates when dealing with citizens, and they accept that the relative autonomy of their judgment is limited (Lipsky 1980, 79). The alienation for the employee is twofold, because they are alienated not only from management but also from citizens. According to Lipsky, the alienating situation is defined by Etzioni as a situation in which 'the frontline worker is encouraged to appear as a helper to the citizen and as an apparently receptive and responsive advocate for the citizen, while the worker is subject to conditions beyond the person's understanding and control' (Lipsky 1980, 76).

As mentioned, such identity imbalances can explain the coping strategies that various studies have shown to exist (Lipsky 1980, part 3; Nissen & Appel 2008, 240ff; Rambøll 2004). Jørgen Goul Andersen outlines the following strategies (Andersen 2008): in order to gain time and resources, problems are exaggerated upwards in the system, while downwards towards citizens, attempts are made to control them, e.g. by withholding information about opportunities and rights within the institution; towards citizens, treatment is also standardized in complex cases, and attempts are made to skim the cream among citizens

and clients (cf. Nielsen 2007, 158). Management can then seek to gain control over the next stage by strategically avoiding complaints and collecting 'good evaluations', all of which should at least legitimize their practices to the public.

Previous studies have focused on coping strategies and on citizens' loss of legal security (Høilund & Juul 2005, chapter 4). The focus of this article is on the fact that the relationship between leaders and frontline staff is mirrored by three factors. Firstly, that frontline employees necessarily face a cross-pressure that is not directly based on budgetary considerations, but rather on conflicting moral considerations that are not always understood by the leader. Secondly, the frontline employee experiences that the leader also primarily has a budgetary agenda that leads to limitations on the employee's relative autonomy, turning cross-pressures into real dilemmas where the employee is faced with tragic choices. Thirdly, the budgetary considerations and belief in management techniques further limit the leader's understanding of dilemmas *as dilemmas* - and not just cross-pressures that can be solved with management technologies.

Structure of the paper

The first part of the article (A) defends the view that NPM has the manifest function of budget management and that budget management poses a structural challenge to the welfare state. At the same time, NPM is a response to the equally permanent challenge that there are tasks in the welfare state that require frontline workers to be granted relative autonomy to exercise judgment. This means that NPM fundamentally has a rationale and is not easily replaceable. The first part also looks at the cross-pressures of frontline work. The challenge for the employee is to be subject to budgetary pressure and at the same time exercise professional and ethically based judgment. On the one hand, you have to toe the line in relation to the law and on the other hand, you have to relate to the spirit of the law. This puts the professional identity of frontline workers under pressure. It is argued that, all else being equal, social workers potentially face greater budget pressures than teachers and nurses.

The second part of the article (B) supplements the narratives of frontline workers' cross-pressures, paradoxes and coping strategies with the narrative of the moral grammar of the welfare state developed by Axel Honneth as a philosophical *theory of recognition*. Honneth's theory is widely used as an explanatory and descriptive model in frontline professions such as social workers, educators and teachers (e.g. Høilund and Juul 2005).

Against this background, we can focus on the challenges of the middle management-frontline worker relationship under NPM rule. The section concludes with a defense of a communication-oriented complement to Honneth's more material recognition-oriented paradigm.

The third part of the article (C) assesses and discusses the possibilities of combining NPM and recognition- and understanding-oriented management. The question is answered both theoretically and 'practically'. The practical question is whether there are tendencies or structural pressures that could enable understanding-oriented management to play a more prominent role even within an NPM regime.

It concludes that we have not understood what recognition in leadership must be when it comes to frontline workers with high discretion (budget pressure), but that the article offers some categories and a framework of understanding that makes the tensions of recognitional public leadership more recognizable.

A. NPM in the public sector between values and budget management

1. NPM as a concept and phenomenon

NPM is a polyphonic concept that cannot be reduced to one particular theory or school of theory (see references in Pedersen and Löfgren, 435). The focus in the following is on NPM as a budget management tool in complex institutions, where management must necessarily surrender a certain amount of discretion and autonomy to the individual employee. This is particularly true when it comes to the welfare state's frontline employees, who are "public employees who interact directly with users/citizens on a daily basis and who, in connection with this work, have a relatively large discretionary freedom" (Nielsen 2007, 151). In the public sector, frontline workers constitute a large group such as nurses, doctors, police officers, social workers, teachers, who are in contact with all types of citizens and who, through their assessment of the individual situation and the individual citizen, must decide which 'face' the welfare state should show.

Frontline workers in the welfare state perform job functions with the following characteristics: they must exercise judgment by taking into account the individual case and the particular situation of each citizen in ways that make the human dimension of the work irreplaceable (Lipsky 1980, 15). On the one hand, this is because it is not possible to simply

feed a computer with information from and about the citizen to determine what type of treatment they are eligible for and which is the right one. The actual communication with the citizen and its interpretation requires human judgment. So does interpreting the potentials of the individual and the situation and how best to connect these elements with actions. Secondly, part of the actors' and the wider population's understanding of encounters between frontline workers and citizens is that this is where the welfare state shows its human face. In the general self-understanding of citizens, the legitimacy of the state depends on whether judgment is actually exercised in the individual encounter between employee and citizen (ibid). Likewise, it is also people who are best at showing the human face. This is not least because we as humans are concerned with other people's recognition of us, and the welfare state's central institutions can be seen as a collective expression of support for the fact that we as citizens are entitled to recognition - regardless of our personal ties, special qualities or achievements.

Rather than covering the breadth of NPM, this article takes a limited look at the way qualitative and quantitative goals are broken in the relationship between frontline workers and their immediate leaders, with a particular focus on frontline workers such as social workers who must exercise discretion in cases where decisions are crucial to municipal budgets (Fisker 2008, 19).

2. NPM as a budget management strategy

The understanding of NPM as budget-focused corresponds well with NPM's functional rationale. NPM was introduced to modernize the classic bureaucracy, but also to address the challenge that frontline workers seemed to be driving their own agenda, causing welfare state budgets to run out of control. The manifest function of NPM is to manage budgets by managing frontline staff (Merton 1957, 60ff), and there is no indication that there will be less need to keep track of welfare state costs in the future (cf. Starke 2006). As not only Denmark but most OECD countries have needed to manage their budgets, these countries have generally undergone reforms since the 1970s, with a wide range of strategies attempting to control public spending and improve the efficiency of public services. Although the management strategies are referred to as *New Public Management* (NPM), they express a classic desire to manage and control from top to bottom and often take a classic planned economy form (Pedersen & Löfgren, 435, 445). The spread of NPM during the period coincides with tighter budget control and an increased focus on efficiency.

During the same period, the Danish Ministry of Finance has been the standard-bearer for the view that the public sector constituted a "spending policy problem" and therefore needed "budgetary framework management and limitation of the public sector's share of the total economy" (Rennison 2000; Pedersen 1998). Hood (1991) also characterizes NPM as an instrument of austerity (p. 3), through which the top of society attempts to increase their control over the 'output' of welfare institutions (p. 4) and management of resource consumption (p. 5). Output is redefined in quantitative targets that employees are rewarded and punished for achieving. The means are efficiency improvements. Thus, the nurse must attend to more patients in less time, whereby a quantitative utilitarian calculus can trump the qualitative and difficult-to-measure calculus where words such as health and care are difficult-to-quantify factors.

In the *Finance Report 1996*, the Ministry of *Finance* analyzed how politicians and leaders in the public sector slowly realized that employees also had institutional interests and that there was no natural coincidence between the interests of those who were to implement the benefits of the welfare state and those of politicians (Raffnsøe-Møller 2011, 53). Therefore, a latent function of NPM was that employees felt suspicious and looked over their shoulders - even when they exercised their discretion in relative autonomy. Even though the Ministry of Finance's report expresses an understanding of the difference between self-interest and special interest, the management tool nevertheless came to resemble an expression of distrust that subordinate agents would "follow the leader's (principal's) goals" (Andersen & Nielsen 2006, 36).

In the perspective of the principal-agent model, the problem for the leader is that the subordinate actor "possesses more information than the principal", which is why it becomes a challenge "how the principal gets the agent to follow the principal's wishes/preferences" (Andersen & Nielsen 2006, 36). According to the above-mentioned report from the ministry that has been the driving force behind the introduction of NPM in the public sector, the goal was to change the interests of employees to coincide with political objectives (Raffnsøe-Møller 2011, 53). In order to simultaneously increase efficiency, management mechanisms such as "quality standards", "performance information", "financial incentives", "splitting work into sub-functions with associated time studies" (Taylorism) were introduced (Andersen & Nielsen 2006, 36f).

In order for such a form of leadership to be combined with recognition in leadership, it must be understood that recognition in leadership focuses on leadership as a *relational* activity where the leader and the led must align assessments of the led's work performance. In public management of frontline staff in the welfare state, such alignment requires the leader to have an understanding of the employee's self-understanding and employee identity. For professionals such as nurses, teachers, social workers and educators, employee identity is often linked to their understanding of their own function in the larger system of the welfare state. These functions are at least partially value-oriented and normative.

These value orientations are not purely subjective, but are part of the curriculum in professional education and have a relatively fixed status in the public sphere. As Lipsky writes, "Lawyers, doctors, social workers, and teachers" can read in their professional ideals that they are advocates for citizens (Lipsky 1980, 72). Thus, the leader must understand that the employee seeks recognition for their ability to perform tasks that are partially formulated in the value codes that make up professional ideals and public operational values.

3. NPM and distrust

Since NPM stems from skepticism about the extended self-interest of frontline staff, the form of governance is more consistent with the *public choice* tradition's assumption that all actors in the private as well as the public sector are self-interested (Perry & Wise 1990) than with the trust model (Grand 2010, 58). According to the trust model of public management, which Grand calls widespread in Europe, the management of the welfare state's frontline staff such as teachers, educators, nurses, doctors, police officers and social workers does not require additional control, as these professional groups are generally characterized and motivated by a special public *ethos* (cf. Perry & Wise 1990, 368f; Dalsgaard and Jørgensen 2010; Klausen 2001). On this basis, they can be trusted to be altruistic rather than selfish. Philip Pettit would add that by expressing trust, one also ensures against undermining such an *ethos* (through distrust) (Pettit 1997b).

When NPM is introduced in the management of public institutions, a form of management is introduced that is based on the assumption "that there is no fundamental difference between public service and any other service production" (Andersen & Nielsen 2006, 35; Hood 1991). This article will help to elaborate on why, in some contexts, there is reason to

believe that there is *something special about* public management. Citing Klausen (1996), Rennison (2000) warns against overlooking the public sector's particular ethos and value orientation (grounded in citizenship and the Enlightenment ideals of freedom, equality and solidarity).

4. Frontline staff's cross-pressure between myths and real dilemmas

The cross-pressures of frontline employees have been documented and discussed in several studies (Jørgensen 1999; Klausen 2001; Majgaard 2013). Jørgensen distinguishes between horizontal and vertical pressure. The vertical cross-pressure is an expression of the fact that management and users cannot both be satisfied, while the horizontal pressure is an expression of "inconsistencies in the institutional environment" (ibid., 57). However, it is difficult to explain why these inconsistencies are 'horizontal'. The distinction between the two levels seems to capture a distinction between direct and indirect, or inside and outside pressures, whose analytical level again seems difficult to maintain. The literature provides many examples of cross-pressure (Majgaard 2013, 99; Schmidt-Hansen & Aalund 2005, 19ff) and suggestions for strategies to deal with it (Majgaard 2013, 107ff, 114ff; Schmidt-Hansen & Aalund 2005, 87ff). Majgaard's characterization of cross-pressure as "an expression of different entities fighting for the place as the dominant, legitimate and binding horizon for the interpretation of actions" (Majgaard 2013, 100) displaces the focus on the fact that cross-pressure becomes personal for the frontline employee who feels obliged to weigh conflicting demands. Here, it is not 'wholes' but aspects of the 'personal whole' that are in conflict.

In the following, I want to highlight a dimension of the cross-pressure that is not sufficiently emphasized in the above. The point is that management's focus on budgets puts the employee in a cross-pressure that turns choices and estimates into real *dilemmas*. To make this point, I'll make a little common sense description of the forms of cross-pressure. We can be under *pressure* in many ways without being under *cross-pressure*. When shopping for dinner, it's important to remember what you need to buy and to get home in time. You can train yourself to remember things and not get distracted and 'lose track of time'. Others may try to control you by giving you a shopping list or calling you on the phone along the way. So, the pressure and control can be to a certain *extent*. You may also be under pressure to exercise judgment. If you want to buy not just ketchup, but a ketchup that meets certain aesthetic, ethical, quality, shelf life and taste requirements, you have to make a judgment call in the store.

On a shopping trip, you may encounter *cross-pressures* if the item needs to be both cheap and ethically produced, or if you are held up by people you would let down if you hurried on. Choices of this nature are something we are trained to deal with on a day-to-day basis without it affecting us too much. Today's parents often also have to deal with cross-pressures between family life and work. While the choices of cross-pressure may seem tragic (see Menke 1996), they are often temporary in nature. You can often make up for lost time in personal relationships.

For frontline workers in the welfare state, cross-pressure is different in a number of crucial situations. Here, cross-pressure is associated with real dilemmas where choices can be tragic. They often encounter people whose life situation seems tragic and where their role is to offer a lifeline. On the other hand, they encounter citizens whose claim for help seems only partially justified. It is up to them to assess under which group the specific citizen falls. Their judgment in such matters is challenged 'from above' by new categorization and matching tools, by budget requirements and public debates where sometimes sharp distinctions are made between the lazy and the useful, the undeserving and the deserving. But even in cases where the citizen's demands seem unfounded, where the citizen can be called lazy and the situation self-inflicted, the frontline worker must not completely disregard the role of safety net provider.

As Michael Lipsky put it in *Street-level Bureaucracy; Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*, 1980:

"To deliver street-level policy through bureaucracy is to embrace a contradiction. On the one hand, service is delivered by people to people, invoking a model of human interaction, caring, and responsibility. On the other hand, service is delivered through a bureaucracy, invoking a model of detachment and equal treatment under conditions of resource limitations and constraints, making care and responsibility conditional" (Lipsky 1980, 71).

Although Lipsky's approach has been both refined and problematized (pp. 151-167), his basic concepts and definitions of frontline workers are widely supported in implementation research (p. 151). Lipsky draws attention to the contradiction between the framework for employees' work and the ideals expressed for their work; an *ethos* that often attracted employees in the first place and for which they therefore want to be recognized by the outside world.

However, Lipsky calls the idea that the human interaction between frontline workers and citizens is underpinned by helpfulness and trust an altruism myth that is repeated over and over again in professional ethical canons and in teaching how to treat the whole person, respect the autonomy of the individual and relate to the individual as an individual (p. 71). Lipsky uses the word myth to point out that the belief in the goodness of the frontline worker can make it easier for the bureaucrat behind the friendly exterior to manipulate and control citizens (p. 71). However, this does not mean that he wants to totally debunk the myth. The myth is not false as a description of some of the functions of frontline staff. It is only false if you take it as an exhaustive description of what actually happens. Nor is his point that all frontline workers are basically bureaucrats. The employees themselves bring the myth with them when they apply to the program out of a desire to help other people (p. 72), but in practice, you can only be an advocate for a citizen if there is time for it. The ideal is therefore naturally put under pressure if the 'lawyer' has to work with a large pile of cases with little time set aside for each (p. 73).

However, Lipsky does not primarily focus on the *leaderial* challenges related to such cross-pressures. He points elsewhere when he suggests where the root of the problem lies. Firstly, he points out that the frontline worker must be able to handle such contradictions and cross-pressures. Secondly, he points out that one of the challenges is that the professional ideals only emphasize the good that the employee should do to help weak citizens in need, while their everyday working life constantly puts them between the cross-pressures described in the quote above.²

A further limitation of Lipsky's approach to the article's focus on leadership challenges and opportunities is that he highlights the different roles of employees as incompatible. He writes that "the advocacy approach is incompatible with the organizational perspective" (p. 73). I'd rather soften this aporia and talk about the two perspectives being in opposition. For the organization, the primary concern is controlling resources and avoiding criticism for favoritism, while the lawyer must look for holes in the system that can help this particular client. There is also a conflict between the lawyer and judge perspective, as the 'lawyer' must at the same time pass judgment on the citizen; must stand outside the conversation and assess whether the person is credible, properly motivated, has the right potential, etc. (p. 74).

Frontline workers are thus often in a cross-pressure between tasks and budget; the experience that the need for their service is a bottomless pit, that the objectives of their work are unclear and conflicting, and that the citizens they work with are not primarily the group they need to legitimize their work efforts to (p. 27f). There are real dilemmas, and frontline staff must be able to manage conflicting considerations. In the following, I will describe why, on the one hand, the conflicting considerations are not incompatible and why management must understand the frontline staff's pressure as something other than a struggle between their desire to *be good and* management's desire to limit this.

The employee knows that in those moments, on the one hand, they are alone with their decision, and on the other hand, they have the indirect support of management. 'It was necessary in order for us to achieve what we are measured on.' In this context, recognition in leadership is precisely the recognition that 'yes, it's hard, but necessary.' 'You did the right thing.' 'We can't...' The recognition is basically that on the one hand, the frontline staff's judgment and ability to sort citizens is superior to an electronic system (p. xv), but on the other hand, the frontline staff's judgment must be limited, as their 'soft caring heart' and excessive focus on legal certainty and the spirit of the law could drain public budgets'. Therefore, the recognition is also easily experienced as icing on a cake, or as a band-aid that still bleeds for the employee who cannot forget the human destinies that were met with budget constraints while defending the rationale of the decision.

What I'm looking for now is why recognition in leadership in public institutions in many situations does not *seem* appreciative. By focusing on recognition theory in the following, we will see that recognition in leadership is difficult because management in its mission has difficulty recognizing the identity-disturbing dimension of cross-pressure. The perspective on recognition in leadership presented in this article is based on the idea that recognition is something you seek precisely to strengthen your identity dimension. This is not a *myth*, but Lipsky is right that in practice, it is unpredictable which strategies employees use when the need for recognition is not understood and acknowledged by management.

B. Dimensions of recognition in public management

From a management perspective, recognition must be a multi-faceted affair. On the one hand, it's nice to have satisfied employees who feel recognized. On the other hand,

withholding recognition can be a powerful motivator. From a budget management perspective, withholding recognition can help keep employees firmly focused on management's goals with a view to 'get a bonus if we hit our target by January first'. However, in the case of frontline staff in the welfare state, recognition in leadership cannot be seen as an isolated relationship. Recognition in leadership must take into account that frontline staff *themselves have* to deal with a multi-sided and double-sided recognition relationship. Recognition must be given on the basis of both *potential* and actual *performance*. This is a difficult task when recognition should not just be a velvet glove around an iron fist; or disciplining with a smile.

In the following, I will analyze the philosophy of recognition in order to understand the following:

1. The importance of recognition for people
2. How recognition is a condition for the development of core *human* capacities such as autonomy, and that it must be given on the basis of potential rather than actual performance
3. How recognition is an important societal management tool that can make individuals comply with common goals when it is conditional on one's performance within commonly set goals
4. How frontline workers in the welfare state have a dual role in exercising recognition unconditionally and conditionally on performance
5. How the framework of recognition in democratic societies will be evolving and that it is legitimate to oppose the current framework

These five themes are the focus of the following. At the same time, the underlying question remains what recognition in leadership should look like in terms of managing frontline employees who have to deal with conflicting recognition relationships.

The thesis is that recognizing management of frontline staff in the welfare state who work on the basis of professional ethics must involve: cf. 1: that employees feel seen and understood; cf. 2: that they can recognize themselves and their own goals in what they are recognized for; cf. 3: that management recognizes that most employees also want their efforts to be recognized based on general standards - including financial considerations; cf.

4 that management recognizes that employees have a difficult task that requires them to be recognized a relative autonomy to exercise their judgment, and that it can put employees in significant dilemmas when management restricts autonomy for budgetary reasons; cf. 5: that there may be a need for open dialogues where dissatisfaction with existing standards is recognized as fully legitimate and not an expression of fundamental employee-management conflicts.

1. the importance of recognition

What does recognition mean to people? The literature on recognition may seem extensive in our time, but recognition is also a recurring theme in European philosophy, both in the canonized such as Plato and Aristotle, Hobbes, Rousseau, Smith, Kant, Hegel and in literature from Homer to Mandeville, Swift, Dostoevsky and Ralph Ellison. For a long period of time, the human quest for recognition seemed to be the focal point for writers and philosophers (Lovejoy 1961). These studies have separated the dimensions of the desire for recognition into three: 1) a quest to be seen rather than invisible, to be 2) equal or 3) superior rather than inferior, respectively (Lovejoy 1961, Neuhouser 2010). While authors have studied the moral and pathological dimensions of recognition, philosophers have been concerned with studying the conditions under which the various dimensions of need can be satisfied without the breakdown of society.

Adam Smith writes in *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1982 [1759]) that the search for recognition is among man's primary motivations and the cause of the vast majority of human actions. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in *Treatise on the Origin and Foundation of Inequality among Men* (Rousseau 1996 [1753]), also argued that the quest for recognition was the fundamental human drive that has led to virtually everything that elevates us above the animals. However, it is especially GWF. Hegel, who is known today for having made the human struggle for recognition a dynamic entity that must be satisfied in different ways if society is to reproduce itself (Jørgensen 2008a and 2008b). Also in the 20th century, philosophers have considered how individuals' preoccupation with their recognized status could stabilize the reproduction of society by satisfying identity needs. John Rawls described the 'social bases of self-respect' as legal, institutional and material recognition on the basis of collectively and morally justifiable principles (Rawls 1971). At the same time, however, he also made a point of describing recognition as something we get based on the complexity and recognition-worthiness of the behavior we actually perform.

From a leadership perspective, all of the many dimensions of recognition can be valuable to know, but which dimensions you focus on is crucial to the form of leadership. For example, is it based on Hegel's assertion that people can only be what they are when they are recognized, or Adam Smith's assertion that most human activities are motivated by a quest for recognition? It seems impossible to map all these dimensions and assess their different rationales and mutual influences, but less can be done when the goal is to assess how recognition in leadership of frontline staff in the welfare state is problematic.

The meaning of recognition for people is a *contested phenomenon*. *Recognition* is a phenomenon we can all intuitively connect with, but its complexity and normative dimensions also make it a contested phenomenon in the academic literature. Because of its complexity, we can argue about 1) its psychological motivational power on people in general and types of individuals; 2) its need status in relation to human satisfaction and in relation to its status as an enabling condition for the development of essential human capacities such as autonomy; 3) its actual and potential impact on types of human practices (including institutionalized management). Because of its normative dimensions, we can argue about who is entitled to what kind of recognition and on what grounds this right can be contested.

However, there is a tradition from Hobbes, Smith, Rousseau and Hegel that reaches into the present day, where the focus is on how recognition comes into focus in theorizing about what fundamentally motivates individuals and how they can achieve a satisfying identity within a societal system that must deal with its own reproductive capacity. An overarching point is that individuals seek recognition, and there are forms of recognition that can satisfy their desire for identity recognition while supporting societal reproduction.

Axel Honneth is the best recent example of a theorist who has pursued this path. According to Honneth's definition of how recognition should be understood within his theory of recognition, it must include "affirmation of the positive qualities of an individual or group"; be an "attitude" expressed in actions rather than just speech; express a distinct intention rather than being "a side effect of an action directed towards a different goal"; and belong to a particular form of recognition such as "love, legal respect" or "appreciation" (2009, 229f). Here it becomes clearer than in Rawls, for example, that recognition necessarily takes different forms.

Against this background, it becomes natural to see the welfare state as an institutionalization

of actions that express affirmation of a citizen's positive quality based on potential (in legal respect) and actual performance (in the form of appreciation) (Jørgensen in press) (Jørgensen in press). Honneth thus distinguishes between the respect everyone should meet in legal and legal-bearing public institutions, and the appreciation that must be earned on the basis of one's "performance within the structurally and industrially organized labour market" (Fraser & Honneth 2003, 140). In legal institutions, citizens should experience equal dignity, while recognition in the labor market is conditional (ibid). Honneth thus makes a sharp distinction between respectful recognition, which is given on the basis of a potential for democratic participation (and on the basis of the dignity this autonomy potential gives the citizen), and recognitional recognition, which is conditional and depends on performance in an 'industrially organized labour market'.

Despite the fact that recognition is a contested phenomenon, Honneth's distinction between recognition based on potential and recognition based on performance seems to capture a central duality in the institutionalized recognition relations of the welfare state. In the following, we will first examine how legal respect is linked to a certain potential (2) and then how appreciation is linked to performance in the labor market (3).

2. Recognition and autonomy

In the following, we will see that recognition is a condition for the development of core *human* capacities such as autonomy, and that it must therefore be given on the basis of potential rather than actual performance. These theoretical explanations should clarify our understanding of why public management cannot avoid the recognition dimension, which is about recognition being a condition for valuable human activities and capacity development. It is precisely this recognition that is the focal point when Honneth, via T.H. Marshall's description of the development of rights in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, suggests that we understand the institutional development of the welfare state as an increasing and expanding recognition that there are socio-economic conditions for people's valuable capacity development and unfolding, and that these conditions are best ensured for all citizens when recognition is institutionalized. It is also Honneth's basic thesis that recognition plays a central function for individuals' development of personal autonomy (i.e. the ability to be 'master of one's own house'). The thesis is that personal autonomy depends on the ability to identify with one's own characteristics and that this ability is developed in the types of interactions with others in personal, public and professional relationships where one experiences recognition (ibid; Honneth 1994). The following is based on the view that

Honneth is correct that the welfare state is considered to have an essential function in promoting human *autonomy*, and that this autonomy can only be promoted for all citizens when it is done through *institutionalized* recognition.

In this way, it is possible to reconstruct why the frontline staff of the welfare state have been assigned a central task in managing this recognition. When Honneth points to recognition as crucial for the development of autonomy, he points to conditions for the realization of a central norm for the Nordic welfare state's frontline workers. For example, the Danish Association of Social Workers has adopted a code of ethics (1995, 1997, 2000) in which autonomy, self-determination, freedom, democracy, personal integrity and personal responsibility are the central values. Looking at ethics books and ethical professional ideals for teachers, nurses and educators, they must also see themselves and treat their colleagues as autonomous individuals and respect and promote the personal autonomy of citizens (Husted 1995; Husted 2013; Andersen et al).

Since autonomy is a fundamental ideal of enlightenment and constitutes a basis for the dignity ascribed to all citizens as equal citizens in a democratic society, the recognition of the potential for autonomy is not something the welfare state can legitimately withdraw based on pragmatic and strategic considerations. Thus, when Honneth defends institutionalized recognition, it is not because it is nice to be appreciated or because it is something many employees strive for and are therefore motivated by. Appreciation is interesting to Honneth because it is thought to play a crucial role in the development and further development of *autonomy*.

The fact that recognition of potential can lead to the development of autonomy, and that recognition is thus morally justified, plays a role for public management both directly and indirectly. Directly, it means strengthening the trust agenda and the expectation that frontline employees exercise independent judgment and are expected to recognize the autonomy of colleagues and citizens.³ Indirectly, this comes into play because the leader must recognize, for example, a pedagogue, social worker, teacher or nurse, who themselves have the task of recognizing citizens - high and low - with equal respect in recognition of the fact that they are all, in a fundamental sense, citizens and have a valuable potential for autonomous participation in the common life (Esping-Andersen 1990: 21, Marshall 1950).

3. Recognition and societal governance

Recognition, in the philosophical tradition Honneth carries on, is not just a gift to

individuals. It is also an important societal management tool that can make individuals comply with common goals when it is conditional on one's performance within commonly set goals.

However, this point is not clearly realized in Honneth, and I will therefore draw on points from the tradition to begin with. According to Smith, individuals in combination resolve the recognition struggle through their self-interested strategic interaction. According to Smith, all individuals seek recognition, which makes them oriented towards others' assessments of their actual behavior. This has a fundamental moral corrective effect, as when children from childhood must learn to conform on the playground in order to become part of the shared play and recognition relationships. We each find our place in the hierarchy and strategically seek different forms of recognition, which is only a good thing. It helps to distribute roles in society and helps to establish *fairness* in the distribution of goods and material safety nets, which helps to provide a necessary balance between dynamism and stability in society. Those who seek stable recognition have to settle for it being relatively cool. Those who dare to take risks and seek recognition for particularly remarkable achievements risk ending up without benefits if the project fails, but can also break through and receive 'warm' recognition. It then becomes a societal task to expose those individuals who adorn themselves with stolen feathers or otherwise try to cheat their way to recognition.

Rousseau was far more skeptical about whether individuals' strategic search for recognition leads to the right balance between dynamism and stability in the reproduction of society. This is because he was not primarily concerned with the dynamism, innovation and capital production that the quest for recognition, comparisons and the desire to be ranked higher than others brings. For him, the uncontrolled quest for recognition leads not only to fraud and deception, but also to economic inequality, status dominance relations and individual unhappiness (Neuhouser 2010; Rousseau 1979).

Hegel, like Smith, warned against the category of citizens who considered themselves above the laws of the land. But unlike Smith, he also drew attention to the necessity of paying attention to the identity formation and recognition experience of the involuntarily marginalized when the state considers its reproductive mechanisms and challenges. Hegel pointed out that the citizen outside the labor market lacks something central to his or her identity formation and that it poses a threat to society if a large group of citizens give up the belief that they can gain recognition from the social community (Hegel 2004). Hegel, in

some agreement with Smith and Rousseau, focused on describing the possibilities for individuals to achieve, through their societal roles, forms of recognition that were individually satisfying and that simultaneously supported individuals' identity formation in a way that would make the activities they were motivated to perform (e.g. through work) consistent with society's concerns for its reproductive capacity. Hegel has an eye for the formative processes the individual must go through from youth, seeking personal satisfaction, to later giving one's activities and production a form that can also satisfy others. The artist or scientist must put things aside in order to improve their skills, but must also abandon experiments that may be personally interesting if they cannot also meet the needs and interests of others.

Honneth formulates a similar point of view, where societal goals and individual goals are reconciled by individuals finding their place in a system of *functional division of labor*. Ideally, through this, individuals can both satisfy their individual desires to express themselves in a particular way, and 'society' can recognize that their expression contributes to achieving common goals or solving common problems. Here, recognition is granted as individual *appreciation* rather than general *respect*. For Honneth, this type of recognition can ensure individuals' sense of self-worth, which is a prerequisite for them to feel and act as free individuals (see Jørgensen 2005). Like Smith, this Hegelian perspective attributes a fundamental and positive motivational force to people in their search for recognition, but it adds to Smith's perspective that the welfare state's ideal of equal citizenship requires an institutional processing and interpretation of the challenges and opportunities associated with people's claim to *equal status as citizens*.

2008, 37f). The key challenge for this assumption, however, is that 'support' for common goals can be understood both as quantitative and strategic support or as qualitative and understanding-based. Furthermore, the assumptions about NPM's compatibility with value- and trust-based leadership only make sense when you don't look at the relationship between the welfare state's frontline workers and their (middle) leaders. Focusing on the cross-pressures of frontline employees is not new, but this article contributes new angles on this cross-pressure by looking at it from a specific recognition theory perspective. It is by focusing on the cross-pressures of frontline employees⁴ that we can see why NPM and recognition in leadership are in deep tension with each other.⁵

There are employees who are in a fundamental cross-pressure because they have to

represent two sides of the welfare state at the same time (e.g. the social worker who has to act as a social safety net for even distrusted clients). The cross-pressure leads to real dilemmas when employees are pressured to de-prioritize aspects of their professionalism and professional code of ethics. Whether NPM is a threat to employees' recognition work is thus largely about whether NPM leads to budgetary orientation, and in the quantification of qualitative goals, management blinds itself to the real dilemmas that budgetary pressure puts employees in. At the same time, it has an impact on whether management considers employees to be a constant budgetary threat. Here, social workers are in a different position than many other public employees, as their discretion often directly affects municipal budgets.

When middle managers need to recognize these employees, this is challenged by the fact that middle managers also have to hold frontline employees to the budget framework for their work, which is why it is the leader who sometimes makes the frontline employee's work tragic in light of the professional ideals they (often) carry. The relationship between frontline worker and middle manager must be based on trust if recognitional dialog is to be possible, but this requires that the trust relationship survives the combination of the leader's ('hard') demands and understanding ('soft') dialog. However, if this relationship ends up being trusting, it should not be because the frontline employee has fully adopted the budget perspective. The frontline worker must also maintain the notion that it is the leader's harshness that in many situations causes the employee to (possibly) let down citizens who (possibly) after a rejection are left without the safety net that the frontline worker (with support from professional ethics) sees it as their task to never completely pull away from the citizen.

So what is the solution? Half solutions are for the leader to put some of the cards on the table to try to understand that it is also in the public interest that public spending does not 'run wild', or to relativize the safety net metaphor with notions that citizens cannot be helped if they do not want to be helped. In light of Honneth's theory of recognition and Habermas' perspectives on dialogue, the conclusion is that the dialogue between the middle manager and the frontline worker can only be truly recognitional when a number of dimensions of the frontline worker's work are recognized. This applies to both the uncertainty of frontline workers' judgment and the tragic choices that sometimes have to be made. Recognizing this also means recognizing that it is the middle and upper management that puts the frontline worker under pressure. Thus, a solution must be oriented 'upwards' in the system.

The article's focus on communication and touching on the idea of the leader as *therapist* gives the middle manager the task of holding the employee to the central democratic and welfare goals, which must support legal certainty in a way that does not express distrust (cf. Pettit 1997). If, on the other hand, the middle manager is not assigned this task, then the relationship between frontline employee and middle manager cannot accommodate the trust necessary for the frontline employee to dare to air their doubts and uncertainty regarding their own judgment in difficult cases. It is beyond the scope of this article to suggest what administrative and leaderial changes are required if middle managers in general are to be granted such a role.⁶

4. The dual recognition of frontline staff

This section explores how frontline workers in the welfare state have a dual role in exercising recognition both unconditionally and contingent on actual behavior and performance. When dealing with the citizens of society as they are, there does not have to be a contradiction between respect and appreciation recognition. Recognition theory, as developed by Honneth, understands both types of recognition-bearing human relationships as having the goal of setting the parties *free*. A social worker must, for example, use independent thinking to help a citizen who is at a loss to 'find *their* own way'. When, in such a process, you also have to respect the citizen who protests when you try to motivate such a liberation process, this respect can be seen as an instrument that in the long run also helps the liberation process.

The reason why the demand for freedom can also be a social project is because autonomy is not the same as the freedom to do what you want. Recognition theory thus tells us that there is a clear framework for how a person can achieve the desired way of life (autonomy) and what such a way of life contains (e.g. personal and public relationships where one lives up to certain images of human worthiness for recognition). The basic premise of recognition theory is that the freedom of individuals depends on whether society as a whole is able to help its citizens find identity in family life, work life and a certain degree of public democratic engagement.

Honneth's analysis draws attention to the fact that there is a large group of public employees whose function is on the one hand to support the 'industrially organized *labour market*' and on the other hand to constitute the recognitional face of the welfare state. Honneth's analysis points out that forms of recognition are not fundamentally incompatible. They can coincide

in time, as when you both love your child unconditionally and appreciate their work effort. Two completely different recognition relationships can also take place between two people within a very short time frame. A loving relationship can be replaced by discord if one party suddenly realizes that the other doesn't value them. For example, it does not lead to a professional crisis for a caseworker if they suddenly have to change their attitude and deviate from an expressive, respectful treatment of the citizen if it suddenly emerges that the citizen has deliberately lied about key issues.

It's much harder to be trusting and distrustful at the same time. This is familiar from jealousy. Distrust can be suppressed, but as soon as it is present, trust changes. The two forces are fighting and trust must be *regained*. Of course, parents need to make demands on their children and love them at the same time. But if the relationship reaches a point where the demands have the ability to crowd out the love, then the relationship is fundamentally changed. Love must be reclaimed. The drug addict son who fails again and again may be able to regain a trusting and loving relationship with his parents. If this does not succeed, it does not necessarily mean that love is completely absent from the relationship, but will, for example, be something that can be retrieved if the parties carry a reservoir of memories of love.

The relationship between social worker and citizen does not have such a shared reservoir of experience. The social worker has the task of *establishing* such a reservoir, as the welfare state has an expressive task in relation to expressing respect for the dignity of all citizens regardless of their utility function (Miller 1978; Jørgensen in press). It is not inconceivable that the citizen the social worker encounters experiences what recognition theorists perceive as the greatest violation, namely invisibility (Honneth 2003). The frontline worker of the welfare state may thus constitute the last bastion of humanity. But this expressivity seems impossible in interaction with distrust. The social worker is well aware that one of the main reasons why humans perform the social worker's function is that humans are better at assessing whether there is reason to trust the information another person provides than a computer would be.

An engineer can solve and create a societal problem at the same time if they build a bridge that is more expensive than necessary, is unsafe or involves the destruction of nature, but bridges can be built in ways that do not destroy nature. It is thus possible to write a coherent formula for when we recognize an engineer's special contribution to solving a common

problem. Only by graduating legal recognition can the social worker solve the task of enforcing the asset line. Unconditional respect in the form of social benefits does not seem possible within this paradigm. Nevertheless - and with good reason - what Lipsky calls the myth of altruism lives on both in Honneth's model and in the descriptions of ethics and values in social work (Husted, 2009).

Helping a person who is facing major challenges in their life to become free is obviously a huge task to have on their shoulders. At the same time, managing the duality of recognition requires great human understanding and sensitivity. When these two perspectives collide, NPM and recognition, the cross-pressure arises. It is therefore not surprising that several Danish studies have documented that social workers feel a cross-pressure between being the citizen's advocate and enforcing system interests (Carstens 1998 16). They struggle to integrate the Janus face of social work (Nissen & Harder 2008). The encounter with the demand to "control" rather than "help" can seem like a meeting between "two very different worlds" (p. 236). Social workers in particular are caught between the lawyer and bureaucrat perspectives.

In light of Honneth's separation of respect and appreciation, we can better understand how social workers, for example, can be in a particular cross-pressure. Their control has a moral justification in that society needs citizens to contribute to its reproduction. Appreciation recognition is contingent on one's actual contribution and not just one's potential. Social workers in the employment field must implement the *active policy* (Damgaard 2003, 2) or *asset line*, which means that welfare benefits such as contact assistance are intimately linked to the duties of the unemployed (Carstens 1998, 61). While a number of justifications for the asset line can go hand in hand with the desire to show *respect* for the unemployed, the asset line also serves functions that are more akin to whip and distrust; but at the same time it is linked to the moral ideal of valuation as dependent on performance.

Here, the desire to use the withheld recognition as an instrument potentially risks undermining the respect that should be given on the basis of the citizens' potential to take control of their own lives and live with autonomy. Carstens (1998) mentions that the activation line should act as a threat to both employed and unemployed people. The threat is strengthened when the activation contains a stigmatizing element (i.e. is disapproving) (p. 66). Furthermore, it is meant to prevent social unrest "by physically keeping the poor in certain places for certain periods of time" (p. 68). It is thus one way of addressing the

problem Hegel described as the marginalized risk becoming a threat to society.

A special role is played by the objective of "maintaining and strengthening the principle of self-support as a fundamental moral value for the sake of social welfare" (p. 69). In Carsten's formulation, this last principle contains both a reference to society as a whole, as something the individual - including the most vulnerable - has a moral obligation to maintain. This means that lack of self-sufficiency is an expression of individual failure of a moral principle. This principle is directly translatable to Honneth's ideal of value recognition, although in the Hegelian tradition, Honneth sees it as a challenge to be taken on from an overall governance perspective (Neuhouser 2003; Fraser & Honneth 2003).

The justification for disregarding collective responsibility is grounded in economic theory. Carstens links the ideal of self-support to what she calls "the belief in the return of full employment" (Carstens 1998, 69). Thus, the ideal of self-sufficiency expresses that social assistance as social assistance is an anomaly that should be abolished. Whereas childcare and nursing care are permanent and rational ways of supporting the market and ensuring welfare, unemployment benefits are irrational.

In conjunction with Carstens' statement that "a formulated central aim of the asset line is to shift responsibility from the public sector to the individual" (p. 67), the asset line sets a fundamental premise for the social worker's conversation with an unemployed person, which means that it would not be rational, morally right or system-supporting if the social worker were to assume the main responsibility for helping the citizen through the crisis. In Carsten's analysis of conversations between social workers and clients, where "the outcome of the process is ultimately crucial to the physical survival of one party", she sees a basic premise that "one party's self-perception and inner moral attitudes are assessed" (p. 121).

All things being equal, this puts the social worker in a more difficult situation in relation to taking care of society's weakest members and finding recognition from management for this than, for example, the nurse or teacher. The person the social worker ultimately helps is also labeled as a deviant (p. 104).

Social workers often have human destinies at their disposal. Whereas a teacher or educator can adjust their pressure and, for example, show a more friendly face to the children the next day, a social worker often has a more limited basis for assessing the citizen's situation before and after their intervention, and fewer opportunities to show both faces. This

sometimes means, to put it bluntly, that you have to show two contradictory faces at the same time. This in itself can call your judgment into question, but when you also question whether there are other actors who will act as a safety net if you deny the citizen's wishes, you may be left wondering whether you were the one who stomped on the hands of the citizen who was clinging to the only raft at sea. However, such employees will also have reasons to feel a twinge of uncertainty about their own judgment in the situation. Professional ethical ideals, goal descriptions for their professional function and the pleading eyes of the citizen put the frontline worker under pressure. At the same time, citizen reactions pose a constant challenge to the disregard of care considerations. The reactions can be negative in ways that do not appeal to the worker's sensitivity and can reinforce their view that they could not make much of a difference under any circumstances (Lipsky 1980, 9).

5. Recognition and criticism

In this section, we consider that the framework of recognition in democratic societies will be evolving and that it is legitimate to oppose the current framework. Honneth has been portrayed as a defender of certain seemingly stable recognition relations. This does not mean that citizens must submit to given recognition relations simply because they appear (as in the above) to be expressions of respect or value recognition.

Honneth's main work is called *The Struggle for Recognition*. Its starting prayer is that the future will show which direction the forms of recognition develop. This is not an expression of relativism, but of the view that people have substantial moral reasons to fight for recognition when the forms of recognition are unsatisfactory. Whether their reasons are substantial cannot always be seen in the situation, but emerges over time. To help clarify whether certain desires for recognition are rational or pathological, we have the existing categories of recognition and their basic normative structure. Do citizens desire material and legal recognition to ensure their ability to do whatever they want, or do they seek material and legal recognition in order to develop their autonomy and become equal citizens in a democratic society? In the latter case, their demands can be justified within the framework of existing moral norms as condensed in what Honneth calls legal recognition. If citizens want greater freedom in terms of what types of contributions to society's common goals are considered worthy of recognition, this may be a legitimate attempt to expand the framework of what can provide recognitional recognition.

Likewise, citizens have the right to criticize existing forms of recognition as mere icing rather than substantive. Honneth has attempted to establish parameters to reveal whether the recognition that is already seemingly at stake (e.g. the leader's recognition of the employee under cross-pressure) manipulatively obscures purely *strategic* interests. Honneth (2009) thus explores the ways in which recognition can constitute a rhetorical and strategic tool that, by promoting a "positive self-image", is intended to maintain individuals and groups "in existing structures of dominance" (p. 323). Here, something akin to recognitional recognition may simply be a way of imposing on the citizen "a particular self-image that will motivate them to voluntarily take on obligations that serve society" rather than support their "autonomy" in the long run (ibid). Recognition here serves to get individuals to stick narrowly to their social role and, in doing so, to fulfill their duties and follow the norms. As long as they stick to the rules of the game, they receive public recognition of their social identity and role as a reward (p. 324). "To recognize someone would then mean to encourage him by means of repeated and ritual invitations to adopt precisely that self-conception that conforms to the established system of behavioural expectations" (ibid). The strategy can be effective if it extends the competencies that the citizen has traditionally found worthy of recognition (professionalism, efficiency and user satisfaction) (p. 340). Honneth's central approach to revealing ideological recognition is debatable. He points out that if employees are suddenly recognized as independent entrepreneurs (p. 343ff), this should be reflected in "institutional policies and practices" (p. 345) in exactly the way that "the material conditions for the realization of the new evaluative qualities" are structurally secured (p. 346). Thus, for the given case, the question is whether the material conditions for employees to act entrepreneurially or innovatively are structurally provided by employers (p. 346). The central point of this article is not whether this disclosure strategy works², but to point out that Honneth, on the one hand, offers a set of categories that can help describe how cross-pressures become dilemmas for frontline staff, and on the other hand, recognizes that the forms of recognition themselves should be subject to critical examination. Thus, recognition in leadership must both relate to the frontline workers' recognition dilemmas, which management's budget management helps to make particularly problematic, and relate to the fact that the employee can legitimately question the forms of recognition themselves, both in their relationship with citizens and with management.

C. Opportunities for recognition in leadership

In the recognition perspective developed by Axel Honneth, among others, with strong inspiration from Hegel, employees are not seen as self-interested, self-righteous or lazy (cf. Majgaard 2012). They are considered to be concerned with recognition as a concrete affirmation of their worth. They link this appreciation both to their personal identity on a general level, and more specifically to their particular professional and work identity. Empirical evidence for such a theoretically grounded thesis could be found in the fact that large groups in society express a desire to 'work with people' and 'make a difference'. It is the recognition theory that helps to formulate more precisely what this need is and what kind of work motivation and drive is being expressed. If the public institution is tasked with recognizing the status of citizens as citizens rather than simply grading on the basis of performance, then management should recognize those employees who live up to this ideal and who do not let their treatment of individuals depend on society's general notions of high and low status.

However, this simple narrative must be supplemented and nuanced. According to Honneth, concrete and imagined recognition is not primarily sought from the leader, but from the public as an abstract entity. The experience of recognition and self-worth is indeed supported by concrete experiences of recognition, but the recognition of professional identity and professional function is never simply a relationship between employee and leader. Employees want the recognition they receive to be based on whether they actually perform a function that is useful and worthy of recognition based on standards that society as a whole agrees with in principle. The employee needs recognition for their special contribution to solving a societal function, and that special contribution could be applying their faculties of judgment in exceptional manners.

However, there are inherent limits to whether the public can assess whether this judgment has been used in an exceptional way. Thus, there are epistemic limits to whether others can assess whether the cross-pressure has been handled in a way that 'divides the sun and wind equally'. Similarly, client and user satisfaction-oriented evaluations will not be a reliable source of understanding whether the employee managed to show both faces of the state in the right way. Social workers' clients' perceptions of recognition and disregard will often be highly subjective and divergent if they have experienced long-term disregard in the form of lack of love, disrespect or lack of recognition. The best professional recognition frontline staff can receive comes from their colleagues. In reflective teams, colleagues can share

views on how the recognition dimensions of cross-pressure should be handled. Here, it will naturally play a major role whether the social workers are truly recognized as autonomous and professional experts (see Rambøll 2004, section 4.1.5). Here, management's recognition plays a crucial role in determining whether the employee can enter into satisfactory recognition relationships.

The role of management becomes crucial if the frontline employee's function is to deal with recognition cross-pressure, i.e. to deal with representing a Janus face even if at any given moment you only have one face to show. But how should the leader *recognize* this? It is not enough for the leader to emphasize that the employee should use their professionalism and not think too much about the municipality's budget. It is not enough to verbally acknowledge the employee's autonomy if you also limit it with reference to budget considerations and without further articulating the legitimacy of new priorities.

When section A of the article is compared with section B, NPM and recognition in leadership seem to be fundamentally at odds with each other. However, as mentioned above, a premise of NPM is that frontline employees are not fully trusted. In response, tasks are quantified and efforts are time-managed. This tends to make reflective teams, at best, a space where colleagues, rather than management, can show that they will support the colleague if 'a case comes out of it'. Colleagues' recognition is then expressed as the silent team of police officers who 'can't remember anything'. In reality, this is also the recognition the leader can give: 'if a case comes out of it, I'll take it upon myself'. However, this recognition is also twofold. The employee is now recognized for his or her ability to prevent cases from becoming a case; in other words, to prevent the relative autonomy of the department (read: leader) (read: job) from being threatened because cases receive audit or media attention.

Recognition theory offers a philosophical anthropology that conflicts with the notion of the self-interest maximizing actor. Of course, while it assumes that actors are fundamentally seeking recognition, this does not mean assuming that people are never lazy or that they are always aware of and motivated to contribute in their particular way to the common goals of society. Instead, the point is that people are affected by how they are seen and recognized. Therefore, one should think carefully before simply introducing controls that indirectly express distrust of whether employees are motivated by common goals rather than simply self-interestedly getting paid for the least amount of effort (see Pettit 1997b and Brennan &

Pettit 2004). The point is also that it is possible to get citizens to pursue common goals in an extremely conscientious way if goals are not presented as abstract entities and if they are instead recognized as having judgment and the ability to handle concrete cases based on an insight into the normative ideals of the welfare state (Neuhouser 2003). If such efforts are to be measured, then the employee must at least be involved in the dialog about what the goals of the work are. At the same time, the leader must give up his alleged neutrality in relation to the interpretation of objectives and increase his concrete insight into the forms of recognition that the welfare state must be able to accommodate according to the normative interpretation of recognition theory. This naturally raises the question of whether NPM will allow middle managers autonomy to solve such a management task or whether such an interpretation of the management task leads to uncertainty at the top, to red numbers on the bottom line and to the iron fist in the velvet glove having *to be* tightened.

Social workers and their leaders are in many ways a key case in assessing the potential for recognitional public leadership under tight budget control. Social workers are under great budgetary pressure while at the same time preparing citizens for the (labor) market, where citizens' recognition value can never be taken for granted but must be demonstrated through their behavior, performance and possible success. The pressure must be managed while social workers express respect for the unconditional dignity of citizens. Leaders must focus on ensuring that the frontline worker's recognition of citizens does not get out of hand, as recognition can undermine budgets.

NPM and recognition theory express different views on the objectives of the activities that public sector management influences. Contrary to its own assumptions, NPM seems to change the objectives of the institutions it is implemented in. For example, whereas welfare states have value-oriented, qualitative objectives such as empowerment to support the realization of the equal status of all citizens as democratic citizens, the budget-oriented goal management of welfare state frontline workers often means that they experience a conflict between the quantitative goals by which they are measured and the qualitative goals by which they believe the quality of the welfare state should be measured.

NPM and the theory of recognition as developed by Honneth also seem to speak different languages, partly because they operate with very different *time horizons*. Where NPM sequences time and is reluctant to look further ahead than the next year, Honneth operates in *The Struggle for Recognition* with a reason that has only partially settled in over 300

years.³ If recognition is to function as a management instrument within an NPM regime, it must prove its worth within a short period of time. Can it change employee motivation in terms of goal achievement and *performance*? If not, a new management strategy must be tried. Honneth's recognition theory can only argue that recognition expectations as a stable motivational factor among most citizens can only be changed very slowly.

This brings us to the big challenge of recognition in public management. The leader would seemingly have to recognize their employees for contributing to solving socially legitimate and defined problems and goals. However, both parties realize that the leader cannot give the employee unambiguous recognition for this. This is because employees are already in a goal-oriented cross-pressure. The cross-pressure is not only between objectives, but also between goals and means. In addition, employees often have a strong professional identity, ideals of methodological freedom and a notion that their work can only be understood through an in-depth understanding of the analytical process that the professional employee goes through in the meeting with specific citizens (Rambøll 2004, section 4.4.).

Does this mean that I, like Lipsky, end up in an *aporia*: we need both NPM and recognition, but the two are not compatible? Is there no solution to the tension between NPM and recognition in leadership? In the last section of this article, I will address this question by expanding the recognition perspective with a communicative perspective.

1. **Recognitional dialog**

In the following, we will look at recognition as dialog. The section leads to a question about how recognition as dialog is possible in an NPM regime. In light of the above, recognition of frontline employees' judgment can be interpreted as a willingness to acknowledge the dilemmas faced by frontline employees. Majgaard (2013) argues that management must "be open to the way in which cross-pressures and dilemmas emerge when we describe our situation and conditions" (38). I will also defend the view that dialog can show a way out, but I will start by pointing out challenges for a dialogical approach based on my analysis.⁴ One of the challenges is that NPM recommends that leaders should have a different professionalism than their employees (Michelsen in press, 28). This can make it difficult for the leader to understand what basic normative cross-pressure the employee believes they are under. Trust reforms that are made explicit as attempts to make management transparent and legitimate through greater openness and a higher degree of *communication* flow do not necessarily bring this understanding closer. Understanding seems to be

required, not least to avoid the demands of management being perceived as meaningless (Andersen et al (2012)).

Given the limitations of recognition theory at this point, I draw theoretical inspiration from Habermas' communication theory. This does not constitute a total shift in theoretical perspective. The subtitle of Honneth's main work on recognition includes the term "moral grammar", and as for Honneth, for Habermas the development of democracy requires the recognition of individuals; a recognition we receive, among other things, by entering into communicative relationships with others. Habermas states that "The self develops out of reciprocal recognitions through which individuals define their identities" (Warren 1995, 177).

There is another crucial point of agreement between Honneth's and Habermas' projects: Habermas subscribes to the notion that the fundamental legitimization of the many actions on which complex societies depend must depend on whether collective action goes hand in hand with *individual autonomy*. This also means that the multiple functional roles that individuals must take on, and whose interrelationships require collective coordination, necessarily enable autonomy. That is, individuals should ideally be able to relate to their roles with autonomy, and that coordination of actions does not take the form of mere edicts, but allows for reflection and mutual understanding (Warren 1995, 168).

"Internally, autonomy implies that one can adopt a reflexive attitude toward one's own internal impulses, interpreting, transforming, censoring, and providing names for needs, impulses, and desires, as well as expressing them to others as interests. With regard to the social world, autonomy implies that one can distance oneself from traditions, prevailing opinions, and pressures to conform by subjecting elements of one's social context to criticism. Autonomy includes, then, the capacity for critical judgment" (Warren 1995, 173).

Habermas' theory reinforces the legitimacy of management focusing on understanding-oriented communication as a condition of possibility for frontline staff to maintain and further develop their judgment and continue to work towards strengthening citizens' autonomy in their work. According to Warren's interpretation of Habermas, mutual understanding processes are necessary to strengthen the autonomy of individuals. Autonomy develops when one is able to distance oneself from one's immediate interpretation of interests, needs and tasks, but this distancing often requires that one

discursively encounters others' interpretations of something one has interpreted oneself, or is forced to discursively explain and justify one's own understanding of a phenomenon (p. 172). Autonomy also involves the ability to think in terms of alternatives and to give reasons for why one norm or way of acting is recommended over another. Thus, one must be able to rise above given practices, traditions and habits even though these are closely connected to one's own self-understanding and identity (p. 173f).

It is also Habermas' claim that autonomy is developed through justification. It is by justifying to others what one's needs and interests are that one is pushed to develop a reflective view of these. Through this process, we can learn more about our needs and test whether they are ours or merely expressions of uncritically adopted norms, habits and culture (Warren, 1995, 179). In addition to the process of justification, it is often an indispensable contribution to the development of the individual's autonomy (and capacity for self-critical analysis) that their needs and interests are challenged by others. Only in a dialogical community with others who are affected by one's efforts to fulfill one's own needs and desires can one develop the principles behind one's judgment. It is only then that one is truly able to analyze and reinterpret one's situated desires and goals:

"Individuals can develop principles of judgment only by conversing with those affected. Only in this way can maxims of conduct relate to individual needs, interests, and situated commitments. And only in this way can individuals challenge the need interpretations of others and be motivated to challenge their own" (Warren 1995, 179)

In this light, NPM as a form of management fundamentally borrows its legitimacy from the notion that the objectives set by the leader are not essentially different from those of the frontline employee and the politically elected representatives. If raw power is used without any attempt at legitimization or reference to tradition, it obviously lacks legitimacy (Warren 1995, 169f). Authority-generating discourse must be able to include contextual experiences and an understanding of the complexity of actions (p. 177), but on the other hand, the discourse must stand in brackets and have a distance to subsequent actions. Understanding-oriented communication is only possible when the parties do not want to be held accountable for what they have said. It is crucial that only the better argument is given power in the conversation, and this requires that other power relations are kept at a distance. Only when parties are motivated only by a cooperative search for truth and assessment of

the legitimacy of claims can arguments gain full power (p. 170).⁵ The point is that it requires trust in management if the frontline worker is to enter into understanding-oriented discourses with management, where their judgment and the norms they follow are openly discussed with reference to contextual actions and judgments made. The employee needs assurance that management will not misuse new information if they confess the challenges they are struggling with in their current situation (cf. Miller 1989).

For the individual employee, communicating about conflicts can seem like a hopeless battle. If you don't even imagine that your leader shares your level of understanding, it can seem easier to hide and at least try to achieve your goals; to avoid too much hassle and try not to think about it too much at the end of the day. For the leader, the 'conflict' can be understood as already being handled as rationally as possible with a procedure that shifts the conflict to the frontline employee. Management can then be understood as the setting of quantitative targets that must be met in combination with a rhetorical statement that of course you expect the professionals to guarantee professionalism. This rhetorical statement is familiar from the university debate, where a lowering of the academic requirements in order to achieve the quantitative requirements results in a rhetorical exchange: the university lecturers ask 'is this what you wanted' and the politicians reply 'we didn't expect this from professionals - isn't your academic heart stronger? The model puts frontline employees in a catch-22. If they go out and say that they are forced to weaken the professional requirements, then there are indeed problems in the department, but it is also easy for the leader to point the finger at the individual employee's 'ability to handle the natural cross-pressures of modern working life'.

So what would it take for dialogs about conflicts to be held and for horizons of understanding to be broadened? It doesn't seem enough that conflicts pose a threat to efficiency. It is not a threat to the leader. As long as there are autonomous units (the individual social worker) that have to deal with the pressure, there is no reason for management to go further in recognizing the cross-pressure as a problem and a professional challenge that is pressured by municipal budgets.

2. Challenges for understanding-oriented communication

Habermas and Warren are not blind to the fact that understanding-oriented communication is both exceptional and time-consuming. Often, the most rational and efficient way to act is to rely on habits and procedures. It is only when disagreements become obvious and

significant that there is a need to recreate a common understanding (p. 171). The argument that it is rational to communicate, on the other hand, should be supported. Autonomy in institutions and role performance is necessary for the legitimacy of institutions and societies. To realize legitimacy and autonomy, dialogue is necessary. This is both because it means passing a test of whether the other party finds your arguments legitimate. Once this is accepted, it also becomes natural to support the use of dialog facilitators and moderators. The question is, what will make management truly recognize this if they fear that such a process is the path to loosening budget-oriented control? The NPM regime attempts to circumvent such a reciprocal legitimization process by considering NPM to be something other than a power that must legitimize itself. NPM is therefore understood as merely an instrument to achieve goals that have already been discursively and democratically agreed upon by the relevant parties. The goals are thus legitimate, and since the instrument is actors who are aware of the goals as professionals, the power is thus illegitimate and does not require discursive coordination or further dialogues of understanding to be legitimate.

In a hierarchical system, NPM pretends to offer a neutral interpretation of existing objectives. NPM derives its pretended legitimacy from the fact that it is a form of management understood as a *form of administration* rather than a form of *leadership*. NPM borrows its legitimacy from the notion that you simply administer legitimate objectives in a more rational way rather than instituting new objectives that undermine the established ones. Here, it probably serves the hierarchical management of the NPM regime to try to avoid recruiting leaders from among the employees

If there is pressure, it seems to come from anomalies in the imagined instrumentalism of NPM, which is rooted in the coping strategies of professionals (cf. Warren 1995, 191). Here too, however, the pressure does not seem strong to defend the normative head of autonomy or the importance of understanding-oriented legitimization of coordinated action. Professionals are not necessarily united in a clear desire to promote autonomy and understanding. This can be explained by Habermas' theory that the relationship between middle managers and frontline workers is a power-filled space. Both actors are aware that understanding-oriented communication from frontline employees will make the employee vulnerable to the leader's power to optimize their workforce (firing and transferring).

As language users, humans may be fundamentally motivated to have their own

understanding confirmed by others in social life. This motivation may also potentially motivate us to resolve conflicts (Warren, 1995, 179), but NPM circumvents this need by ensuring that employees and leaders have different horizons of understanding and different circles of justification. Habermas is surely right that democratizing relations and loosening power relations would allow for the kind of open reflection that autonomy and legitimacy in light of the autonomy norm require, but precisely because NPM in its self-understanding is only legitimate if it maintains the ability to direct and powerfully control objectives and actions, it cannot allow for the development of therapeutic relationships between leaders and employees where the patient (employee) is free - and feels free - to say anything (Warren 1995, 188).

3. Opportunities despite?

Warren, in his search for potentials for the realization of Habermas' ideal of legitimate norms and developed autonomy, writes that "in principle" there is a basis for critique and discourse in workplaces where employees are brought together to pursue certain goals. It is precisely the "need to perform" that makes it "costly for the group to ignore conflict and failed communication" (Warren, 1995, 190). The premise of Warren's argument is that employees can overcome differences in understanding based on ethnic, religious or political differences in pursuit of a common goal. This is certainly true, for example, in an experimental unit at LEGO, but if the frontline worker believes they were created to care for the whole individual and to empower and respect the individual's autonomy, while the leader understands the goal as achieving quantitative targets that can be recorded and put the unit in a good position to compete with other units, then they do not share a common understanding of the unit's goals, tasks and problems. In NPM arenas, the type of dialogue moderators Warren sees as facilitators for the realization of the ideal of institutional legitimacy and individual autonomy are not encouraged to venture forth or recognized:

"In such groups, there are often individuals whose personalities and skills of communication dispose them to act as mediators and facilitators, and who gain (discursive) authority within the group because they are very good at listening, probing, drawing out opinions, interpreting, offering options, and restating them. Such persons often sense when positions have become polarized, say, as a result of threats to self-esteem, and can recommend delaying decisions, allowing time to disentangle motives. This is the kind of authority possessed by a chairperson who serves at the pleasure of the meeting, or for a specified period within an organization.

Because formal powers of the chair are limited, authority rests on discursive means, and success often depends on his or her ability to play a quasi-therapeutic role" (Warren 1995, 192).

Warren acknowledges that the democratization of workplaces and the empowerment of workers in terms of influence over the organization of work and in terms of power-free deliberative forums is not widespread (Warren 1995, 190; 1993, 231).

How would worker empowerment then take shape? Combining Warren's focus on communication and Honneth's focus on the *struggle* for recognition (Honneth 2006, chapter 9), a necessary factor seems to be a strong reflexive and professional collaboration where there was widespread recognition of the normative cross-pressures. These professional groups would then have to fight for their professional autonomy by articulating what the central task of the individual employee is for society as a whole, and articulate that the conditions of work often mean that a central societal task is potentially being neglected. This strategy is a classic remedy against welfare workers losing their enthusiasm and focus (Pettit 1997a). When the strategy is coupled with Honneth's theory of recognition, it turns out that it must never remain a rhetorical instrument for draining employees' *human resources*.

This is not only because of the point made in the article on 'recognition as ideology', but also because of the central story in *The Struggle for Recognition*. Here, the systematic relations of recognition (love, respect and appreciation) express the outcome of a *bottom-up* process that can be interpreted as the informed and reflected voice of the whole people, as it turns out to be stable and sustainable over time. This indirect democratic procedure (indirect because it appears as a popular process rather than once established as a popular constitution) gives forms of recognition their legitimacy. As a *bottom-up* process and as expressing an inclusive understanding of who has a say in citizens' need for recognition, recognition theory will not allow NPM leaders to operationalize the goals - certainly not without subsequent goal-setting checks.

Conclusion

That public management is a conflictual project seems obvious. In the *code of conduct for good top management* (Forum for Offentlig Topledeelse, 2005), it is recognized that the bottom line must be complex and include considerations of resource consumption,

efficiency and innovation, but also democratic and welfare values (p. 17f). That NPM as a management instrument in the public sector can lead to unintended consequences is not a new claim either (Hood & Peters, 2004, 269). This article has made a (primarily) philosophical and theoretical contribution to the debate on NPM in public management, which has opened up a perspective on the underlying professional identities and professional motivations among frontline workers who are in a recognition and budgetary cross-pressure. With a focus on social workers, the article has primarily contributed to understanding why the frontline worker-middle manager relationship is conflictual in a regime that focuses on budget efficiency and output control. Using Axel Honneth's theory of recognition, the article focused on a particular type of cross-pressure certain groups of frontline workers in the welfare state face in order to answer when and why NPM is difficult to reconcile with recognition in leadership. ⁶

As Honneth's theory is developed at a high level of abstraction, the article is highly theory-interpretive and develops as a mutually informing interpretation of practical challenges in public management in the welfare state and recognition theory as welfare state and communication theory. It is a central point for Honneth, and I think it is quite rightly seen, that professional identities mean a lot to workers and that it is important that leaders fundamentally understand the work functions and recognize the work efforts of employees and thereby recognize the professional identities in basically the same way that employees themselves do.

The article has focused on NPM as a budget management instrument that focuses on quantified output rather than employee identity and the qualitative value frontline staff have as a welfare state task to create together with citizens (Greve 2011, 251). At the same time, I have pointed out that NPM is an expression of the realization that frontline workers cannot be directly controlled in their work process because they must necessarily be granted at least relative autonomy. In this way, they are forced to behave in a manner reminiscent of trust-based management (ibid, 252; Hood 1991), and one also finds municipal actors who believe in the combination of NPM and "value-based management", which attempts to manage the organization through "support for common goals" (Andersen, N. Å. 2008, 37f). The key challenge for this assumption, however, is that 'buy-in' to common goals can be understood both as quantitative and strategic buy-in or as qualitative and understanding-based.

Furthermore, the assumptions about NPM's compatibility with value- and trust-based leadership only make sense when you don't look at the relationship between the welfare state's frontline workers and their (middle) leaders. Focusing on the cross-pressures of frontline employees is not new, but this article contributes new angles on this cross-pressure by looking at it from a specific recognition theory perspective. It is by focusing on the cross-pressures of frontline employees⁷ that we can see why NPM and appreciative leadership are in deep tension with each other.⁸

There are employees who are in a fundamental cross-pressure because they have to represent two sides of the welfare state at the same time (e.g. the social worker who has to act as a social safety net for even distrusted clients). The cross-pressure leads to real dilemmas when employees are pressured to de-prioritize aspects of their professionalism and professional code of ethics. Whether NPM is a threat to employees' recognition work is thus largely about whether NPM leads to budgetary orientation, and in the quantification of qualitative goals, management blinds itself to the real dilemmas that budgetary pressure puts employees in. At the same time, it has an impact on whether management considers employees to be a constant budgetary threat. Here, social workers are in a different position than many other public employees, as their discretion often directly affects municipal budgets.

When middle managers have to recognize these employees, this is challenged by the fact that middle managers also have to hold frontline employees to the budgetary framework for their work, which is why it is the leader who sometimes makes the frontline employee's work tragic in light of the professional ideals they (often) carry. The relationship between frontline worker and middle manager must be based on trust if recognitional dialog is to be possible, but this requires that the trust relationship survives the combination of the leader's ('hard') demands and understanding ('soft') dialog. However, if this relationship ends up being trusting, it should not be because the frontline employee has fully adopted the budget perspective. The frontline worker must also maintain the notion that it is the leader's harshness that in many situations causes the employee to (possibly) let down citizens who (possibly) after a rejection are left without the safety net that the frontline worker (with support from professional ethics) sees it as their task to never completely pull away from the citizen.

So, what is the solution? Half solutions are for the leader to put some of the cards on the table to try to understand that it is also in the public interest that public spending does not 'run wild', or to relativize the safety net metaphor with notions that citizens cannot be helped if they do not want to be helped. In light of Honneth's theory of recognition and Habermas' perspectives on dialogue, the conclusion is that the dialogue between the middle manager and the frontline worker can only be truly recognitional when a number of dimensions of the frontline worker's work are recognized. This applies to both the uncertainty of frontline workers' judgment and the tragic choices that sometimes have to be made. Recognizing this also means recognizing that it is the middle and upper management that puts the frontline worker under pressure. Thus, a solution must be oriented 'upwards' in the system.

The article's focus on communication and touching on the idea of the leader as *therapist* gives the middle manager the task of holding the employee to the central democratic and welfare goals, which must support legal certainty in a way that does not express distrust (cf. Pettit 1997). If, on the other hand, the middle manager is not assigned this task, then the relationship between frontline employee and middle manager cannot accommodate the trust necessary for the frontline employee to dare to air their doubts and uncertainty regarding their own judgment in difficult cases. It is beyond the scope of this article to suggest what administrative and leadership changes are required if middle managers in general are to be granted such a role.⁹

Bibliography

- Andersen, Grethe: *Anerkendende skoleledelse*. Dansk psykologisk forlag. 2008
- Andersen, Jørgen Goul: "Voice og exit - borger, bruger eller forbruger?" Bag kulissen i konstruktionen af kvalitet. red. Bente Bjørnholt; Jørgen Goul Andersen; Henrik Lolle. Odense: Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2008, 101-123
- Andersen, Lotte Bøgh et al: "En innovativ offentlig sektor, der skaber kvalitet og fælles ansvar" <http://www.forvaltningspolitik.dk/>) 2012
- Andersen, Lotte Bøgh & Søren Serritzlew: "Does Public Service Motivation Affect the Behavior of Professionals?" *International Journal of Public Administration*, Volume 35, Issue 1, 2012, pp. 19-29
- Kjeldsen, Anne Mette, Jacobsen, Christian Bøtcher: "Public service motivation and employment sector: Attraction or socialization?", *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* 23 (4), 2013, pp. 899-926
- Andersen, Niels Åkerstrøm: "Velfærdsledelse: Diagnoser og udfordringer" I:

- Velfærdsledelse I den selvstyrende velfærdsstat*, Camilla Sløk og Kaspar Villadsen (red.), Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2008, 33-68
- Brennan, G. & Pettit, P.: *The economy of esteem: an essay on civil and political society*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Carstens, Annette: *Aktivering - klientsamtaler og socialpolitik*, Hans Reitzels Forlag, 1998
- Dalsgaard, Lene & Henning Jørgensen: *Kvaliteten der blev væk. Kvalitetsreform og modernisering af den offentlige sektor*, Frydenlund, 2010
- Damgaard, Bodil: *Social- og arbejdsmarkedssystemerne. En flerstrengt historie*. SFI 03:21, 2003
- Esping-Andersen, Gøsta: *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*, Polity Press, 1990
- Fisker, Anders et al: *Socialrådgiveren på arbejde. Portræt af en profession og dens dilemmaer*, Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2008
- Forum for Offentlig Topleddelse: *Public Governance – kodeks for god offentlig topleddelse i Danmark*, 2005
- Grand, Julian Le: "Knights and Knaves Return: Public Service Motivation and the delivery of Public Services", *International Public Management Journal*, 13(1), 2010, 56-71
- Greve, Carsten: "Reformer af den offentlige forvaltning" i *Organiseringen af den offentlige sektor. Grundbog i offentlig forvaltning*. Anders Berg-Sørensen, Caroline Howard Grøn og Hanne Foss Hansen (red), Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2011
- Hansen, Anne Kathinka & Maya C. Flensburg Jensen: *Socialrådgivere på jobcentre – i krydsfeltet mellem beskæftigelsespolitik og profession*, Speciale på Forevaltning/Offentlig Administration, RUC, 2009
- Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich: *Retsfilosofi*, Det lille forlag, 2004
- Honneth, Axel: "Usynlighed: om anerkendelsens erkendelsesteori" i *Behovet for anerkendelse*, Gyldendal Akademisk, 2003
- Honneth, Axel: "Recognition as Ideologi", Bert van den Brink & David Owen (ed) *Recognition and Power. Axel Honneth and the Tradition of Critical Social Theory*, 2009
- Honneth, Axel: *Das Recht der Freiheit: Grundriß einer demokratischen Sittlichkeit*, Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 2011
- Honneth, Axel: *Kampen om anerkendelse. Sociale konflikters moralske grammatik*, Hans Reitzels Forlag 2006.
- Hood, Christopher & Guy Peters: "The Middle Aging of New Public Management: Into the Age of Paradox?", *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 14:3,

- 2004, 267-282
- Husted, Jørgen: ”Personlig autonomi: at gøre en dyd af nødvendigheden”, *Philosophia*, 24(3/4), 1995, 121-146.
- Husted, Jørgen: *Etik og værdier i socialt arbejde*. Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2009
- Husted, Jørgen: *Etik og værdier i sygeplejen*, Hans Reitzel, 2013
- Høilund, Peter og Søren Juul: *Anerkendelse og dømmekraft i socialt arbejde*. Hans Reitzels Forlag 2005
- Jørgensen, Simon L.; ”Selvrealisering”, *Selvrealisering - kritiske diskussioner af en grænseløs udviklingskultur*, 2005, 231-250.
- Jørgensen, Simon L: *Self-esteem – precondition for and threat to the humane society*. Phd afhandling, Institut for filosofi, Aarhus Universitet, 2008a.
- Jørgensen, Simon L.: ”Tre veje til respekt” I: Andersen, LM, Jørgensen SL and Skovmose HF (red.) *Folkeskolens filosofi – idealer, tendenser og kritik*. *Philosophia*, 2008b, pp. 299-325.
- Jørgensen, Simon Laumann (in press): “Recognition, Education, and Civic Equality – Uncovering the Normative Ideals of the Welfare State”, *Social and Critical Theory*.
- Jørgensen, Torben Beck: “Politik og produktion”, Torben Beck Jørgensen & Preben Melander (red.): ”Livet i offentlige organisation. Institutionsdrift i spændingsfeltet mellem stat, profession og marked, *Jurist og Økonomforbundets forlag*, 1999, 45-63
- Klausen, Kurt Klaudi: *Offentlig Organisation, Strategi og Ledelse*, Syddansk universitetsforlag, 1996.
- Klausen, Kurt Klaudi: *Skulle det være noget særligt – organisation og ledelse i det offentlige*, Børsen, 2001
- Lipsky, Michael: *Street-level bureaucracy. Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*. Russell Sage Foundation 1980
- Arthur O. Lovejoy: *Reflections on Human Nature*, John Hopkins Press, 1961.
- Majgaard, Klaus: *Offentlig styring: Simpel, reflekteret og transformativ*, Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2013
- Majgaard, Klaus: ”Jagten på autenticitet i offentlig styring, del 3: Anerkendelsens og rationalitetens spiral”, *Økonomistyring & Informatik*, 27,2, 2002, 217-274.
- Marshall, Thomas Humphrey: *Medborgerskab og social klasse*, Hans Reitzels Forlag, 2003.
- Melander, Preben: *Lederskabsreformationen. Kampen for et demokratisk samspil som modspil til det globale imperium*, Jurist- og Økonomiforbundets Forlag, 2012.

- Menke, Christoph: *Tragödie im Sittlichen. Gerechtigkeit und Freiheit nach Hegel*, Suhrkamp 1996.
- Merton Robert K.: *Social Theory and Social Structure*, Free Press, 1957
- Michelsen, Randi Riis: ”Faglig ledelse i socialt arbejde – et praksisperspektiv” in Karin Kildedal, Erik Laursen og Randi Riis Michelsen (red.) *Socialfaglig ledelse – Børne- og ungeområdet*, Samfundslitteratur 2013/in press
- Miller, David: ”Democracy and Social Justice”, in *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 1978, pp. 1–19.
- Miller, David: ”In what sense must socialism be communitarian?” *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 6(2), 1989, 51-73
- Mortensen, Nils & Jens Peter Frølund Thomsen: ”En jernnæve i fløjlshandsken: magt i mødet mellem velfærdssystem og klient”, Peter M. Christiansen & Lise Togeby *På sporet af magten*, Aarhus University Press, 101-116.
- Neuhouser, Frederick: *Foundations of Hegel’s Social Theory: Actualizing Freedom*, Harvard University Press, 2003.
- Neuhouser, Frederick: *Rousseau’s theodicy of self-love: evil, rationality, and the drive for recognition*, Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Nielsen, Jeppe Agger & Jørgen Goul Andersen: *Hjemmehjælp. Mellem myter og virkelighed*. Syddansk Universitetsforlag, 2006.
- Nielsen, Vibeke Lehmann: ”Indbydelse til dans omkring markarbejderadfærdsbegrebet” , (red.) Vibeke Lehmann Nielsen og Niels Ploug, *Når politik bliver til virkelighed. Festskrift til professor søren winter*, Sfi – Det nationale forskningscenter for velfærd, 07:23, 2007, 149-170
- Nissen, Maria Appel & Margit Harder: ”Forandringer i det sociale velfærdsarbejde – om oplevelsen af styring og socialrådgivernes strategier”, *Nordisk socialt arbeid*, 3-4, 2008 233-245.
- Pedersen, John Storm & Karl Löfgren: ”Public Sector Reforms: New Public Management without Marketization? The Danish Case”, *International Journal of Public Administration*, 35:7, 2012, 435-447
- Perry, James L. & Lois R. Wise: ”The Motivational Bases of Public Service”, *Public Administration Review*, Maj/Juni, 1990, 367-373
- Pettit Philip; ”Freedom with honor: A Republican ideal”, *Social Research* 1997; 64, 1, 52-76 1997a
- Pettit Philip; *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government*, Oxford University

- Press, 1997. 1997b
- Pettit, Philip; "Towards a Social Democratic Theory of the State", *Political Studies*, XXXV, 1987, pp. 537-551
- Raffnsøe-Møller, Morten: "Aims and Formats for performance measurement at the Danish Universities: Battles over Performance Regimes and Procedures", Kristensen, Jens Erik, Hanne Nørreklit & Morten Raffnsøe-Møller (red): *University Performance Management: The Silent Leaderial Revolution at Danish Universities*, DJØF Publishing Copenhagen, 2011, 49-78.
- Rawls, John: *A Theory of Justice*, Oxford University Press, 1971
- Rennison, Betina W.: "Offentlig ledelse? En fortælling om New Public Management og et alternativt studie på vej...", Working Paper, CBS, Januar, 2000.
- Rosenberg, Shawn W. (red.): *Can the People Govern? Deliberation, Participation and Democracy*, Palgrave MacMillan, 2007.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques: *Emile: Or On Education*, Basic Books, 1979
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques: *Afhandling om ulighedens oprindelse og grundlæggelse blandt menneskene*, Gyldendal. 1996
- Schmidt-Hansen, Ulrich & Aalund, Søren: *Kampen for autonomi – offentlig ledelse i krydspres*. Jurist og Økonomiforbundets Forlag. 2005
- Smith, Adam: *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, ed. D.D. Raphael and A.L. Macfie, vol. I of the *Glasgow Edition of the Works and Correspondence of Adam Smith*, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982
- Starke Peter: "The Politics of Welfare State Retrenchment: A Literature Review", *Social Policy & Administration*, 40, 1, 2006, 104–120
- Rambøll: "Undersøgelse af retssikkerhedslovens §4", Rapport, Socialministeriet, 2004
- Warren, Mark E. "The self in discursive democracy", *The Cambridge Companion to Habermas*, Stephen K White (red) Cambridge University Press 1995, 167-200
- Warren, Mark E.: "Can participatory Democracy Produce Better Selves? Psychological Dimensions of Habermas's Discursive Model of Democracy", *Political Psychology*, 14(2), 1993, 209-234

Notes

¹ Thanks for helpful comments and references from the editor and reviewers at *Økonomistyring & Informatik*, colleagues from CARMA, CCWS and COMA (Department of Political Science, AAU) as well as Gitte Sommer Harrits and Morten Raffnsøe-Møller (AU).

² The headlines in Husted (2009) are: duty to help and professional integrity; dignity and rights; social justice; self-determination; the good life; ethical awareness; confidentiality. Ethical judgment must be exercised by balancing a plurality of ethical considerations. There are strong ideals at stake, which in themselves can easily conflict and lead to dilemmas (cf. Husted 1995). It is therefore important to draw attention to these ideals and how to reconcile them in practice. This prepares the employee for the fact that cross-pressures may arise, but not necessarily how to resolve them. What does the newly qualified social worker do when they find that the municipality systematically encourages employees to assess cases based on budget considerations - so that longer complaints and newspaper scandals are avoided?

³ Majgaard (2013: 139) is thus too quick to dismiss Honneth's theory on the grounds that it is primarily concerned with "healthy development."

⁴ One could imagine that the employee who asks about the material conditions for employees to live up to new conditions makes themselves vulnerable. Competition, performance management and the collection of data from different contexts enable the leader to point out that 'here is someone who could do it'. This sets the premise for an eye exchange between leader and employee, where the underlying dialogue is: if you can't do what the others can, then you are the poor material basis for me to recognize my employees as x.

⁵ In the 18th century, civil rights were fought for, in the 19th century for political rights and in the 20th century for social rights. At the same time, the 300-year perspective expresses a slow expansion of the scope of rights. It was not until 1915 that women were granted political rights and not until 1956 that political rights for citizens became fully independent of socio-economic conditions. In today's Denmark, recognition of immigrants' political rights depends on whether they are considered to be an economic burden on society.

⁶ Challenges that Majgaard overlooks, and which his constructivist and narrative

approach (38, 203-229) therefore ultimately risks only temporarily obscuring

⁷ However, this claim is disputed (Rosenberg 2007). It is clear that pure discussion forums without power have a hard time retaining the commitment of the debaters. If there is nothing to be gained by engaging in a power struggle with management, and if there is uncertainty about whether a management-employee discussion forum is a power-free space, then there may be too much to lose by the employee opening their mouth, and the leader may seem to have everything to gain by steering the debate away from conflict.

⁸ Research on public management and NPM has increased focus on the unresolved issues of frontline employee motivation (Andersen & Serritzlew 2012; Hansen & Jensen 2009; Grand 2010, 62, 68; Kjeldsen & Jacobsen 2013).

⁹ Rather than political reform intentions, management and organizational theory or client perspectives (Mortensen and Thomsen).

¹⁰ With this focus, I have analyzed how NPM affects (mis)trust relationships between employees and management. The article has not addressed other aspects of NPM such as exit, voice, marketization, competing entities, etc. are not touched upon (Grand 2010). By focusing on a specific type of management relations within the public sector as an analytical strategy, the critical analysis of whether NPM is in opposition to all conceivable forms of recognition in leadership is also limited (cf. Andersen, N. Å. 2008, 36f).

¹¹ See Majgaard (2013 263ff, 291ff) and Dalsgaard & Jørgensen (2010, 77ff) for alternative suggestions on what type of dialog needs to be (re)established in public leadership and Klausen (2001, 218ff) and Melander 2012 (132ff) for suggestions on the many challenges (and opportunities) facing public leadership.