

## **Motivation and behavioural outcomes among local councillors**

Paper presented at the IRSPM conference in Dublin 11-13 april, 2011

By,  
Lene Holm Pedersen,  
AKF – Danish Institute of Governmental Research.  
Købmagergade 22  
1150 Copenhagen K  
Mailto: lhp@akf.dk

### **Abstract:**

Politicians are often seen as office-seekers who work to improve their own career. But the results presented here suggest, that councillors who are committed to the public interest, have a higher work effort and work more hours. Those who are more motivated to contribute to the public interest also obtain more influence, and the perception of having influence make the councillors less likely to quit voluntarily. This suggests that local councillors seek influence, not just to maximize their own self-interest, but also to do good for others, and that those who perceive to have influence are likely to continue in politics. Furthermore, the results show that the type of altruistic motivation matter to what type of influence the councillors have. Those with high User Orientation have more influence on agenda-setting, but not on decision-making. This suggests that different motivational dimensions affect different behavioural outcomes differently. The data consists of a survey undertaken among the local councillors in Denmark in spring 2009 with 1336 respondent and a response rate of 53%.

## Introduction

Politicians are often seen as office-seekers, who work to build a political career (Schlesinger, 1966; Hibbing, 1982), while politicians rarely are seen as motivated to do good for citizens and the public interest. However, the Public Service Motivation (PSM) literature states, that there is a special ethos related to the provision of public service, which is not based on self-interest maximization. Thus PSM is defined as an individual's orientation to deliver public service in order to do good for others and society (Perry and Hondeghem, 2008:6). By drawing this perspective into the study of local governments, new insights on the motivation and behaviour of local councillors may be obtained.

The PSM literature has been investigating, if there is a relationship between PSM and behavioural outcomes. This is highly interesting, as there may be a hidden potential in public service provision, if PSM has a positive influence on behavioural outcomes. There are studies, which find that PSM influences the type of service delivered (Andersen and Serritzlew, 2009). Thus, research suggests that PSM might make people do more and make them provide more altruistic services. But the literature on PSM and behavioural outcomes remain inconclusive (see Brewer, 2008 for a review). Thus, more research is needed in order to establish this link.

In this regard the local councillors are a particularly interesting group. First, schools, day-care, elderly care and primary health care are under the jurisdiction of the Danish municipalities and thus the local councils play a central role in the local provision of public services. Second, very little research has been made on locally elected administrators from a PSM perspective (see however Paine, 2009a; 2009b). Third, it is likely that councillors, who are highly motivated, will work harder, as it has been known in other organisational contexts (Ritz, 2009; Vandenabeele, 2009). Fourth, willingness to run for election is central in a well working democracy, and motivation and goal-attainment may matter to recruitment as well as de-recruitment. This is important especially as the number of candidates running for election has been falling during the last decades (Kjær, 2007).

The paper focuses on how two motivational dimensions influence behavioural outcomes among local councillors. Commitment to the Public Interest (CPI) denotes the motivation to deliver public services to serve the relevant society based on values and duty (Perry, 1996, Kim, 2010), and is seen as the core motivational dimension in PSM (Andersen and Pedersen, 2010). User Orientation (UO) denotes the motivation to help the specific users of public services (Vandenabeele, 2008; Andersen et al., forthcoming). This dimension is not included in the PSM construct. Both types of motivation are altruistic, but the recipients differ. UO is directed to specific others, whereas CPI is directed to the public at large. Hence the type of behavioural outcomes may also differ between on one hand being directed to the aggregate decision-making in the council, and on the other being directed towards the concerns of specific citizens.

Thus, the central research question is: How does CPI and UO influence behavioural outcomes such as hours spent on working in the local councils, political influence and voluntary retirement. The central claim in the article is that politicians with high CPI are motivated to work more hours and that higher work effort may result in more political influence. The type of motivation matter to the type of influence the councillors seek. Some obtain influence on aggregate decision-making, while others obtain influence on agenda-setting. The perception of having influence makes it less likely that the councillors quit.

In this paper, insights from public management theory are applied to the study of local councillors. The paper contributes to the Public Service Motivation (PSM) literature by exploring how two motivational dimensions – CPI and UO - influences working hours, political influence and de-recruitment. In addition, the paper contributes to the literature on local government, as it uses insights from the PSM literature to analyse the job-context of the local councillors.

The study is based on a survey undertaken among the local councillors in Denmark in spring 2009 with 1336 respondent and a response rate of 53%.

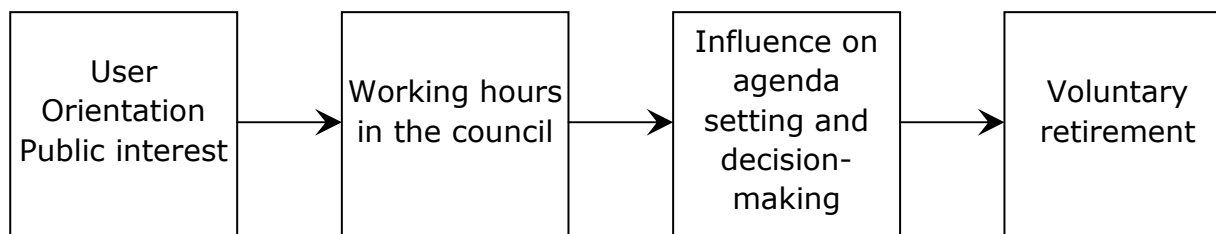
The paper proceeds as follows. First, some contextual information on the role and job of local councillors in Denmark is provided. Second, the theoretical model is discussed, and based on this expectations are raised. Third, the method and data are presented. Fourth the results of the analysis are presented and discussed, and in the end a conclusion is reached.

### **The role and job of the local councillors in Denmark**

Local elections are held every four years in all Danish municipalities. Each municipality forms a single constituency with councillors elected at large. The national political parties are running in most of the municipalities supplemented with non-partisan lists in some municipalities (Kjær 2007). It is a central feature in the local governments in Denmark that it is based on a committee model (Berg, 2004). The local council is the highest ranking decision-making arena in the municipality, and the place where authoritative decisions on the rest of the local administration are made. The number of members in the councils typically varies between 19 and 31, mainly depending on the size of the population in the municipality<sup>1</sup>. The council is chaired by a mayor who is the only full-time politician in the municipality. However, the daily decision-making responsibility is not placed in the council but in a number of sub-committees. The most important committee is the economic committee (typically 7 members), but the social committee (typically 7 members) and the technical committee (typically 7 members) are also considered important committees. The local councillors receive compensations according to the institutional positions they hold in the local governments. Thus ordinary councillors receive the lowest, while committee members and chairmen receive higher compensations. However, the mayor is the only politician in the local governments, who receive a pay equivalent to a full time job. The size of the compensations varies from municipality to municipality (Indenrigs- og Socialministeriet, 2009). Thus it is evident that being a local councillor is not an ordinary job. It is not a first-career choice, but most typically the local councillors work from 15-19 hours per week (Dahlgaard et al, 2009).

### **Theory and expectations**

In the following the central concepts and theories are discussed. Figure 1 suggests that motivation leads to higher working hours, which leads to higher political influence, but that if the political influence is low the voluntary retirement increases. The framework here suggests that a causal relationship exist among the study variables, while the possibility of bi-directional relationships is recognized.

**Figure 1: Motivation and behavioural outcomes**

*Public Service Motivation, Commitment to the Public Interest and User Orientation*

Perry and Hondeghem (2008: 6) see PSM as an orientation to do something good for others and society in the delivery of public service. According to this definition, PSM can be directed to different recipients, that is the individual as well as the public at large (see also Andersen and Pedersen, 2010a; 2010b). In line with this, Public Service Motivation is – in the following – defined as a force that provides individuals with energy to do something good for specific as well as generalised others in the delivery of public services (Andersen and Pedersen, *ibid*). Thus PSM is present at the level of the individual and as such it is distinct from aggregate constructs such as shared values and norms on how things ought to be, and from political ideologies at a societal level about what the role of the state and the public sector should be in the economy in general (Andersen et al. 2010).<sup>4</sup>

The discussion about which dimensions to include in PSM continues to be relevant (Kim, 2010; Kim et al., 2010). At the outset Perry (1996) included four dimensions. First, ‘Commitment to the Public Interest’ (CPI), which denotes the desire to serve the society based on values and duty. Second, ‘Compassion’ covering the emotionally-based motivation to do good for others based on identification and empathy. Third, ‘Self-sacrifice’ which describes the willingness to bypass one’s own needs in order to help others and society. Fourth, ‘attraction to policy-making’ denotes motivation to improve decision-making concerning public services. The PSM construct is first order reflexive and second order formative (Kim, 2010; Kim et al., 2010). This means that the construct reflects underlying dimensions, which are fundamentally different in type, but which all add up in an aggregated construct. In some analyses, it makes sense to use the unified construct, while the dimensions should be used individually, when theoretical arguments imply that the dimensions have different causes and consequences. The claim in this paper is that motivation concerning doing good for others leads to more working hours and influence, but also that different types of motivation leads to different types of influence. Hence, it is relevant to analyse sub-dimensions of PSM.

The analysis here is based on the PSM dimension CPI. Previously, research has shown that CPI is at the core of the PSM construct (Andersen and Pedersen, 2010b), and therefore this dimension is the one included in the analysis. It would of course be preferable if all PSM dimensions could be surveyed and analysed separately and in combination, but due to restrictions on the size of the questionnaire data availability has been limited. This is a well known problem in PSM research, which has called for attempts to abbreviate the original PSM scale (Perry, 1996; Coursey and Pandey, 2007).

In addition to the traditional PSM dimensions, Vandenabeele (2008: 145) introduces a customer orientation dimension that includes specific others, whom the provider of public service wants to help. Adding to this, it has been proposed that customer orientation should be defined as the motivation to serve the user of the public service, as the term user is more inclusive and adequate for public services, which the service user does not pay for directly. Thus the more inclusive term 'User Orientation' has been used, because the beneficiaries of public service do not necessarily pay for the services in a direct way (Andersen and Pedersen, 2010a; Andersen and Pedersen, 2010b). However, in this questionnaire the wording of the items has been changed from 'user' to 'citizen' as this makes more sense in the context of the local councillors. Thus the motivational dimensions included in this analysis are CPI and UO. CPI measures altruistic motivation in public service delivery directed to collectives and groups, whereas UO is directed to individual citizens (Andersen and Pedersen, 2010b). UO is not normally considered part of the PSM construct (Kim, 2010; Kim et al., 2010).

#### *Working hours in the council*

The literature on PSM has for long been interested in establishing a link between PSM and behavioural outcomes. This possible link has been investigated along several paths. One line of research has investigated, if public employees are more likely to perform extra-role behaviours such as participating in politics and charity, donating blood and spending their personal time on social causes (Brewer and Selden, 1998; Houston, 2006). In this view, being a local councillor is in itself a behavioural outcome, which may be related to PSM, and empirical research does indeed suggest that local councillors have more CPI than people in general (Dahlgard, 2010). However, it is also relevant to see, how motivational factors influence the behaviour of those who have been elected as local councillors. Here a second line of research is relevant, e.g. research on the relationship between PSM and performance. Some research has been made with use the employee's own reporting of their most recent performance appraisal score. Some find a positive relationship between PSM and employee performance, where as others find contradictory evidence (Brewer, 2008). There is also research in a European context which suggests a positive relationship between PSM and employees performance. Leisink and Steijn (2009) find that CPI is positively related to organisational commitment, willingness to exert effort and self-reported job performance. The performance measures are based on a survey question, asking the respondents to state their performance relatively to the performance of their colleagues. Vandenabeele (2009) and Ritz (2009) corroborates this result, as they also find a positive relationship between PSM and self-reported performance measures. There is also research, which shows that PSM is related to the type of service delivered as physiotherapists with high PSM provide more services for disabled (Andersen and Serritzlew, 2009). This study combines survey and register data, and hence it does not suffer from self-reported measures and common-source problems. However, the question about how PSM influences the performance of providers of public services, where the goals are externally defined, is different from studying the relationship between motivation and behaviour among councillors. The number of hours spent on a job cannot be seen, as a performance indicator in relation to service provision, as some may be able to reach the same results as others, who are working less hours. However, being a councillor is to some extent a type of voluntary activity, and it is likely that those with more altruistic motivation both will be more likely to volunteer and more likely to spend more hours on the voluntary activity. The number of working hours in relation to being a councillor is a relevant behavioural outcome, as it is a sign of work-effort, and harder work-effort is expected to create better results. The measurement is however also self-reported, but by asking specifically about an actual behaviour is a way to limit subjectivism. Furthermore, in the

questionnaire a number of items were used to divide the work of the councillors into specific tasks, in order to help the councillors make realistic assessments of how they spend their time.

These considerations lead to the expectation, that the more CPI and UO the more motivated the councillors are to work to do good for others. The more motivated councillors exercise a higher work effort, and thus they are expected to spend more working hours in relation to the council.

*Political influence and voluntary retirement*

Those motivated to do good for others and society will work to fulfil the political goals, which they see as contributing to this. Thus the politicians are expected to seek influence, as this makes it possible for them to do good for others. Politicians may of course also seek influence for other reasons, but those with high PSM will in addition seek influence in order to fulfil their altruistic motivation. In the PSM literature, there has been an interest in how goal-attainment affects job-satisfaction and turn-over, which is relevant to understand how councillors seek political influence, and how their perception of having influence affect the turn-over intentions of the local councillors. Bright (2008) finds, that PSM has no significant relationship to job satisfaction and turnover intentions when P-O fit is considered. P-O fit captures the congruence between the characteristics of individuals in the form of goals, skills and values and the characteristics of organizations in the form of goals and values (Bright, *ibid*). Steijn (2008) similarly find, that Dutch workers are less likely to leave an organisation, if they experience a fit between their motivation and the organisation they are working for. Thus, high goal-attainment has a negative bearing on de-recruitment. In line with this, it can be expected that local councillors are less likely to retire, if they perceive that they have political influence. In sum, motivation to do good for others is expected to affect political influence positively, as the more motivated work harder to be able to do good for others. However, the causality can run both ways. On one hand more motivated councillors are expected to work harder to obtain political influence, but on the other hand the experience of influencing the political goals are also likely to be motivating.

Politicians are generally not expected to quit voluntarily. In contrast they are expected to be office seeking (Hibbings, 1982; Schlesinger, 1966). However, the PSM perspective suggests, that the councillors may also be motivated to do good for individual citizens as well as the public at large. The more motivated councillors will put more effort into their work and hence also reach more influence, which allows them to make decisions, which they regard as being to the benefit of the citizens and the community. However, the local councillors, who do not reach this goal, are expected to be more likely to quit. In other words, councillors are more likely to retire voluntarily, if they don't have political influence.

In sum the expectations are as follows:

- H1. CPI is positively correlated to the number of working hours in relation to being a councillor.
- H2. UO is positively correlated to the number of working hours in relation to being a councillor.
- H3. CPI is positively correlated to political influence.
- H4. UO is positively correlated to political influence.
- H5. Political influence is negatively correlated with voluntary retirement.

### Methods and data

Data were collected in March 2009 as part of a broader research project on role perception among local councillors in all 98 Danish municipalities. The individual-level data were collected through an email-based questionnaire among all sitting municipal councillors. The response rate was 53% which amounts to approximately 1,336 council members. The response rate is somewhat lower than that of postal surveys in a municipal context (Blom-Hansen et al. 2004; Berg & Kjær 2007), but is acceptable and matches that of similar studies based on email (Bækgaard 2008). Various strategies were applied in order to maximise the response rate (for details see Hjelmar et al., 2010). A non-response analysis shows no significant variations in the response rate over municipal size, region, amalgamated vs. not amalgamated municipalities, gender and party ID.<sup>ii</sup>

It would be highly interesting to analyse if motivations affect behavioural outcomes or if it is the other way round. However, as time-series data on these items are not available, it is not possible to make causal interference, but only to analyse the correlations. Definitions, means and standard deviations for all used variables can be seen in Appendix A, table A.2.

The dependant variable of the number of hours spent on being a councillor is based on the item: 'how many hours to you on average use on all sorts of activities in relation to the work as a member of the local council?'. Answers are made in 5 hour brackets and the variable is coded according to the middle point of the bracket. There are four measures of influence. First a measure of influence on agenda-setting based on three items questioning on a scale from 0-10 a) if the councillor has contributed to raising new local themes on the agenda in the meeting of the council or the committees, b) if the councillor has had an impact on the themes discussed in the local media, and c) if the councillor has brought requests from the citizens up at the meeting of the council or the committees. Second the measure of influence on decision making in the council is similarly based on three items questioning a) if the councillor has succeeded in putting a number of his local key issues thorough, b) if the councillor has put his fingerprint on the budget of the municipality in 2009, and c) if the councillor has had a crucial impact on a number of important cases, which have been voted on in the council. Third, the measure of relative influence is based on an item, which question how the councillors places his own influence in the council compared to his colleagues in the council. As these measures are all based on self-assessments a fourth measure was added, which asked the councillors to mark their five most influential colleagues in the council. Based on this assessment a variable was calculated with describes the influence of the individual as seen by the other members of the council. Voluntary retirement also constitutes a dependant variable. This is a binary outcome variable indicating whether a council member intends to voluntarily retire at the elections in November 2009, as the data was collected in March the same year. This timing is important to the investigation of voluntary retirement as the councillors at that point in time had an idea about whether they would retire or not, but at the same time this was not finally announced, and hence the other councillors judgement of their influence cannot be expected to influenced by this. Responses intending to retire were coded to 1. By this definition approximately 300 councillors or 22.7% of the sample are classified as voluntary

retirees. Importantly, the dependent variable is based on the councillors' own assessment of whether to seek re-election or not, and is thus a subjective measure.

A number of explanatory variables are included in the analysis: The motivational dimensions UO and CPI were surveyed. Appendix A, table A.1 presents a principal component analysis of the items applied. *Age* is added as a categorical variable comprising four distinct age categories in order to capture the possible non-linear effect of age on the probability of retirement. *Seniority* is measured as the total number of years in a local council grouped in intervals of four years, equivalent to one term in the council. Thus, the measure may be interpreted as number of terms in political office.<sup>iii</sup> *Education* is a categorical variable consisting of practical, short, medium, high, no and other education. In the analysis of voluntary retirement *Education level* is a categorical variable consisting of the levels: a) Low level of vocational education, b) B.A. degree and c) Master degree or more. *Employment sector* consists of the sectors: a) No employment sector (i.e. not a part of the working force), b) public sector and c) private sector. *Gender* denotes the gender of a council member, and 1 equals male. In addition to the socio-demographic variables, *Mayor* denotes if the councillor is a mayor and *chairman* denotes, if the councillor is chairing a committee. The population in the municipality is included as a control, as this is known to influence the role and working conditions of the councillors (Kjær and Mouritzen, 2003).

### Results and discussion

In the following the results of the analysis are presented and discussed. The results show a positive correlation between CPI and hours spent on work related to being a local councillor (see table 1). Those with high CPI spend more time in relation to working in the council. However, this is not the case for those with high UO. This may be because the working hours in the council are related to activities in relation to decision making concerning the public in general rather than concerning the individual citizens. The results thus support the first expectation which suggested that CPI would be positively related to working hours, but not the second expectation, as UO is uncorrelated with the number of working hours.

The regression analysis of the effect of CPI on political influence (see table 2) shows that CPI is positively related to influence on decision-making and agenda-setting. Councillors with high CPI evaluate that their influence is relatively higher than the influence of the other councillors, and the other councillors also evaluate those with high CPI as being more influential. This result supports the third expectation, which stated that CPI would be positively correlated to political influence.

The result of the correlation between UO and political influence is less clear (see table 2). UO is positively related to influence on agenda-setting, while it is not related to influence on decision-making. This suggests that the type of motivation the councillors have affect the type of influence they obtain. If they are motivated to do good for the individual citizens, e.g. have high UO, then they obtain influence in a way that brings the concerns of particular citizens to the decision-making arena. In the context of the local councils this means that they seek to influence the agenda-setting in the councils, for instance by starting discussions in the council based on requests from the citizens and by raising new issues on the local policy agenda. In contrast, if they are more motivated to do good for the public in general, e.g. have high CPI, they seek influence on the agenda with issues of interest to the

general public, but also to seek influence on aggregate decision-making with consequences for the public at large, e.g. the outcome of votes in the council, on the aggregate budget of the municipality, and to put their particular key issues through on the decision-making agenda.

**Table 1: Regression statistics for hours spent on work related to being a councillor**

Constant	10,17*** (1,904)
UO	-0,01 (0,015)
CPI	0,05** (0,019)
Age - 39 or younger	1,31 (1,138)
Age - 40-49	-1,45* (0,778)
Age - 50-59	-0,23 (0,599)
Seniority	-0,12 (0,186)
Education – practical	0,84 (0,847)
Education- short	1,03 (0,994)
Education- medium	0,47 (0,689)
Education - no education	-0,56 (1,717)
Education - other education	0,51 (0,884)
Gender (male)	-0,71 (0,571)
Mayor	33,52*** (1,168)
Chairman	6,51*** (0,592)
Population (1000)	0,04*** (0,004)
F-model	98,105***
R2	0,552
Adj R2	0,546
N	1212

\*p<.10; \*\*p<.05; \*\*\*p<.01. Standard errors in brackets

**Table 2 : Regression statistics for measures of influence**

	Relative influence	Influence on decision-making	Influence on agenda-setting	Colleagues perception of influence
Constant	49,26*** (4,286)	31,92*** (4,817)	29,21*** (4,465)	-1,45 (5,149)
UO	-0,04 (0,034)	0,06 (0,039)	0,18*** (0,036)	-0,09** (0,042)
CPI	0,14*** (0,042)	0,16*** (0,047)	0,14*** (0,044)	0,10** (0,051)
Age - 39 or younger	3,19 (2,562)	3,75 (2,870)	3,42 (2,687)	10,24*** (3,065)
Age - 40-49	-0,85 (1,751)	0,33 (1,968)	-0,12 (1,839)	7,44*** (2,130)
Age - 50-59	0,39 (1,349)	-0,59 (1,516)	-0,45 (1,419)	5,56*** (1,640)
Seniority	1,65*** (0,420)	0,64 (0,473)	0,76* (0,441)	3,20*** (0,511)
Education - practical	-5,51*** (1,908)	-1,82 (2,140)	-4,48** (1,998)	-5,97 (2,312)
Education- short	-2,63 (2,235)	0,75 (2,511)	-4,54* (2,331)	-3,91** (2,718)
Education- medium	-4,04*** (1,551)	-1,63 (1,741)	-3,80** (1,615)	-3,81 (1,880)
Education - no education	-3,14 (3,864)	-3,52 (4,259)	-9,75** (4,086)	1,66 (4,627)
Education - other education	-1,78 (1,990)	2,62 (2,252)	-2,79 (2,095)	-3,69 (2,414)
Gender (male)	3,07** (1,286)	2,17 (1,446)	2,26* (1,349)	3,67** (1,560)
Mayor	13,73*** (2,627)	18,64*** (2,944)	9,73*** (2,751)	47,90*** (3,196)
Chairman	15,78*** (1,332)	15,93*** (1,494)	10,85*** (1,396)	25,20*** (1,615)
Population (1000)	0,01 (0,009)	0,01 (0,010)	0,03*** (0,009)	-
F-model	28,824***	19,830***	13,881***	69,791***
R2	0,238	0,201	0,150	0,449
Adj R2	0,228	0,191	0,140	0,443
N	1210	1200	1192	1213

\*p<.10; \*\*p<.05;\*\*\*p<.01. Standard errors in brackets

As these measures are based on the councillors own subjective perception of their personal influence, an analysis of the correlation between UO and the other councillors' perception of who is having influence was made. This shows that councillors with high UO are perceived as having significantly less influence. One interpretation of this result is that the user-oriented councillors over-estimate their influence, and that the change of the direction of the pre-fix is due to the subjectivity of the measure. Another interpretation is that influence on decision-making in the council is more visible to the other councillors, whereas influence on agenda-setting is less visible. New ideas and topics may emerge on the agenda, but it is not so easy to say where they came from. There is no reason to believe that the subjectivity of the measures should vary between UO and CPI. In other words, it is not likely that those with high UO should over estimate their own influence, while those with high CPI should not do the same. In consequence, the most likely interpretation is that

it is due to variations in the visibility of the two types of influence that the pre-fix of UO changes direction. Thus the fourth expectation – that UO would be positively related to political influence in general – cannot be corroborated. In contrast, UO seem to matter to a particular type of influence, e.g. agenda-setting.

**Table 3 – logistic regression statistics for indicators on de-recruitment**

	Model A	Model B	Model C
Gender (male)	-,374(,167)	-,409(,168)	,349(,176) ***
Employment sector (Public sector)			
No sector	,344(,209)	,327(,212)	,372(,220)
Private sector	,701(,187) ***	,706(,190) ***	,761(,196) ***
Education (No degree)			
BA degree	-,130(,168)	-,140(,169)	-,154(,176)
Academic degree	,014(,196)	-,018(,200)	,003(,207)
Age (under 39)			
40-49	,425(,427)	,392(,430)	,221(,436)
50-59	,616(,409)	,580(,410)	,402(,415)
Above 60	1,275(,411) ***	1,306(,413) ***	1,169(,420) ***
Seniority	,212(,052) ***	,213(,052) ***	,248(,055) ***
Mayor	-,367(,415)	-,359(,418)	,050(,432)
Chairman of committee	-,485(,175) ***	-,506(,178) ***	-,168(,190)
CPI		-,005(,005)	-,001(,006)
UO		-,005(,004)	-,004(,005)
Decision-making			-,014(,005) ***
Agenda-setting			-,014(,005) ***
Constant	-2,637(-2,637) ***	-1,831(,622) ***	-,975(,646)
-2*log Likelihood Ratio	1216,541	1193,252	1118,109
d.f	11	13	15
NagelkerkeR2	,116	,125	,174
N	1228	1211	1178

\*p<.10; \*\*p<.05; \*\*\*p<.01. Standard errors in brackets

The logistic regression analysis shows that CPI and OU do not influence the likelihood of voluntary retirement, when gender, employment sector, education, age, seniority and institutional position are controlled for (see table 3). The results also show, that a negative perception of influence on agenda-setting as well as decision-making affect voluntary retirement positively (see table 3). The analysis also shows, that CPI and UO affect all the indicators for influence positively (see table 2). Thus, motivation affects voluntary retirement, but it is mediated by influence on agenda-setting and decision-making. In other words, those who are less motivated by UO and CPI have less influence, and those with

less influence are more likely to retire voluntarily. This results support the expectation that influence is negatively correlated with voluntary retirement.

Voluntary retirement is an interesting indicator as politicians are not expected to retire voluntarily if they have influence. In contrast, they are expected to seek to maximize votes and run for re-election. The result here indicates that it is not lack of motivation to do good for others which cause politicians to retire voluntarily. In contrast, it is when they do not perceive to have influence that they retire. This result is interesting as the local councillors in another survey report that they lose influence towards central government and the local administration (Kjær, 2010). The results in this survey indicate that this hollowing out of influence may cause problems of de-recruitment. However, it is relevant to ask how high the rate of de-recruitment should be. At this point the level of de-recruitment is not alarmingly high in the local councils in Denmark (Hjelmar et al., 2010).

### **Conclusion**

This paper has been investigating the relationship between motivation, working hours, political influence and voluntary retirement among local councillors in Denmark. The conclusion is that the more committed the local councillors are to the public interest, the more working hours they spend on work in relation to being a local councillor, and the more influence they have on agenda-setting as well as on decision-making in the council. While these measures of influence are based on self-assessment, it is relevant to note that the other members of the councils also report influence policy-making to be higher for councillors with high CPI. The councillors with high CPI also evaluate that their influence is higher compared to the other councillors. Thus the results suggest, that this type of motivation leads to a stronger work effort, and that a stronger work effort leads to higher political influence. The results also show that the councillors, who perceive to have influence, are less likely to retire voluntarily.

The results are relevant to the debate on what motivates the politicians. Politicians are often seen as vote-maximizing or office-seeking. The results here suggest that they seek political influence, not just in order to maximize narrow self-interest, but also to do good for the citizens and the public at large, and that the perception of having influence motivates the councillors to continue in politics. The PSM perspective suggest that there is a particular ethos related to the provision of public services, and this research suggests that this is also the case for the role local councillors play in service provision.

The analysis also investigated the relationship between UO and behavioural outcomes. User orientation is not correlated to the number of working hours, when institutional position is controlled for. Councillors with high UO do not perceive their relative influence in the council to be high, and they do not perceive to have high influence on decision-making in the council. However, they do perceive to have influence on agenda-setting. This suggests that different types of motivation lead to different types of goal-attainment and influence. Councillors with high UO seek influence on agenda-setting, where concerns of individual citizens can be raised, but they do not obtain as much influence on decision-making in the council, where decisions which are binding for the community at large are made. Thus variation in the type of motivation is related to differences in behavioural outcomes among the local councillors.

Regarding de-recruitment, the analysis of voluntary retirement among local councillors showed that it particularly is the councillors who perceive to have less influence who are state that they intend to quit. This is relevant as central regulation decreases the influence of the local councillors and hence may result in increased de-recruitment (Hjelmar et al., 2009).

Even if the framework suggests, that a causal relationship exist among the study variables, the possibility of bi-directional relationships should be recognized. Furthermore, measures of motivation and influence are largely self-reported.

## Appendix A

**Table A.1: Principal component analysis of all items (pattern matrix)**

	Component	
	1	2
Concerns for the individual citizen are always more important than the concerns for formal rules	-0.143	0.745
It gives me energy to know that I helped the citizen	0.379	0.569
If the citizen is satisfied, the job is done	0.072	0.786
I contribute to my community	0.615	0.168
Meaningful public service is very important to me	0.737	0.067
I would prefer seeing public officials do what is best for the whole community even if it harmed my interests	0.745	-0.207
I consider public service my civic duty	0.757	0.018

NOTE: Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization.

**Table A.2: Description of variables**

Variable	Operational definition	N	Mean	St. dev.	Min.	Max.
UO	Motivation to serve the user of the service (the specific other)	1248	68,35	17,60611	0	100
CPI	Motivation to serve the general public (the generalised other)	1235	82,56	14,19925	0	100
Age - 39 or younger	1' if respondent is 39 years old or younger. '0' else.	1230	0,068	0,25095	0	1
Age - 40-49	1' if respondent is between 40 and 49 years. '0' else.	1230	0,177	0,38202	0	1
Age - 50-59	1' if respondent is between 50 and 59 years. '0' else.	1230	0,350	0,47704	0	1
Age - 60 or older	1' if respondent is 60 years old or older. '0' else.	1230	0,401	0,49123	0	1
Seniority	Respondent's seniority on a scale from 1 to 6, where '1' is 0-4 years and '6' is 25 years or more.	1336	2,89	1,584	1	6
Education - practical	1' if respondents has a practical education. '0' else.	1336	0,145	0,35169	0	1
Education- short	1' if respondents has a short (< 3 years) education. '0' else.	1336	0,086	0,28058	0	1
Education- medium	1' if respondents has a medium length (3-4,5 years) education. '0' else.	1336	0,355	0,47863	0	1
Education - high	1' if respondents has a longer (> 5 years) education. '0' else.	1336	0,195	0,39605	0	1
Education - no education	1' if respondents has no education. '0' else.	1336	0,023	0,15061	0	1
Education - other education	1' if respondents has reported another type of education. '0' else.	1336	0,132	0,33833	0	1
Gender (male)	Respondent's gender. 1 = Male	1336	0,72	0,45	0	1
Mayor	1' if Mayor. '0' else.	1336	0,05	0,226	0	1
Chairman	1' if chairman of permanent committee. '0' if else.	1255	0,31	0,464	0	1
Population (1000)	Municipal population in thousands	1336	62,10	68,77848	2,06	503,76
Weekly work hours	Reported weekly work hours	1280	18,55	12,71499	2	65
Relative influence	Own perceived overall influence compared to other members of city council	1302	68,60	22,00999	0	100
Influence on decision-making	Own perceived influence on decision-making	1298	58,94	24,192	0	100
Influence on agenda-setting	Own perceived influence on agenda-setting	1288	59,23	21,793	0	100
Colleagues perception of influence	Other council members perception of who are the most influential council members	1336	23,40	31,3527	0	100



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<sup>i</sup> In Copenhagen there are as an exception 55 members of the city council.

<sup>ii</sup> A two-sided t-test was carried out to test whether the variations between the population and the sample were significant in relation to municipal size, region, amalgamated vs. not amalgamated municipalities, gender and party ID. The test showed that all parameters were insignificant ( $p < 0.05$ ).

<sup>iii</sup> It should be noted that measure does not capture whether the number of terms served has been in a single career sequence or in multiple different career sequences.