

## Political Diversity and PSM

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### *Abstract*

The research agenda of Public Service Motivation (PSM) has emerged in a period where the provision of public services has become politicised and challenged by criticisms from New Public Management reforms. However, the correlation between political orientations and PSM is rarely investigated and the potential political bias is rarely discussed. This paper shows that there is a high correlation between self-placement on the left-right dimension and the PSM dimensions Public Interest and User Orientation. This indicates a left-wing bias in the construct. The position of the political parties also varies on the two dimensions. The ranking of parties on the dimension Public Interest is largely inverse to the ranking on the dimension User Orientation. The ranking on Public Interest largely corresponds to the rank of the parties on economic values, whereas the ranking on User Orientation corresponds to the rank on the authoritarian-liberal value dimension. Hence it may be useful to integrate the dimension User Orientation in the PSM construct in order to encompass all the different types of motivation relevant to provide public services present in the two-dimensional political space.

### 1. Introduction

At the outset, research on Public Service Motivation (PSM) emerged out of the idea that there was a special public sector ethos, which needed to be reasserted in reaction to increasing distrust in the public sector and political agendas of ‘bureaucrat bashing’ (Perry & Wise 1990; see also Le Grand 2003). Thus, Public Service Motivation (PSM), which denotes an individual’s orientation to deliver public service in order to do good for others and society (Perry & Hondeghem 2008:6; Rainey & Steinbauer 1999; Pedersen & Andersen 2010) has challenged the content of New Public Management (NPM) reforms by devoting increasing attention to motivation and behaviour in the public sector, which is not based on self-interest maximisation, or indeed by paying attention to situations – such as for instance performance pay – where regulations assuming that public sector employees act out of self-interest prove to be counterproductive (Perry et al. 2009). But even if the PSM research agenda was born in a political setting, we know very little about how PSM and its sub-dimensions are related to political orientation. This gap needs to be filled in order to clarify potential biases in the policy implications drawn from PSM research, and in order to build knowledge on how public service providers with diverse political orientations may be motivated. If

right-wing employees have higher levels of User Orientation, while more left-wing employees have higher levels of Public Interest, this knowledge is useful in order to appeal to the public service providers, who have diverse political orientations.

It has always been a central assumption that PSM has behavioural implication in the sense that it influences the possibility of recruitment in the public sector, that it is associated to performance, and that different regulations and rewards will apply in the public sector (Perry & Wise 1990). Thus, one reason to care about PSM is that it is seen as important in order to design appropriate organisational incentive systems and responsive organisational designs (Perry & Hondeghem 2008:7). In this way, the PSM research agenda has always had an ambition about being useful to society by building a platform of knowledge on which policy recommendation can be made. Evidence of a link between PSM and performance is used to recommend that Public Service Motivation is managed in a way that strengthens the relationship between motives and behaviour (Brewer 2008; Leisink & Steijn 2009; Andersen & Serritzlew 2009; Paarlberg et al. 2008). This can be by using PSM as a selection criterion for entry into public service employment, by socialising newcomers into behaviour that reflects public service values and by creating a workplace environment that models and reinforces PSM (ibid.). Policy recommendations can for instance be recommendations about organisational designs such as contracting out (Pedersen & Andersen 2010), recruitment (Vandenabeele 2008b; Andersen et al. 2010) and motivation of public sector employees (Moynihan & Pandey 2007; Wright & Pandey 2010). However, the instrumental use of PSM as a 'management tool' has also been critiqued (Steen & Rutgers 2009). The central point is that if the PSM construct has a political bias, the policy recommendations made on the basis of PSM research may also be biased. For instance, if it is recommended to seek to attract employees with high PSM – in order to improve performance – this may be the same as attracting employees with certain political orientations. Furthermore, the recommendations may be biased if the PSM constructs only encompass the altruistic motivation of certain political groups. In that case, policy recommendations may fail to draw on all relevant types of altruistic motivation relevant to the provision of public services. In both cases, it is relevant to know what the political bias of the PSM construct is.

In order to explore this, I investigate how the political orientation of local councillors in Denmark is associated with the PSM sub-dimensions Public Interest and User Orientation. Local councillors are important producers of public services as they take collective decisions about the level of local taxation and the priorities between expenses for schools, kindergartens and care for the elderly. These decisions potentially have wide consequences for the production of public services. Thus, the local councillors are a group which are particularly interesting to the provision of public services. The reason why survey data on local councillors are used is that information on their political orientations is very valid. This is important as valid data on political orientations can be difficult to obtain as people may be reluctant to report what they actually vote. For instance, the votes for radical right-wing parties are generally higher in the elections than the figures reported in the polls. In contrast, the politicians answer readily to questions on political orientation. Furthermore, it is far from

all voters who are members of a political party or who have stable preferences for a political party. In this regard, the local councillors all belong to and represent political parties. Therefore, they can provide information on the variation in Public Service Motivation among the political parties.

The overall research question is how dimensions of Public Service Motivation and political orientation correlate. For reasons that are discussed in the following the analysis of Public Service Motivation focuses on the dimensions Public Interest and User Orientation, and the analysis of political orientation focuses on self-placement on the left-right dimension as well as the position of the political parties. The main expectations are that there is a correlation between PSM and self-placement on the left-right dimension and that there are significant differences in the Public Interest and User Orientation of the political parties. Based on the analysis it is discussed if PSM contains a political bias, what this bias could be and what implication this may have for the policy recommendations based on PSM research.

As there are very few studies of the relationship between PSM and political orientation, the analytical approach is exploratory. This means that rather than formulating and testing hypothesis on the relationship based on previous conceptual development and empirical studies, the empirical relationships will be analysed and discussed in an exploratory manner. The paper proceeds as follows. First, PSM and political orientation is discussed. Second, the data and the main variables are presented. Third, the empirical results are presented. Fourth, the implications of the result for research on PSM are discussed, and fifth, a conclusion is reached.

## 2. Concepts

In the following the concepts Public Service Motivation and Political Orientation are discussed.

### *Public Service Motivation*

PSM is motivation held by individuals. Brewer & Selden (1998: 417) make this clear in their definition of PSM as ‘the motivating force that makes individuals deliver significant public service’. Thus, Public Service Motivation is not about the direction the individual believes society should take. In contrast, it is about what motivates and provides energy to the individual in the provision of public services. Perry & Hondeghem (2008: 6) see PSM as an orientation to do something good for others and society in the delivery of public service. Thus they emphasise that it can be directed to different recipients (see also Pedersen & Andersen 2010). 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 (Pedersen & Andersen 2010). Thus PSM 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 and in the delivery of public services in particular (Andersen et al. 2010).

The discussion about which dimensions to include in PSM continues to be relevant (Kim & Vandenberghe 2010). At the outset Perry (1997) included four dimensions. First, 'Public Interest' 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. Affective reasons are linked to compassion, normative reasons to the Public Interest and instrumental reasons to attraction to policy-making (Wright 2008). Self-sacrifice originally showed to be highly correlated with Public Interest and remains under-theorised (Perry 1996:19). Therefore, it has been excluded from the analysis here. Attraction to policy-making has also been excluded from the analyses. One reason is that this dimension previously has proved to give less clear results (Pedersen & Andersen 2010). Another is that the items are less suited to be posed to politicians as some of them express disgust with politicians. One example is the item 'I don't care much about politicians', which it seems less sensible to pose to politicians. Previously, research has shown that Public Interest is at the core of the PSM construct (Pedersen & Andersen 2010). In addition to the traditional PSM dimensions, Vandenberghe (2008a: 145) introduces a customer orientation dimension that includes specific others, whom the employee wants to help. Adding to this, we propose that customer orientation should be defined as the motivation to serve the user of the public service. We use the more inclusive term 'User Orientation', because the beneficiaries of public service do not necessarily pay for it in a direct way. Therefore, and as space limits in the survey forced us to make priorities, only the dimensions Public Interest and User Orientation were included in the survey. Public Interest measures altruistic motivation in public service delivery directed to collectives and groups, whereas User Orientation is directed to individual users (Pedersen & Andersen 2010).

The PSM construct is first order reflexive and second order formative (Kim & Vandenberghe 2009: 13). 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. As it will be discussed in more detail in the following, political orientations vary fundamentally in the belief about the desirable role of the individual versus society. Therefore, it is in this case important to include sub-dimensions of PSM, e.g. User Orientation and Public Interest, which measure motivation directed to individuals as well as aggregates at a societal level. Otherwise, we may risk a biased analysis and policy implications which may fail to draw on the motivations held by certain political groups.

The paper set out to analyse the correlation between Public Interest, User Orientation and political orientation. The discussion above shows that there are important conceptual and methodological considerations behind the choice of PSM dimensions employed. The same holds for the concepts and measures employed in the analysis of political orientation. In the following these are discussed.

### *Political orientations – the two-dimensional political space*

Beginning in the 1960's the advanced industrial democracies – and Denmark being one of those – have been witnessing a major change in issue-orientations and policy positions. This has been seen as a shift from 'old' politics focusing mainly on economic issues, to 'new' politics focusing mainly on non-economic issues (Inglehardt 1977; 1990; Dalton 1988; 1991; Borre 1995). This value change can be conceptualised as taking place along an authoritarian-libertarian value dimension (Flanagan & Lee 2003). Whereas the old left-right dimension mainly captures economic values on the degree of redistribution desired and the role of the state in the economy, the authoritarian-libertarian constitutes an alternative value dimension, which cuts across the economic value dimension, hence creating a two dimensional political space (Flanagan & Lee 2003). The economic value dimension concerns the role of the state in the economy and the size and role of the public sector. The authoritarian-libertarian dimension in contrast has hierarchy at its core, as authoritarians favour social hierarchy. Libertarians, on the other hand, dislike social hierarchies and prefer the free and equal interaction of people without regard to social position of any kind (Flanagan & Lee 2003; Stubager 2009). A second core aspect of the authoritarian-libertarian dimension is attitudes to tolerance for non-conformity. The libertarian position entails a basic tolerance for people who deviate from one's own norms, and variety among humans is seen as something to be protected for its own sake, but for the authoritarian those who stand outside society should be made to comply with the norms of society. Research also shows that highly educated groups tend to be libertarian in their outlook while less educated groups tend to be authoritarian (Flanagan & Lee 2003; Stubager 2010: 509). Economic values can be measured by items such as: 'The government has too little control over private investments', 'Higher incomes ought to be taxed more than they are today', and 'In Politics, one should strive to give everybody the same economic conditions no matter what their education and employment are'. On the other hand, authoritarian-libertarian values can be measured by items such as 'Immigration constitutes a serious threat to our national culture', 'Violent crimes should be punished far more strictly than they are today', 'It would be sensible to let a strong man seize power in a situation of economic crisis', and 'Islam constitutes a serious threat to Danish culture' (Stubager 2009).

The rise of the importance of the authoritarian-libertarian value dimension has meant a reorientation of the political parties in the two-dimension political space. In Denmark, the 2001 election meant a restructuring of the party system – a development which was consolidated at the 2005 elections (Andersen 2003: 2006). The Radical Liberals, which is a social-liberal party, used to be pictured as a centrist party, but it is increasingly moving to the right on the traditional left-right dimensions, but at the same time it is an 'extreme' libertarian party on the new value dimension. In contrast, the Danish People's Party which used to be pictured as a right-wing extremist party is increasingly becoming a centre-left party on distributional issues. In addition, it has a stronger working class profile among the voters than the social democrats. But on the authoritarian dimension it is an extreme right party with strong demands for tight regulations on immigration and strong EU scepticism. The Liberal Party which used to have a strong neo-liberal profile has positioned itself as

centrist on welfare policies and distributional issues, but more authoritarian on the new value dimension (c.f. Andersen 2006: 396-397). There are also political parties which are less clear in their reorientation in the new political landscape, e.g. the Social Democrats, which in Denmark is a middle-left party, and the Conservatives, which for many years have been forming government with the Liberal Party. Thus, the Danish parties are adapting to the new political conflict structure and may in this respect although old in name be considered new parties (ibid.).

The restructuring of the party system has also affected the voters' perceptions of whether they are leaning to the left or right – something indicated by self-placement on the left-right dimension. The left-right dimension depicts the political space as one-dimensional. This view draws on the old politics when the economic redistribution based on economic conflict between the classes was the most important cleavage. However, this has ceased to be the case, and these days the voters' perception of left and right depends on their position on the new value dimension as well as on their position on the old dimension of distributional conflict (Andersen 2006: 393). The developments of a two-dimensional political space are a general development in the advanced industrial societies (Flanagan & Lee 2003: 250; Inglehardt 1990), and the embedding of the authoritarian-libertarian value dimension in the political parties is a development that takes place across countries. However, the specific ways vary from country to country (Kriesi et al. 2006). On the one hand, the socio-demographic developments driving the political cleavages vary. For instance increases in the level of education (Stubager 2010). Furthermore, the political parties face different incentives in drawing attention to different issues depending on the political competition in the specific country (Green-Pedersen & Krogstrup 2008: 610-634).

In sum, there has been a remarkable development in the political orientations in the last decades. The left-right dimension used to constitute a fundamental organising principle for the voters, which at the core encompassed controversies on the degree of redistribution and the role of the public sector in this regard. In the industrial society class cleavages between workers versus owners/employers were a central fault-line behind the left-right dimension, but in the post-industrial society this has been supplemented and combined with new political cleavages. A new and growing middleclass has emerged, the educational levels have been rising and with the growth of the public sector, the public sector employees have also become an important group of voters. Today, the political space can be described according to two value dimensions. Firstly, economic values on the degree of redistribution desired and the role of the state in the economy, and second authoritarian-libertarian values on the preferences for hierarchy and attitudes to tolerance for non-conformity (Flanagan & Lee 2003; Stubager 2010; 2009; Evans et al. 1996; Andersen 2006).

### 3. Data and method

The diverging positions on the value dimensions are represented in the Danish party system today (Andersen 2006). All the main parties are represented in the 98 local governments, and in addition

many councils have local parties, which are formed in reaction to local political problems (Elklit & Kjær 2007). This multitude of political parties makes the local councils in Denmark a rich laboratory for analysing the relationship between the PSM dimensions and political party membership. Being a local councillor is a part-time job with 15-20 working hours on average. The mayors and the chairmen, however, work considerably more hours (Dahlgard et al. 2009). The councillors are elected for periods of four years and receive a fee which varies with the institutional position they hold.

The analysis is based on survey data collected in March 2009 as part of a broader research project on role perception among local councillors in all 98 municipalities in Denmark. 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 2008), 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. First, the respondents were explicitly informed that the response time would (only) amount to 15 minutes. Second, the respondents were promised full anonymity. Third, two rounds of follow-ups for non-respondents were distributed respectively 10 and 20 days after the ordinary survey dispatch. Fourth, the follow-ups contained a number of recommendations from respondents about the survey, comments which were collected among respondents from the ordinary invitation. Finally, all 98 mayors received two letters during the survey period requesting them to call on the council members to fill out the questionnaire. 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>1</sup>

The councillors were exposed to the PSM sub-dimensions User Orientation and Public Interest. Appendix A, table A.1 presents a principal component analysis of the items applied. It would be highly interesting to analyse if motivations matter to political orientations or if it is the other way round. However, as we do not have time-series data on these items we will not be able to make causal interference, but only to analyse the correlations. The coding of the political parties is based on the parties they are representing in the local councils. Definitions, means and standard deviations for all used variables can be seen in Appendix A, table A.2.

#### 4. Results

The table below shows the average mean scores for the different parties on the left-right dimension, Public Interest and User Orientation among the local politicians. According to this, the Conserva-

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<sup>1</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 ( $p < 0,05$ ).

tives are the most right-wing party. Then follows the Liberal Party, the Danish People’s Party, minor parties, local parties, the Social Liberals, the Social Democrats and finally the Socialist Parties. The ranking of the parties on the dimension Public Interest seems to come fairly close to the traditional left-right dimensions as the order between the parties is somewhat similar. However, the ranking of the parties on the dimension User Orientation is quite different. Here the Danish People’s Party have the highest score, whereas the Social Liberal Party has the lowest score – see table 1. Here the ranking is more similar to the ranking of the parties on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension (Andersen 2006). The average means score presents a rough measure, but including the party groups in the regression analysis makes it possible to control for socio-demographic and institutional variables – see table 2.

**Table 1: Party means on political orientation, Public Interest and User Orientation**

	Self-placement on the left/right scale	Public Interest	User Orientation
The Conservative Party (Konservative)	68.8 (1)	81.5 (6)	71.0 (4)
The Danish Liberal Party (Venstre)	66.6 (2)	79.3 (8)	69.2 (5)
The Danish People’s Party (Dansk Folkeparti)	62.8 (3)	81.2 (7)	75.4 (1)
Other parties and independents <sup>a</sup>	55.0 (4)	82.4 (5)	71.4 (3)
Local Parties (Lokallister)	48.6 (5)	85.4 (2)	72.9 (2)
The Social Liberals (Det Radikale Venstre)	45.9 (6)	84.6 (3)	58.9 (8)
The Social Democrats (Socialdemokraterne)	36.1 (7)	84.1 (4)	67.1 (6)
Socialist Parties (SF, Enhedslisten)	18.5 (8)	86.2 (1)	66.4 (7)

<sup>a</sup> Others are Liberal Alliance, the Christian Democrats and the Schleswig Party (Liberal Alliance, Kristen-demokraterne & Slesvigsk parti).

The regression analysis presented below (see table 2, model 1 and 2) shows a positive relationship between self-placement on the left-right dimension and User Orientation and a negative relationship between left-right self-placement and Public Interest. This result is controlled for socio-demographic factors, e.g. age, gender, education and seniority. In model 1, politicians with a long academic education have a higher degree of Public Interest than politicians without an academic degree. The other socio-demographic factors are insignificant. As written above the relationship between left-right self-placement and Public Interest is a negative one. The estimated size of the parameter is -0.092, and the beta-coefficient is -0.14. That means that for each point a politician moves from left to right on the left-right scale, the politician will on average score 0.092 lower on Public Interest other things being equal. In contrast as shown in model 2, the association between left-right self-placement and User Orientation is a positive one. The estimated size of the parameter is 0.057 and the beta-coefficient is 0.07. This means that moving one point on the self-placement scale a politician will on average score 0,057 higher on User Orientation other things being equal. Even if the parameter is much higher for Public Interest than for User Orientation, self-placement explains important parts of the variance in Public Interest as well as User Orientation. This is in line with the interactions between the new value dimensions and self-placement (Andersen 2006).

Older politicians tend to have a higher degree of User Orientation, while politicians with an academic degree have a lower degree of User Orientation compared to politicians with no academic degree.

**Table 2: Political Orientation, Political Party, User Orientation and Public Interest**

	Model 1 Public Interest	Model 2 User Orientation	Model 3 Public Interest	Model 4 User Orientation
Age	0.02 (0.46)	0.19*** (3.20)	0.02 (0.50)	0.16** (2.78)
Gender (male)	-1.55 (-1.66)	-0.89 (-0.78)	-1.52 (-1.65)	-0.68 (-0.60)
Seniority	-0.41 (-1.40)	-0.57 (-1.60)	-0.47 (-1.61)	-0.55 (-1.53)
Education				
Short Academic	0.52 (0.56)	-2.74* (-2.42)	0.34 (0.37)	-2.65* (-2.35)
Long Academic	2.24* (2.04)	-5.62*** (-4.17)	2.37* (2.13)	-5.65*** (-4.15)
Political Self-Placement	-0.092*** (-4.87)	0.057* (2.48)	- -	- -
Political Party <sup>a</sup>				
Left wing	- -	- -	1.42 (0.92)	0.31 (0.16)
Social Liberal Party	- -	- -	-0.33 (-0.15)	-7.25** (-2.67)
Local parties	- -	- -	0.72 (0.40)	5.84** (2.68)
Conservative Party	- -	- -	-3.36* (-2.21)	4.04* (2.17)
Liberal Party	- -	- -	-5.17*** (-5.21)	2.22 (1.82)
Danish People's Party	- -	- -	-2.56 (-1.10)	7.32** (2.57)
Others <sup>b</sup>	- -	- -	-1.82 (-0.58)	4.02 (1.05)
(Constant)	87.41*** (32.39)	59.52*** (17.90)	84.86*** (33.14)	62.00*** (19.69)
N	1207	1198	1213	1203
Adj. R <sup>2</sup>	0.025	0.025	0.0315	0.039
F-test for full model	6.24***	6.14***	4.28***	5.03***

\* Indicates significance at a 5%-level. \*\* Indicates significance at a 1%-level. \*\*\* Indicates significance at a 0.1%-level. <sup>a</sup> Social Democratic Party is base category. <sup>b</sup> Contains Liberal Alliance, the Christian Democrats, the Schleswig Party and independents. NOTE: T-values in ().

The regression analysis is also performed with political parties rather than self-placement on the left-right dimension as the independent variable (see table 2, model 3 and 4). Both models have an increased value for adjusted  $R^2$ , which means that the models explain a larger proportion of the sample variance. This indicates that Public Interest as well as User Orientation are better explained by party than by left-right self-placement. Model 3 shows that the Public Interest of the Liberals and the Conservatives are significantly lower than the Public Interest of the Social Democrats. The Public Interest of the Social Democrats does not vary significantly from the Danish People's Party, the Social Liberals or the Socialist Parties. The maximum difference between two parties is 6.59 and is between the Liberal Party and the Socialist Parties. This difference is also significant. These parties are, respectively, the second most right-oriented and most left-oriented on the left-right self-placement scale.

In model 4 the party effects are quite different. The User Orientation of the Danish People's Party is the highest followed by the local parties and the Conservatives, while the User Orientation of the Social Liberals is the lowest. There is no significant difference between the Social Democrats and the Liberal Party. The highest difference between two parties is 14.57 and is between the Social Liberals and Danish People's Party. The difference is highly significant.

The picture is clear. The position of the political parties on the left-right dimension is close to their position on the Public Interest dimension. But the dimension User Orientation cuts across the left-right dimension – and the Public Interest dimension. On the one hand, the Social Liberals, which is a middle party on the left-right dimension, is at one extreme of the dimension User orientation with the lowest score, on the other hand the Danish People's Party which does not vary from the Social Democrats on the scale Public Interest has an extremely high score on User Orientation.

## 5. Discussion

The analysis shows that local councillors with higher Public Interest are more left-wing and that local councillors with higher User Orientation are more right-wing (see table 2). This immediately indicates that there is a political bias in these dimensions. However, the measurement is based on self-placement on the left-right dimension, which has some serious limitations. One is that it is subjectively reported data and hence subject to variation in the respondents perception of what the left-right dimension is. The respondents are all local councillors and as such they can be expected to have a higher knowledge on political concepts such as the left-right dimension than voters in general (Evans et al. 1996). However, even if they have knowledge of the content of the left-right dimension, recent research shows that the authoritarian-libertarian position is becoming integrated in the self-placement on the left-right dimension (Andersen 2006). Therefore, it is not quite clear what political conflicts the left-right dimension is perceived to contain today and to what extent the dimension represents economic or authoritarian-libertarian values versus economic values. Items on the value dimensions have not been posed to the local councillors, but they are articulated by the

political parties in Denmark (Andersen 2006). Therefore, it is possible to gain some additional insight by analysing how the political parties are placed on the left-right dimension and how left-right self-placement as well as Public Interest and User Orientation vary between the political parties.

The ranking of the parties on the dimension Public Interest is roughly similar to the ranking on the left-right dimension, whereas the rank on the dimension User Orientation is more in line with the ranking of the parties on the authoritarian-libertarian dimension (Andersen 2006). Thus, the dimension User Orientation cuts across the dimension Public Interest and the placement on the self-reported left-right dimension. The Social Liberal Party has high libertarian and low authoritarian values, whereas the opposite is the case for the Danish People's Party (Andersen 2006). Thus, the ranking of the political parties on this dimension found in previous research resembles their scores on User Orientation. This indicates that User Orientation may be correlated with authoritarian-libertarian values. Furthermore, education is highly correlated with the authoritarian-libertarian dimension as well as User Orientation. This indicates that the same social cleavage may be the driver of the variation on authoritarian-libertarian values as well as User Orientation (Stubager 2009).

The reason why libertarians have lower scores on User Orientation may be that the libertarian values emphasise that all should be included also global and environmental recipients. Thus, they prefer to deliver public services to the most generalised others which could be the environment or poor and deserving people on a global scale (Pedersen & Andersen 2010). In contrast the authoritarians are more motivated to deliver public service to specific recipients in their local communities, who are perceived as being needy. The needy are likely to be specific recipients, who belong to their own group, while those who do not conform to the norms and values of the group risk not to be seen as deserving.

As said only little research has been made on the correlation between dimensions of PSM and political orientation. But some has been made on the correlation between the authoritarian-libertarian values and civic-mindedness (Flanagan & Lee 2003: 262). The research shows that authoritarians are much more likely than libertarians to do voluntary work out of a desire to be of service to others. Thus, they are more likely to express motivations for voluntary community work such as compassion for those in need, identifying with people who were suffering, to give the disadvantaged people hope and dignity, to give back something and to make a contribution to the local community (Flanagan & Lee 2003: 262). In contrast, the liberals to a higher extent were motivated by bringing about social and political change, gaining new skills and useful experience and meeting people for social reasons. Thus, authoritarians were found to be motivated to do voluntary work out of a desire to serve others, whereas civic mindedness for libertarians is about themselves and changing society into their own image (*ibid.*). Even if civic mindedness is directed to voluntary work rather than to the delivery of public services these concepts are overlapping rather than

mutually exclusive. Furthermore, it is evident that some of the items employed in the measurement of civic mindedness come close to some of the items in the PSM construct – especially those on the dimension compassion. Thus it is likely that the PSM construct also is correlated with an authoritarian political orientation. However, more empirical work is needed to get a full picture of how the different PSM dimensions are correlated with the authoritarian-libertarian values. Therefore, the analysis could be extended by supplementing the self-reported measure on left-right orientation with items measuring economic and authoritarian-libertarian values. At this point, it can be concluded that the political bias of the PSM dimensions may not just be following the traditional left-right dimension.

The dimension User Orientation is only rarely included in the PSM construct and it is still discussed if it should be included or not (Kim & Vandenabeele 2010; Pedersen & Andersen 2010). As it is not included in the PSM construct it does not contribute to the political bias of the construct. However, the correlation indicates that there are forms of altruism linked to certain political orientations which are not included in the construct, and hence that PSM does not encompass all forms of pro-social motivation which may be relevant in the provision of public services. As this specific type of motivation for doing good for others is more prominent in some political groups rather than others, the policy implications drawn on the PSM construct may fail to draw on the motivation to deliver public service present in certain political groups.

In sum, the results presented here indicate that there is a political bias in the PSM dimensions' Public Interest and User Orientation. One may speculate if the PSM construct not only holds a political bias, but that this political bias may also be out of line with the political landscape of present day society because it fails to incorporate motivations to do good for others in the provision of public services relevant to the authoritarian-libertarian dimension. At the liberal end motivation to do good for future generations in environmental regulation and for developing countries may be relevant, whereas doing good for others who belong to the specific and local community rather than immigrants or developing countries may be relevant at the authoritarian end.

## 6. Conclusion

The research agenda on Public Service Motivation was born – and has been unfolding – in an era where the role and performance of the public sector have been a highly political question. Therefore, it is surprising that we know so little about the political bias of PSM. This paper has produced some interesting insights on this. It is a main finding that there is a negative correlation between self-placement on the left-right dimension and Public Interest and a positive correlation between the left-right dimension and User Orientation. This indicates that the left-wing has a higher level of Public Interest, whereas the right-wing has a higher level of User Orientation. As the dimension Public Interest is at the core of the PSM construct, whereas User Orientation is generally not included, this implies that the PSM construct is likely to have a left-wing bias.

However, political orientations are placed in a two dimensional space consisting of economic values on the one hand and authoritarian-libertarian values on the other. The ranking of the political parties on Public Interest largely corresponds to their ranking on the economic values, as the left-wing parties have higher scores on Public Interest than right-wing parties. In contrast, the ranking of the parties on User Orientation largely corresponds to their ranking on authoritarian-libertarian values. The Social Liberals have the most libertarian values and the lowest level of User Orientation and the Danish People's Party have the most authoritarian values and the highest level of User Orientation. This indicates that the authoritarians are more motivated to do good for specific recipients, who conform to the norms of their own group, whereas the libertarians are more motivated to do good for generalised others and taking more abstract global and environmental concerns. The PSM construct may fail to measure the motivation corresponding to the authoritarian-libertarian dimension, especially if User Orientation is not included in the construct.

There are some methodological limitations to this study. Firstly, in order to produce an encompassing analysis on the political bias of the construct an analysis is needed where all PSM dimensions are included, even if the conclusion made here on the sub-dimensions Public Interest and User Orientation remains clear. In addition, an analysis including items on the economic and authoritarian-libertarian values dimensions would be relevant in order to analyse the political bias of public service motivation in a two dimensional political space.

## 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	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Public	Motivation to serve the user of the service (the specific other)	1235	82.56	14.20	0	100
User	Motivation to serve the general public (the generalised other)	1224	68.44	17.37	0	100
Age	Respondent's age in years	1230	55.91	9.65	23	81
Gender	Respondent's gender. 1 = Male	1336	0.72	0.45	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	1.58	1	6
Education: Short academic	Equals 1 if respondent has 3-4 years education	1336	0.35	0.48	0	1
Education: Long academic	Equals 1 if respondent has 5 years education or more	1336	0.19	0.40	0	1
Political self-placement	Political self-placement on a scale from 0 to 100, where '0' is most left-oriented and '100' is most right-oriented	1259	49.07	21.72	0	100
Political party: Left Wing	1 if member of left-wing party	1336	0.08	0.27	0	1
Political party: Social Liberals	1 if member of the Social Liberal Party	1336	0.04	0.18	0	1
Political party: Local parties	1 if member of local party	1336	0.06	0.24	0	1
Political party: Conservative	1 if member of the Conservative Party	1336	0.09	0.29	0	1
Political party: Liberal	1 if member of the Liberal Party	1336	0.30	0.46	0	1
Political party: People's Party	1 if member of Danish People's Party	1336	0.03	0.18	0	1
Political party: Others	1 if member of other parties or independent	1336	0.02	0.13	0	1
Political party: Social Democrats	1 if member of the Social Democratic Party	1336	0.38	0.49	0	1

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