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Karlsson, Tom

2014

Link to publication

Citation for published version (APA):
Karlsson, T. (2014). *Manager and Civil Servant: Exploring actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration*. [Doctoral Thesis (monograph), Department of Business Administration]. Lund University.

Total number of authors:
1

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Manager and Civil Servant

Exploring actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration

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Manager and Civil Servant

Exploring actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration

Tom S. Karlsson

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION
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To be defended at Holger Crafoords Ekonomicentrum, EC3:207.

June 3 at 10:15 AM.

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Document name
DOCTORAL DISSERTATION

Date of issue 2014-05-12

Sponsoring organization

Title and subtitle: Manager and Civil Servant: Exploring actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration

Abstract

Manager and Civil Servant is an exploration of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions that govern perceptions concerning how public administration should be undertaken within contemporary welfare states. It is argued that more than 30 years of continuous reforms directed towards public administration have caused dilemmas to arise. These dilemmas have resulted in a shifting of balances regarding the underpinning pillars of public administration. These reforms have furthermore resulted in an emergence of challenging social systems, entailing new beliefs and practices. The question posited is "how do actors engaged in public administration make sense of the dilemma(s) they face". Theoretically, this dissertation entails institutional theory as well as Structuration Theory. These are combined in a framework, wherein agency and structure are used in order to characterise manifestations of taken-for-granted assumptions. The framework is furthermore elaborated through conceptual perspectives concerning Management as well as Civil Service in order to model a framework for public administration. Empirically, this dissertation entails a use of qualitative as well as quantitative methods. Open-ended interviews are combined with self-administered surveys, statistical analysis, and focus groups. Two important contributions are highlighted. Firstly, actors engaged in public administration reject the idea of polarisation concerning inherent public administrative activities and that the dilemma being accentuated within public administration. As such, instances of making sense are reduced due to an unconscious enactment of meanings and sanctions that reject the presence of dilemmas. Secondly, actors' ability to reject polarisation, and thus dilemma, can be explained through compartmentalising interdependent perspectives. On the one hand actors enact an internal perspective wherein instances of Management make sense. On the other hand actors enact an external perspective wherein instances of Civil Service make sense. The separation and compartmentalisation of these perspectives not only enable actors to reject dilemma, they are enabled to enact seemingly different roles at once. They become both Managers and Civil Servants.

Key words: Public Sector Reforms, Management, Civil Service, Taken-for-granted assumptions, Institutional theory, Structuration Theory

Classification system and/or index terms (if any)

Supplementary bibliographical information

Language: English

ISSN and key title

ISBN: 978-91-7473-979-4

Recipient's notes

Number of pages: 304

Price

Security classification

Signature _____ Date 28/4 2014

Manager and Civil Servant

Exploring actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration

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School of Economics and Management, Dept. of Business Administration
ISBN 978-91-7473-979-4 (print)
ISBN 978-91-7473-980-0 (pdf)

Printed in Sweden by Media-Tryck, Lund University
Lund 2014

To Susanna, Mika, Dutt, and Elis

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Content

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Thank you!

Undertaking a project as large, as long, and as emotionally turbulent as a doctoral dissertation is, is not done without continuous support, trust and faith from others. My supervisors, Karin Jonnergård and Gert Paulsson, have been my strongest supporters and, as it turned out, my greatest and most fierce adversaries. They have read, scrutinised, and challenged every idea and text that I have presented them with, all the time with the purpose of making me, and the dissertation, better. For that, I owe them a great gratitude. Thank you!

Another gratitude is directed to Robert W. Scapens, who invited me to Manchester Business School for the duration of four months. During my time as a PhD-student in general, and visiting Manchester Business School specifically, Robert has readily engaged in numerous discussions ranging from theoretical to methodological issues. My deep appreciation for the concept "taken-for-granted assumptions" – which really is central in this dissertation – can readily be traced back to those discussions. Thank you!

During my time as a PhD-student I have been part of the Department of Business Administration at Lund University School of Economics and Management (LUSEM). I have been privileged to work alongside intelligent, insightful, and warm people who have all welcomed me into academia. Early on, Ulf Ramberg and Mikael Hellström gave me a chance by employing me as an assistant within The Council for Local Government Research and Education (KEFU). I can truly say that I consider this chance to be of pivotal character for me joining academia. My colleagues within the research project "Out of Many – One": Fredrik Andersson, Margareta Dackehag, Tomas Bergström, Stina Melander, Gert Paulsson, and Louise Bringselius. You did a great job in welcoming me: I am still here!

Anna Thomasson, Ulf Ramberg, Ola Mattisson, Hans Knutsson, Per Magnus Andersson, Niklas Sandell, Johan Dergård, Robert Wenglén, Magnus Nilsson, Peter Svensson, and Jon Bertilsson. Thank you for the lunches, coffees, and seminars; for the discussions, thoughts, and feedbacks; for making the everyday life within academia a brighter place.

Some colleagues have scrutinised the manuscript more than others. Mikael Hellström, Rolf G. Larsson, Kristina Artsberg, Elin K. Funk, Anders Anell, and Louise Bringselius; thank you for contributing with your insightful comments and advices at my internal seminars. I hope that I have remedied some of the inherent flaws within those earlier versions and done your advice justice in this (final) one. Sven Modell and Jodie Moll in Manchester, thank you for reading and commenting my (very) early theoretical drafts. It is better now, I promise.

Others have walked the same path that I am now finalising. Sandra Erntoft, Pia Nylinder, Jonas Fjertorp, Anna H. Glenngård, and Stephan Schaefer. Thank you for showing me that perseverance and persistence are virtues that pay off. I would furthermore like to give Alexander Paulsson special thanks, not only for being part of scrutinising my dissertation during the internal seminar in 2012 (and reading many of my other drafts), but more so for sharing this big project (you get the pun, right?) that writing a doctoral dissertation is. For our discussions, our anxieties, our hopes, and our continuous, never wavering, abuse of coffee (well, perhaps the abuse was more me than you): Thank you!

I would furthermore like to direct a thank you towards the organisations and economic institutions that have made this research possible. The Swedish Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan) for funding the research project "Out of Many – One", The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT) for funding my visit to Manchester Business School, and finally The Council for Local Government Research and Education (KEFU) who made the final empirical collection (the focus groups) possible.

To my mother and father, Margaretha and Lars Swenson: perhaps you don't remember, but growing up I proclaimed that academics were mainly sitting on their arses and thereby failing to provide anything substantial to society. You argued against me. I was wrong in everything except the sitting part. That was, and is, true. To my siblings, Jessica Swenson, Niclas Swenson, and Angelica Swenson, you can be whatever you want to be! To my grandparents Svea and Kurt Ottosson, for showing me the importance of meticulous accounting as well as defying injustice and questioning those in power.

The most important thing throughout this process has been the support, the love and understanding, and continuous belief from Susanna. You have never wavered. You have never lost faith. Not even when I did. Without you, this would not have been. This dissertation is dedicated to you and our children Mika, Dutt, and Elis. All tid, alltid!

Lastly, in the immortal words of Douglas Adams "So long, and thanks for all the fish"

1 Introduction

In Homer's epic poem The Odyssey, Ulysses comes sailing between what today is understood to be the Italian mainland and the island of Sicily. Approaching the narrow canal, he comes to face the horrors of Scylla and Charybdis. Charybdis was a sea monster living under a rock in the sea and Scylla, another sea monster, lived inside a larger rock. It happened to be that they were located so that either one of them would reach any ship that trying to get passed. In the choice between these two great evils, Ulysses chose to 'battle' Scylla, as this would potentially only render the death of a few in his crew, whereas the alternative would endanger the entire ship. Although the poem of Ulysses essentially portrays the choice between two evil things, I find it to be a rather illustrative analogy for the manner in which actors undertake administration within a public sector context. The careful navigation between different alternatives is inherent in all forms of administration, but becomes particularly accentuated in contemporary public administration.

Administration, in its most rudimentary form, refers to the process in which several people engage in activities all leading towards a common goal (cf. Simon, Thompson, & Smithburg, 2005 [1950], p. 3). This means that wherever at least two people engage in working together, through coordination and cooperation, there in essence exists a hint of administration. More commonly, however, administration refers to the process of leading and managing different organisations towards common goals. In this dissertation I focus on how such administration is undertaken within a public sector context: what I refer to as public administration. More specifically I embark on an exploration concerning how actors' taken-for-granted assumptions underpin certain dilemmas that I understand to be inherent in contemporary public administration, which actors' face.

Actors engaged in public administration are recursively situated in positions wherein certain choices have to be made. Indeed, this is not conceptually any different from how administration in general is understood. What makes the navigation more complex within a public administration context are the re-

strictions, demands, and expectations imposed through e.g. the state's legislation. The navigators – in this dissertation referred to those actors engaging in public administration – need to find an intermediary course in which all – or most – demands and expectations are met.

In this introductory chapter several things will be discussed in order to prepare the formulation of the research question that has guided as well my empirical queries as the subsequent analysis. I will begin with a discussion wherein I declare my understanding of what public administration entails. These understandings involve both the demands that we put on public administration as well as the different types of reforms we have undertaken. These reforms have come to change some of the underpinnings, which have previously been argued to guide actors within the public sector. Reforms directed towards public administration have given ground for dilemmas to become accentuated: dilemmas that actors have to make sense of in order to avoid complete and utter chaos.

The first two subsections in this chapter (Public administration and Dilemma(s) within public administration) are provided as a contextual basis. By this I mean that these two sections provide a framing of the problems I find prominent within contemporary public administration. In the following section (Administrating the Swedish Social Insurance) I make an empirical presentation, whereby I situate this dissertation. The section thereafter (Defining the research question) contains a delineation and problematisation concerning the accentuation of dilemmas within public administration. I thereafter (Demarcating and explicating the empirical focus) argue for why the chosen empirical case proved valuable for this dissertation. That section contains arguments regarding demarcations as well as elaborations of why the specific case proves important for understanding contemporary public administration. The purpose is then presented and discussed followed by a discussion about the research process and deployment of different methods used (Choice(s) of method). I conclude this chapter by discussing the further disposition of the dissertation.

1.1 Public administration

Defining the concept of 'public administration'[1] is both as easily done as it soon becomes complex. From one perspective, public administration is no different from the rudimentary forms of administration mentioned above. It entails a voyage in which several individuals need to cooperate and coordinate their efforts in a manner that brings them closer to their final destination. Within business administration we commonly refer to this as the process of achieving defined goals. In this section I will discuss what separates public administration from the generic form of administration mentioned above.

As public administration is situated within a public sector context, I will also discuss how politics becomes involved in the process. I will not elaborate these parts extensively since the main aim here is to present you with a contextual background for understanding what has come to happen to public administration since the end of the 1970's. I refer to this as reforms of public administration. Finally, this section contains a discussion of the demands that is directed towards public administration. These demands, discussed as the 'four E's', have come to change as different reforms have been directed toward public administration.

Understanding public administration, I argue, should begin in scrutinising the word 'public' in itself. It is when we add 'public' to 'administration' that our understanding from the generic concept alters. According to Simon et al. (2005 [1950], p. 7) public administration can be defined as:

---

[1] A caveat concerning the concept public administration is needed. The word administration is in many ways ambiguous. It may refer to the process of enabling cooperation towards a common goal as mentioned above. It may furthermore refer to the process in which citizens' applications are handled. In this dissertation, public administration refers to the first of these two meanings, implying a focus on the activities undertaken within public organisations in order to exert control. Some scholars prefer the concept public management for this purpose. I have chosen not to use this concept, as it may give rise to ambiguity both in reference to the connotation 'management' entails as well as create confusion in regards of discussing the occurrence of Management as a social system inherent in contemporary public administration (see chapter three). For all purposes, however, public administration should not be understood as conceptually different from the generic use of public management within a public sector context.

> […] the activities of the executive branches of national, state, and local governments; independent boards and commissions set up by Congress and state legislatures; government corporations; and certain other agencies of a specialized character.

Contextually, then, public administration is not merely about undertaking activities of coordination and cooperation, but should be understood specifically as situated within a public sector context. This may seem as a trivial point, but I argue that the specificities surrounding the public sector clearly demarcate the administrative activities. The public sector is in this dissertation understood to be different forms of organisations, all essentially taking their orders from the Government. By extension this means that public administration is intimately connected to the current political power.

Simon et al. (2005 [1950], p. 10) continue their description of public administration by demarcating it, further, from that administration generically discussed as inherent in the private for-profit sector. They argue that:

> […] the duties and responsibilities of the public administrator will usually be described by law in much greater detail than those of his private counterpart, and there will usually be greater possibilities for holding him accountable in the courts for the discharge of these duties in a lawful manner.

Undertaking public administration is not merely about actors being situated within public sector context. It is furthermore an important part of upholding the current legislation and, as such, being publically scrutinised for the activities that they undertake. Understanding public administration is therefore not only about encompassing generic understandings of organisation or the manner in which control can be exerted within it. Rather, it is understandings concerning the manner in which current legislation create restraints that actors need to consider on a daily basis as they engage in public administration. As such, actors engaged in public administration play a pivotal role in upholding the democratic welfare state as we have come to understand it.

The process of considering and adhering to the current legislation is commonly referred to as the rule-of-law (cf. Mohl, 1832–1833; Heckscher, 1958; Premfors, Ehn, Haldén, & Sundström, 2003; Boucher, 2005; Bohlin & Warnling-Nerep, 2007). It builds on the principle of *lex facit regem* (Eng: Law makes the King), which essentially presents the legislation with transcendent power rather than any one individual that happens to occupy the top of a societal hierarchy. Connecting public administration to this process means that citizens can expect to enjoy the privileges they are entitled to and predict what con-

sequences specific actions may carry. When public administration aligns with the current legislation it provides legitimacy to the Government as well as to the State (cf. Donnelly, 2006, p. 37) and infuses actors with characteristics such as impartiality, equity, (Bobbio, 1987, p. 149) and predictability (Bobbio, 1994, pp. 15-19).

The rule-of-law is furthermore an assurance that public administration follows the will of the people. Most western democracies are constituted on similar constructs (cf. Dahl, 2000), of which one of the more fundamental is that all public power essentially emanate from citizens through public and free elections. As citizens engage in these public and free elections, politicians are given a public trust to lead the Government. Public administration can therefore be understood to be the transformations of citizens' will through the constitutional form of representative democracy.

Public administration is about the transformation of political intentions into activities of public policy. As such, it concerns making political decisions into a viable reality that citizens are confronted with in their everyday lives. In this process, actors engaged in public administration need to acknowledge the legitimate power given to politicians, yet align their own behaviour with the legislation to uphold the rule-of-law.

The fact that actors engaged in public administration should recognise both the authority of the Government as well as that of the current legislation is not an entirely unproblematic issue. Politicians naturally want to be in power, especially when it comes to the manner in which their policy is transformed into public administrative activities. After all, it is politicians who are accountable for the policy that citizens face (cf. Cook, 1992, p. 408). John Ehrlichman, a leading figure within the Nixon administration is e.g. known for his saying "When we say jump, their only question should be 'How high?'" (as referred in Aberbach & Rockman, 1994, p. 466). 'Their' in this respect refers to the actors engaged in public administration. Politicians being accountable for their constituencies will inevitably strive towards increasing power over how public administration is undertaken.

Although the principle of *lex facit regem* is understood to be essential to public administration, politicians just like Ehrlichman above have continuously through history tried to restrict the discretionary freedom administrators enjoy. It is for this reason that academics continuously have argued for a distinct separation between politicians and public administrators. This separation is commonly referred to as the Wilson-Goodnow dichotomy, after academic interjections by Wilson (1887) and Goodnow (1900). In short, they argued that in or-

der to preserve the constitutional basis within public administration, partisan movements and political power needed to be removed. This separation, however, has not been entirely without complications (cf. Czarniawska, 1985; Cook, 1992; Hood, 2000; Aberbach & Rockman, 2006; Svara, 2006a, 2006b; Lundberg Rodin, 2010). The rise of bureaucratic autonomy has presented problems to public administration.

The principles of rule-of-law as well as the Wilson-Goodnow dichotomy both posit that public administration should primarily adhere to legislation. It is assumed that legislation stands without partisan character, as it essentially is based on the premises made legitimised through public and free elections together with democratic jurisdictive. But as power have been removed from political levels and redistributed to administrative levels, there have been instances where they have become self-directing (Kaufman, 1956, p. 1070): a tendency that became intensively questioned during the 1970's and 1980's.

During the Thatcher administration in the UK and the Reagan administration in the USA, the adequacy of public administration became a hot political issue. Both Thatcher and Reagan carried political motives for reducing the states' intervention in citizens' lives as well as minimizing the costs associated with large government. The self-directing properties (Kaufman, 1956, p. 1070) had during decades resulted in administration governing themselves, evolving into rigid red-tape bureaucracies, with increasing costs and an inability to keep with the tasks demanded by Governments. At least this was the political rhetoric used at the time. It was argued that the rapidly changing environments in which the public sector was a part needed changes towards a "flexible and adaptable" (cf. Osborne & Gaebler, 1992, p. 15) public sector, essentially challenging the inadequacies of the bureaucratic order (cf. Dunn & Miller, 2007).

1.1.1 Reforming public administration

Following the criticism directed towards public administration during the 1970's and 1980's, several quite pivoting reforms were engaged in order to come to terms with the perceived inadequacies. In this section I will present some of these reforms. Although this dissertation is not primarily about reforms, they come to form an important backdrop for understanding the dilemma actors come to face in contemporary public sectors.

Discussing reforms of public administration during the 1970's onward is somewhat problematic. A multitude of labels have been used in an attempt of capturing the characteristics of them. Some examples are New Public Manage-

ment (Hood, 1991, 1995) Managerialism (Aucoin, 1988; Pollitt, 1993), New Managerialism (Deem, 1998; Gewirtz & Ball, 2000; Deem & Brehony, 2005; Brodkin, 2011), Entrepreneurial Government (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992), and Market-Based Public Administration (Lan & Rosenbloom, 1992). Together, however, they focus on the reforms directed towards public administration and attempts to capture what has come to happen. They furthermore, by labelling the way that they have, highlight the move from one conceptual position to another. This other position is the previous state, or manner, in which public administration was undertaken. It has e.g. been labelled as Old Public Administration (Riccucci, 2001; Osborne, 2006, 2010) or Traditional Public Administration (Lynn, 2001).

To add complexity to the feat of discussing such reforms, they are themselves quite diverse. Scrutinising what have been done, how it has been done, and where it have been done, one soon realises that there is no such thing as a globally recognised model for reforming public administration (Cheung, 1997, p. 439; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011, p. 11). From this perspective it is quite hard to acknowledge all reforms as existing within label. In trying to give a reasonable description of what public administration reforms have come to entail, I will make use of categorisations instead.

Engaging in discussions surrounding public administration reforms by identifying characteristics and categorising them has been done by others. Two categorisations that have been fruitfully used are those of Hard versus Soft reforms (Trow, 1993; as referred to by Deem, 1998, p. 53; see also Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011, p. 11) or Administrative versus Ideological reforms (cf. Deem & Brehony, 2005). I draw on these studies when advocating a slightly different labelling. I find it useful to distinguish between what is happening within public sector organisations and that which affects the environment wherein they exist. For this reason I will discuss reforms from (1) an organisational and (2) a societal perspective. The separation into these two categories is not to be understood as mutually exclusive, but more as a way of understanding these reforms.

Organisational reforms refer to such changes that have been implemented with an aim of changing how public administration can be undertaken within organisations. In part, it entails reforms that are put in place in order to increase the discretionary freedom actors engaged in public administration enjoy (Pollitt, 1993; Hood, 2000; Pollitt, 2000; Lapsley, 2008, 2009). Techniques for coming to terms with the inefficiency and inadequacy inherent in public administration thwarted by introducing new techniques for conducting activities (cf. Chow, Humphrey, & Miller, 2005; Ter Bogt, Budding, Groot, & Van

Helden, 2010). Such techniques have been observed to be e.g. accrual accounting (Carlin, 2005; Paulsson, 2006; Lapsley, Mussari, & Paulsson, 2009), contract management (Bryntse, 2000), and use of profit centres (Hellström, 2002).

Actors primarily being conceived as professional managers (Hood, 1991, p. 4) have been found to replace those previously defined as stewards or civil servant. Perceptions regarding the specificities inherent in public administration have been replaced with generic knowledge concerning management[2]. It has been argued that the use of external business consultants have been a driving power for such reforms (cf. Saint-Martin, 1998; Lapsley & Oldfield, 2001).

It has furthermore been observed that public administration has been subjected to an increased use of standardisations and measurement (Llewellyn, 1993, 1998; Llewellyn & Northcott, 2005). These have been found to increase predictability and controllability within municipality contexts (Westrup, 2000, 2002) as well as within central government contexts (Andersson et al., 2011, 2012; Karlsson, 2012). Interrelated with the increased use of standardisations and measurement, it has also been found that the focus of public administration have shifted from how things are done – behaviour control – to what is being produced – output control – (Hood, 1995). Ends have come to play a more intricate role than the means by which they are achieved (cf. Brodkin, 2011). Evaluations of whether things are getting done have come to be based primarily on performance measurement (Hood, 1991; Lapsley, 2008) leading to increased administrative efficiency (Pollitt, 2000; Johnsen, 2005).

Whereas reforms here characterised as organisational primarily have had internal issues as their main target, several additional reforms have been implemented from an ideological stance. These are reforms that I characterise as societal, since their main aim has been to change the public sector in large. These reforms have come to affect the manner in which actors' perceptions (Brignall & Modell, 2000; Lapsley, 2008) and choice of words and expressions (Sinclair, 1995; Gewirtz & Ball, 2000; Agevall, 2005; Hartley, 2006) have come to change.

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[2] In this dissertation you will notice that I separate between management and Management. The prior refers to a generic instance of handling (managing) e.g. organisations. The latter (Management) refers to the social system containing certain taken-for-granted assumptions concerning public administration. The same reasoning follows the separation between civil service and Civil Service, wherein civil service refers to a generic position or activity undertaken within the public sector.

During the early 1990's, Osborne and Gaebler (1992) published their seminal book "Reinventing Government" wherein they argued that the public sector needed to be 'entrepreneurial' in order to become more efficient. One manner in which this came to manifest within the public sector was through the breakdown and commercialisation of the public sector. It has been argued (cf. Megginson & Netter, 2001, p. 423) that the Thatcher Government during the 1980's lead the wave of privatisations in the United Kingdom. Competition was introduced as means of further increasing this state of entrepreneurialism within the public sector.

Similar reforms have been noticeable in other welfare states than that of the UK. Adjacent to exposing the public sector to competition, we find shifts of referring to citizens as customers (Potter, 1988; Walsh, 1991; Fountain, 2001; Modell, 2005; Alford & Speed, 2006; Modell & Wiesel, 2008) and the continuous emergence of different hybrid organisations (Thomasson, 2009a, 2009b; Grossi & Thomasson, 2011).

The reforms discussed in this section have come to challenge previously dominant perspectives on how public administration within the public sector is to be conducted. It has been argued that there is an on-going economification[3] (Lundquist, 1997, 1998, 1999) within the public sector, essentially supported by neoliberal ideologies and new institutional economic theory such as e.g. rational choice theory, public choice theory, and principal-agency theory (cf. Peters, 1999, p. 43; Agevall, 2005, pp. 81-83). Taken together, they have come to affect the demands and expectation exerted upon public administration.

In the next section I will elaborate on this expectation in the form of the four E's of public administration.

1.1.2 The four E's of public administration

Actors engaged in public administration are subjected to a large and continuous number of expectations and demands. I have already hinted that the reforms discussed above have come to change the manner in which these are exerted. It

[3] In Swedish he uses the words "ekonomifiering" (economoficiation) or "ekonomism" (economism). I use the word 'economification' as descriptive for the trend associated with these two words.

can be argued that public administration should be conducted swiftly, with high levels of quality and without letting the price tag end up too high. In this section I will continue that line of reasoning by discussing the demands in the form of four E's.

I have already stated that one of the main things that separate public administration from administration within private for-profit sector is the requirement of adhering to current legislation. But there are other demands that are commonly expected from public administration. These are referred to as the four E's: Efficiency, Effectiveness, Equity, and Economy (cf. Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Efficiency is in general held as doing thing right, whereas effectiveness concerns doing the right things. Another way of understanding the difference between the two concepts is by interpreting efficiency as focusing on internal issues and effectiveness as focusing on external issues (cf. Modell & Grönlund, 2006).

Within a public administrative context, efficiency concerns the way in which administration is conducted. Increased efficiency from this perspective can be obtained in a number of different ways (Simon, 1997 [1945] e.g. discusses four different ways of increasing efficiency within administration), but simplified it is about maximising the interval between input and output. Effectiveness, doing the right things, from a public administrative context is about whether citizens receive the intended welfare. Factors affecting effectiveness are harder to identify, leading to problems of quantifying and evaluating changes. Efficiency and effectiveness are connected, but essentially autonomous. This means that we can find public sectors that show high levels of efficiency but low levels of effectiveness.

The other two demands on public administration concerns equity and economy. Equity is about treating citizens and their applications in a fair manner. An assumption regarding equity is the alignment of administrative behaviour with current legislation. More than that, equity also entails ideas about treating people equally, irrespective of sex, age, or national or cultural ethnicity. Demands of economy, on the other hand, are about public administration assuming a careful use of public funds. The resources that are put into the public sector are commonly done so through the obligatory taxation of its citizens. Due to the general scheme of restricted resources and the fact that these resources belong to the public, actors engaged in public administration are expected to heed this by accepting a parsimonious stance.

Even though this conceptual separation is possible it has been argued that the four different values have come to conjoined into two distinct sets (cf. Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). In these sets efficiency have become associated pri-

marily with economy, whereas effectiveness is associated with equity. One implication of this is that instances of increasing efficiency have come to be associated primarily with reducing costs. Although we can imagine situations wherein increased efficiency is achieved by essentially increasing input – and expecting an even greater increase in output – instance of parsimonious attitudes required within public administration come to functions as a disincentive for such progression. The other set, effectiveness/equity have come to be understood rather simplistically as instances of adhering to the rule-of-law. This means that rather than understanding effectiveness as delivering a certain welfare service, it has become associated with rigid following of current legislation.

In addition to the aggregation of the four E's into two distinct sets, there have also been shifts in the balance between them. The reforms that I have discussed above have primarily been directed towards the efficiency and economy set, whereas effectiveness and equity has been assumed stable. Since the efficiency and economy set is more easily translated into quantifiable – and thus commensurable – measures, focus have been kept on trying to achieve improvements here. The same is not true about the set of effectiveness and equity, where specifying quantifiable measures is dubious. Indeed, Stewart (2009, p. 81), in discussing the increased focus on efficiency from a mere cost perspective, argues that:

> Managers with their eye on the 'bottom line' are understandably preoccupied with costs. Costs are easier to control than are revenues, which for many public organisations are set by factors beyond their control.

Following the proverb 'what gets measured gets done' in this respect have caused instances wherein the set of efficiency and economy have come in the foreground due to its measurability and, thus, commensurability. Although it is likely that actors engaged in public administration recognises the importance within the set of effectiveness and equity, resource allocations and reform programs directed primarily towards efficiency and economy changes the scales. Instances of equity and effectiveness have to some extent been exchanged by efficiency and economy (cf. Pollitt, 2011 [2003], p. 16). This economification of the public sector has accentuated a presence of dilemmas within public administration.

1.2 Dilemma(s) within public administration

I have so far discussed public administration, how it has been subjected to different reforms during the 1970's onward, and the demands and expectations in form of four E's. In this section I will introduce yet another concept: the concept of dilemma. I have already hinted that dilemma can be understood to be the outcome of an economification of the public sector, but I will linger on this statement a bit longer and focus on the concept of dilemma. I will also argue that the reforms discussed above have come to challenge established beliefs and understandings surrounding public administration.

A dilemma in this dissertation is understood to be a situation in which an actor is faced with a choice between at least two different alternatives. The process of choice requires the rejection of one to favour another. This means that there is something at stake as the dilemma comes into play. The dilemma, however, should not be understood to be merely the choice in itself, but rather the prominent process of a priori deliberation that precedes the choice itself. I will begin with a quick delineation of conflict, as this concept is commonly associated with dilemma – although fallaciously so – why I find it helps to further our understanding.

The difference between the concepts of conflict and dilemma is perhaps best understood by making analogies of clarity versus obscurity. Whenever actors perceive a conflict to be present it is common that they are clear on what that conflict entails. The relative opposition of the alternatives are readily available to the actor and it is clear whether they are inherently good or bad. Lundquist (1991, p. 37) discusses this difference in relation to ethics. He argues that an ethical conflict occurs when actors are conscious of the positive and negative alternatives, and where there is a prevalent a priori deliberation between the two alternatives. When a public employee is offered a 'gift' in exchange of approving an application for constructing a new building – what we commonly refer to as a bribe –, it is clear that there exists a conflict. In this case, the conflict is between not accepting the gift (good) versus accepting the gift in reciprocity for approving the application (bad).

Dilemmas however, entail obscured alternatives. Not in the manner that actors cannot identify them, but rather in that the consequence of the alternatives are not as polarised as when it comes to conflict (cf. Lundquist, 1991, p. 37). One cannot say that alternative A is good whereas B is bad. They may both be good or bad but a choice between them has to be made, inevitably ending in a rejection of the other. Imagine the example above, about approving an appli-

cation for a building. Imagine that the actors' approval enables new jobs to be created in a region that badly needs it, but whereas rejecting the application might protect a sensitive environment with endangered wildlife. Neither of the two alternatives can be deemed as only good or bad. There are obviously pros and cons inherent in each alternative, and a careful a priori deliberation needs to be undertaken by the actor prior to choosing. In this case, the actor is faced with a dilemma. The concept of dilemma is thus understood be much more inclusive than as compared to conflict. Agevall and Jenner (2008, p. 99) discuss this topic and argue that:

> Ett dilemma utmärks av att det finns två hänsyn som står i motsättning till varandra och det inte är helt givet vilket som är det bästa valet.
>
> A dilemma is characterised by the existence of two considerations that are in contradiction with each other and where it is not completely given which one is the best choice. (Author's translation)

The concept of dilemma can furthermore be expanded so that it comes to include tensions inherent in the roles actors' enact within public administration. One example of where such a dilemma can occur within public administration is the demand for actors to be loyal to fellow citizens, the legislation, as well as demonstrate obedience to their superiors (Lundquist, 1991, p. 37; 1998 chapter four). It is perfectly conceivable that in some occasions, the individual actor experiences a dilemma between adhering to these three different positions.

Dilemma has furthermore been discussed within the professions literature. Herein, the dilemmas concern the discretion of professionals to cater for citizens and furthermore to adhere to the restrictions imposed from e.g. the organisation in which they are employed (Jonnergård, Funck, & Wolmesjö, 2008). In such instances professional behaviour come to contrast e.g. bureaucratic regulations (Lipsky, 2010 [1980]) so that actors become torn between different expectations, instigating a dilemma between different roles. Such dilemmas have been found among e.g. the police (cf. Agevall & Jenner, 2006, 2007), school teachers (cf. Agevall & Jenner, 2008), and the medical profession (Östergren & Sahlin-Andersson, 1998; Kurunmäki, 2004; Östergren, 2009). In these studies, actors have been found to face dilemmas between preserving their professional discretion at the one hand and abide to the imposed restrictions on the other.

Dilemma can also be understood on more abstract levels. One such dilemma is that which occurs when current beliefs and practices come to be questioned. This requires us to take a social constructions perspective. Understand-

ings of our reality are essentially social constructions. We believe in things, we express those beliefs, and after some time perceive that which used to be our beliefs as objective truths in the world (cf. Berger & Luckman, 1967). Sometimes, however, we are faced with 'truths' that does not fit well: either with the truths that we already hold dear, or the manner in which we do things. In that intersection, as our current beliefs and practices meet new beliefs and practices, dilemmas are accentuated. Poulsen (2009, p. 121) states that:

> Dilemmas occur when a new idea conflicts with existing beliefs and practices, and thereby require the individual to reconsider these existing beliefs and associated traditions.

Understanding that different roles may carry different underpinning rationales, it is important to consider the impact of challengers to current practices. In this dissertation, the reforms of public administration are understood as such challengers and the underpinning rationales as differing social systems (a matter that I will elaborate on in chapter two and three). It should be duly noted, that such challenges are not understood solely in a negative manner. On the contrary, new practices force actors to question the appropriateness of their current behaviours. Poulsen (2009, p. 121) continues:

> Dilemmas are what force individuals to react to, and consider, how new ideas fit with old ones and how both new and old ideas should be moderated and interpreted in order for them to merge. Thus, it is through the occurrence of dilemmas that actors constantly transforms (sic!) and reinvents (sic!) existing traditions.

As actors face these new beliefs and practices, they also encounter different social systems within contemporary public administration. I agree with Poulsen above and argue that dilemmas force actors to question the validity of their current understandings and even that dilemma opens up for social progression to occur.

The reforms directed towards public administration can be interpreted as new practices that have come to challenge already existing practices. Lundquist (1997, 1998, 1999) have argued that neoliberal policymaking has come to support an economification of public administration. He argues that whereas the public sector – and thus public administration – needs to incorporate as well democratic as economic values, the economification inherent in reforms have shifted the balance. This shift has come to reduce democracy as part of admin-

istration, potentially risking the legitimacy and validity of the welfare state, as we know it.

This is similar to what I have previously discussed concerning the conjoined sets of E's. On their own, the four E's serve as a basis for actors' perception of dilemma within public administration. Whereas it may be hard enough to meet the standards of any one of the four E's, combining them is quite the challenge. What makes the dilemma especially interesting in the context of this dissertation is the proliferation of efficiency and economy.

As instances of efficiency and economy have gained proportionally greater focus as compared to effectiveness and equity, actors engaged in public administration have been faced with a dilemma. As measurement and subsequent evaluations have turned focus away from effectiveness and equity towards the set of efficiency and economy, new sets of practices have come to emerge within public administration (cf. Brodkin, 2011). These practices are underpinned by essentially different assumptions, leading to dilemmas occurring in the intersection between the different forms.

From the perspective I take in this dissertation, it may well be the case that dilemma is an on-going phenomenon actually entailing balancing and combining different dilemmatic positions: and, more importantly, making sense[4] of such situations. As I approach public administration in the wake organisational- and societal reforms, dilemma seems to be an ever-pressing concern. Social systems have come to change as reforms have been rolled out within the public sector. Efficiency and economy meet effectiveness and equity, economy meets democracy, and management meets civil service. In this dissertation, I argue that an exploration of taken-for-granted assumptions may prove fruitful in understanding contemporary public administration.

[4] It should be noted that I make use of the concept 'making sense' in a generic manner. That means that I understand it to be a general process of engaging in understanding something otherwise mindboggling. As such, it does not relate to the concepts of sensemaking as progressed by organisational theorist Karl Weick on the one hand nor by sociologists Erving Goffman or Harold Garfinkel on the other hand.

1.3 Administrating the Swedish Social Insurance

I have so far discussed and elaborated my understandings concerning public administration as it is exerted within a public sector context. I argued that inherent in public administration is the expectation, indeed requirement, concerning the fulfilment of the four E's. Dilemma was thereafter added as a concept, by which the expectations and requirements can be understood to cause friction at an actor level. Dilemma from this view is understood as accentuated through the proliferation of efficiency and economy as superior within public administration. Before I problematize this further and elaborate the research question, I will present an empirical context wherein this dissertation is situated: the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (SSIA).

The Swedish Social Insurance is a highly important part of the general welfare the Government provides its citizens with. The characteristic of the Social Insurance has been described as:

> […] politiskt beslutad, obligatorisk för alla och omfördelande mellan riskgrupper. (Riksförsäkringsverket, 1999, p. 22)
>
> […] politically decided, compulsory for all and redistribution between risk groups. (Author's translation)

In this section I will give a historical overview as well as present some of the pivoting reforms undertaken during the early 21st century.

The Social Insurance as inherent part of our general welfare began with small groups forming exclusive membership with the intent of protecting them against unforeseen events such as unemployment or sickness: this tradition have roots that stretch back as far as to the Middle Ages. Our understanding of contemporary social insurances, however, stem from the 18th century. During this time the Social Insurance administrated e.g. the church or in some cases temperance societies and not – as is the case today – the Government. Funds were started and membership could be attained through a fee. This fee guaranteed reimbursement if or when they were made redundant (Försäkringskassan, 2011, p. 4). The demand for a modern and inclusive, social insurance began as Sweden became more and more industrialised during the mid 19th century (Riksförsäkringsverket, 1999; Försäkringskassan, 2011). As people became employed by industries, and to a large extent urban rather than rural, the previous solution of relying on family or the church became inadequate. In other words, the quickly expanding urban society simply could not ensure that individuals

were taken care of in a desirable manner. The first local funds – the beginning of what today is the SSIA – begun during the late 19th century.

It should, however, last until the 1960's until the name "Försäkringskassa" (eng: Social Insurance Office) was first implemented. It was at this time that the duty of assuring citizens a social insurance was assumed by the Government (Försäkringskassan, 2011, p. 6). Although the Government assumed the duty, the actual task of administrating the Social Insurance was decentralised into 21 regionally located offices. Each regional office enjoyed autonomy e.g. through the freedom of putting resources to use as they saw fit.

In 2005 it was decided that the Swedish Social Insurance should be administered by a new central government agency. This new agency, was a construction wherein 21, regionally located, insurance offices were merged with the governing body the National Social Insurance Board (Sw: Riksförsäkringsverket, here abbreviated as NSIB). The change was a response to an ever growing critique against the public administration's inability to uphold equity in their decisions making (cf. Riksförsäkringsverket, 2001, p. 1) and can be understood as the effect of several governmental reports (SOU 1996:64; SOU 2003:57; SOU 2003:69; SOU 2003:106; SOU 2004:127; Riksförsäkringsverket, 2001) and political propositions (cf. Regeringen, 2004a) concerning the administration of the Social Insurance.

A second factor for change was the fact that the social administration had become a political tool with which early retirements was continuously used, leading to unsustainable levels of citizens (cf. Hetzler, 2009, pp. 16-21; Andersson et al., 2012). Early retirements was perceived as a viable solution for handling the growing queues within the Social Insurance system: e.g. by the end of 2002 over 488 000 – from a total population of barely 9.5 million – citizens was granted early retirement (Regeringen, pp. 14-15). During the period between 1995 to 2004 the amount of expenses for Health Insurance had increased from 25.3 billion SEK to staggering 108.3 billion SEK[5] (Hetzler, 2009, p. 16).

In chapter four, I engage in a fuller exploration of the organisational reforms undertaken during the period between 2005 up until 2010. For this reason, I will not elaborate this part here. What is of interest in at this point, however, is the increased focus of delivering results, which was imposed on the new

[5] The increase equates to approximately 2.7 billion EUR in 1995 to 11.55 billion EUR in 2004.

agency. They where demanded to deliver good results – measured and evaluated quantitatively – but essentially received lesser resources to do it (cf. Andersson et al., 2011, 2012). The Swedish Agency for Public Management have remarked on this topic that:

> Vårt intryck är att resultatfokuseringen drivits ännu hårdare under år 2006 och att det främst är olika mål kopplade till handläggningstider och antal avstämningsmöten som är föremål för ökad styrning. Signalerna om rättssäkerhet har inte uppfattats som lika tydliga av handläggare och chefer. Detta framkommer i de intervjuer vi genomfört. (Statskontoret, p. 77)

> Our impression is that the focus of performance was pushed even harder in 2006 and that it is primarily different targets linked to the speed of administrating beneficiary claims and beneficiary meetings that are subject to greater control. Administrators and managers certainly have not perceived the signals of rule-of-law to be equally clear. This is evident in the interviews we conducted. (Author's translation)

A driving force within most of these reforms was the assistance given from external business consultants (cf. Statskontoret, p. 37; Pauloff & Quist, 2010, p. 14). They came to have tremendous impact in e.g. the manner in which citizens came to be defined as customers, and the labelling of activities within the agency. The language came to shift during this time, to fit more generic approaches to administration. What we commonly understand to be 'business talk'.

Although this is a rather thin description concerning the reforms of administrating the Swedish Social Insurance, it is suggestive of dilemmas being prominent. The accentuation of quantitative measurements together with a focus on delivering results came to instigate instances of efficiency and economy discussed above. The change of language is furthermore indicative of challenging social systems, arguably affecting taken-for-granted assumptions and situated practice among actors within the agency.

In the next section I will progress the research question, which entails the notion of dilemmas within public administration and the need for actors to make sense of them.

1.4 Defining the research question

So far I have discussed the presence of dilemmas within public administration. These dilemmas can be understood to stem from the expectation and requirements we pose on actors engaged in such activities incorporated in public administration. In this section I will discuss and problematize the occurrence of dilemmas within public administration. The section is finalised with a specification of the research question, which has guided me in this dissertation.

1.4.1 Economification of the public sector

In the previous section I argued that actors engaged in public administration are expected to have a conduct that adheres to the four E's. According to this perspective we, the people, expect employees within the Government to be efficient (making the things right) and effective (making the right things) at the same time. In addition we expect that these two instances be followed by a conduct that aligns equity (everyone is equal and get a fair treatment) with economy (the parsimonious aptitude with public resources).

From this perspective, actors engaged in public administration may experience friction between the different sets. It may be hard to achieve high levels of efficiency at the same time as citizens get what they deserve (effectiveness and equity). By adding the fourth E, economy, resources become an intricate part of the puzzle, the navigation, which actors engaged in public administration face. Adding to this complexity, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) assert that in the wake of reforms directed towards public administration (which I have discussed above), the four E's have become conjoined into two distinct sets: efficiency/economy on the one hand and effectiveness/equity on the other.

Although the conjoining of the four E's into two sets may seem as a reduction of complexity, it has actually added tensions to the dilemma which actors engaged in public administration face. As economy and efficiency have come to be conjoined it has seriously affected the proliferation of the set. As resources are, for good reasons, limited, increase in efficiency becomes interpreted as an instance of scrutinizing costs. It does not necessarily equate to a general reduction of resources, but it does imply that there is an intention of increasing output given a stable level of input.

The alternative set of E's – effectiveness and equity – has come to be understood as a manner of providing the service that citizens deserve through an engagement that coincides with the constitutional statutory. There are at least two problems emerging as these instances have come to conjoin. Firstly, as equity has become conjoined with effectiveness it is to a smaller degree associated with efficiency. By this I mean that increasing equity through e.g. more adherences to the rule-of-law may be understood as counterproductive to increasing efficiency through limitation of available resources. Secondly, as effectiveness and equity has been conjoined they form a polarisation with efficiency and economy, furthering the incompatibility between them. In other words, efficiency and economy comes to be understood as in opposition of effectiveness and equity, when they really should be taken in together.

The continuous balancing that actors engaged in public administration has to undertake in regards of the four E's have been discussed by to Lundquist (1997, 1998, 1999) as well. Although he uses slightly different terminology – values of democracy versus values of economy – he advocates that actors engaged in public administration should adhere to both these seemingly different stances. As these stances to some extent come to oppose one another, it is up to the actor engaged in public administration to deliberate on the choice s/he is to make.

In addition to this point about balancing difference values, Lundquist have argued (1997, 1998, 1999) that reforms directed towards public administration have caused a shift in the assumed balance between the values. I have above described this as an economification of the public sector, wherein economics has rendered control. This means that instances of economic rationalisation have taken over so that, from his opinion, democracy has been left behind.

Although the revealed picture here is quite grim, it is inherent in the reforms directed towards public administration. One of the driving factors, which I touched upon in the first section of this chapter, was that public administration operationalized in the bureaucracy had become slow and non-responsive. Citizens did not receive the benefits they were entitled and the costs of this – fallacious deliverance – were deemed unacceptable. Together with the neoliberal policy gaining dominance on the global scene, reforms can be understood to have had an economification purpose. At least in so far that we understand the set of efficiency and economy to equate to this trend of economification.

The instance of economification has been nourished within the public sector through the intensification of quantifiable and commensurable measurements regarding public administration. Levels of outputs, resources, and performances are all indicative of this on-going trend of evaluating the on-going

behaviour within public administration. Following the popular proverb 'what gets measured gets done', a reasonable inference to make would be that if actors engaged in public administration are continuously measured and evaluated on instances that accentuate the efficiency/economy set, it is these activities that gets done.

The logical implication would thus, of course, be that if something is measured and hence evaluated, that which is not included in the measurement becomes disregarded. The proliferation of efficiency and economy has gained strength and dominance partly due to the fact that they can be transformed into quantifiable targets: for instances of effectiveness and equity, such a transformation are problematic and require quite elaborate evaluative schemes. I am not denying that such efforts are not, or have not, being made. What I am arguing is that the problems of transforming effectiveness and equity into easily quantifiable and evaluative targets, actors engaged in public administration perceive these instances as less important.

In a study of social workers in the USA, Brodkin (2011) noticed that as performance measurement and benchmarks were introduced and became a part of the evaluative scheme, behaviour among the social workers inevitably changed. Brodkin concluded that actors engaged in public administration do not merely respond to such changes, the come to inherently align behaviour with them. This means that as efficiency and economy becomes proliferated through quantification and evaluation, it is highly likely that actors engaged in public administration will take notice and align their behaviour.

Although the validity of the concept economification can be questioned I find it useful as it embodies some of the effects that reforms directed towards the public sector has had. As efficiency and economy have become focused upon within public administration – partly because of their quantifiable character – the assumed balance between all four E's has come to shift. Actors engaged in public administration today may be expected to fulfil all four E's, but the messages that are received by actors reaffirm the perceived imbalance. Actors come to face a dilemma as this imbalance is accentuated.

1.4.2 Dilemmatic positions within public administration

The dilemmatic position that actors engaged in public administration face can to some extent be said to stem in the separation of the four E's. As I have argued above, actors are expected to consider all four E's in every instance regard-

ing public administration. However, the maximisation of all four E's are unlikely, at least from an empirical perspective (cf. Strömberg, 2006, p. 154). From an empirical stance, we may find a priori deliberations concerning pros and cons in every decision, ending up in actors making compromises (Heckscher, 1958, p. 53). If efficiency is enforced by reduction of imposed rules, the trade-off always jeopardises citizens' rights (cf. Frederickson, 1999, p. 303). Although the four E's by themselves pose a challenge for actors engaged in public administration, the dilemmatic positions can be further qualified.

Analyses concerning states' susceptibility and acceptability for the previously discussed reforms have sometimes been undertaken from the backdrop of differing constitutional context: the Rechtsstaat and a Public Interest (cf. Pierre, 1995; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). According to such a perspective, different states have enforced behaviours and constitutions that have either safeguarded the continental tradition of rigidity in terms of following legislation or as an alternative the Anglo-Saxon tradition of flexibility by seeking the best solution for citizens. I will not engage in a discussion concerning the merits and flaws of these traditions – as it lies outside the scope of this dissertation – but rather posit the two traditions as partly explanatory of why reforms in Sweden have come to endorse the coexistence of several different rationales concerning public administration.

From the backdrop of the two constitutional traditions, Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011, p. 63) discusses comparisons between nations in Scandinavia. They argued that Swedish tradition – in the context of public administration – had "as much to do with satisfying the demands for 'coordination', 'partnership', 'responsiveness', and 'leadership' as with a strict application of law". They concluded that rather than finding evidence for the dominance of one single tradition, the Swedish context entailed customs based in the Rechtsstaat as well as Public Interest.

By extension, this means that traditions have become mixed over time (cf. Loughlin & Peters, 1997, p. 46; Rhodes, 1999), enabling new manners concerning how activities inherent in public administration become rationalised by government and actors. Instances of e.g. increasing privatisations have by tradition been frowned upon within the predominantly social democratic Sweden. But the 'choice revolution' (Blomqvist, 2004) during the 1980's and 1990's brought Sweden closer to liberal directions as those noticeable within the Anglo-Saxon countries (cf. Wolfe, 1989; as referenced in Blomqvist, 2004). There are at least two important implications associated with the mixed tradition from a Swedish context.

Firstly, the observation of the mixed traditions presents us with an opportunity for understanding why such reforms as discussed above have been successfully implemented within public administration. From this perspective, the gradual change into a mixed tradition have paved the way for implementation of reforms that would have been readily rejected only 20 years earlier (e.g. the choice revolutions). Increasing performance measurement as an evaluative scheme is another example that would have been hard to implement in a tradition primarily focusing of abiding to legislation. As performance is highly associated with quantifiable targets, it fits well with the proliferation of efficiency and economy.

Secondly, the mixed tradition provides a basis for multiple social systems to coexist. As I have discussed previously, a majority of the reforms undertaken during and after the Thatcher and Reagan administrations have been based on ideas of increasing efficiency and minimizing Governments' intervention in citizens' lives. One of the motivations here is that the Government should provide a welfare that is good enough; so that citizens can be protected but not so large that it becomes autonomous. This is essentially different from more legalistically characterised states, wherein the states' intervention is argued to be for the good of the citizens. As I have already argued, this dissertation is not about these differences as such, but the observation provides a basis for understanding how differing social systems can come to be intricate parts of a constitution. Within a Swedish context, the observation of mixed traditions provides a basis for accepting reforms that primarily work towards the economification of the public sector as well as reforms that increases the Government's opportunities for intervention in ordinary citizens' lives.

It seems as if Sweden provides a basis for what Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011, p. 120) describes as a nation with a vision of "[t]rust us, we can modernize and become both efficient and citizen-friendly […]". The gradual change – perhaps due to such reforms as I discussed in chapter one – of constitutional traditions have presented lenience for supporting different forms of underpinning rationalisations. Reforms have been accepted partly because the constitutional contexts have become mixed, opening up for the emergence of different social systems providing sense to public administration.

Although the mixed traditions have provided the Swedish context with an opportunity to thread a balance between the different polarisations, it has also provided a basis for increased dilemmatic positions. I have above described the dilemma between adhering to the four E's as such a dilemmatic position. On a more abstract level, this dilemma resides in the existence of differing social sys-

tems for why actors should adhere to the difference E's. The tools and mechanisms that have been intricate parts within what I have here referred to as organisational reforms, was traditionally found within the private for-profit sector. The shifting focus towards quantification and evaluation in retrospect are techniques that we commonly attribute to the private sector.

More so, we have come to associate these techniques as inherent in management. Management as such is understood as a generic term for governing or controlling organisations: not unlike the manner in which I have previously described our generic understandings of administration. In the context of the public sector and the reforms directed towards public administration, however, management has gained additional associations. These associations bring our thoughts to the manner in which organising and control are undertaken within the private for-profit sector. It is strongly associated with a strict separation between those who direct and those who do (cf. Ostroff & Douglas, 1992; Taylor, 1998 [1911]; Ostroff, 1999) and has come to represent the accentuation of efficiency and economy within public administration.

There are numerous techniques that associate with such managerial approaches (I will not spend time in this section to elaborate them as I make such a discussion in chapter three where I elaborate characteristics of Management as an alternative to Civil Service) and they have readily been legitimised ways of conducting public administration (cf. Hofstede, 1981; Hood, 1991). They are perceived to be vital parts of achieving goals that citizens as well as politicians demand from public administration. The implication of these adaptions, however, is that they draw from inherently different underpinnings as compared to our previous understandings (cf. Hood, 2000). By this I mean that the imposition of management within public administration has come to pose an alternative foundation for how activities are perceived by actors.

In this dissertation, I understand the imposition of management to be highly associated with the economification of the public sector as Lundquist (1997, 1998, 1999) discusses it. It is understood as a general trend towards focusing on quantification and measurability, shifting focus away from the how things are done towards how much that done: a shift away from focusing on means towards focusing on ends. Actors have come to align rather than respond (cf. Brodkin, 2011) to the social systems inherent in this economification, meaning that the proliferation of efficiency and economy have been supported from within. As these social systems become internalised by actors – what I have mentioned to be actors' alignment above – new assumptions concerning the manner in which public administration should be conducted are formed. By understanding the underpinnings inherent in these – new – trends as contain-

ing different assumptions concerning public administration, it can be posited as a contrast to what was perceived to be prominent previously. That is, through an economification of the public sector and an imposition of management in public administration, assumptions previously found within a private for-profit sector are now firmly situated within the public sector.

Taken-for-granted assumptions, as I use the concept, are understood to be actors' social dispositions from which meanings can be constructed. Enacted unconsciously, taken-for-granted assumptions form a continuous patterning of situated practice. These situated practices are understood as a behavioural alignment with social systems, which dominate a given context (the concepts is further elaborated in chapter two). This means that as actors align behaviour with new social systems, we may observe how different situated practices emerge.

Different contexts require actors to construct different taken-for-granted assumptions in order to make sense of emerging contexts. In chapters two and three I qualify this as the existence of multiple social systems inherent in our societies. Multiple social systems – and thereby differing taken-for-granted assumptions – are a partial reason for why we e.g. may find actors behaving different when they are working as compared to when they interact with their family. The manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions are what can direct our attention to what is happening.

The economification of the public sector has provided actors with a new context wherein they can find basis for rationalising occurrences concerning proliferation of efficiency and economy within public administration. I have discussed this as an imposition of management. However, although the economification of the public sector have provided such new context, it is unlikely that previous contexts have been entirely abolished. Rather, it is likely that actors to some extent make use of previously predominant assumptions in order to discuss instances of effectiveness and equity as an alternative to proliferated instances of efficiency and economy. This means that actors engaged in public administration may find themselves balancing not only the four E's, but navigating between different taken-for-granted assumptions in the process of making sense of seemingly dilemmatic positions when engaged in public administration.

1.4.3 Formulating the question

In this section I have discussed a number of dilemmatic positions wherein actors engaged in public administration may find themselves. The economification of the public sector has given rise to instances of a proliferation of efficiency and economy. As such, the set of effectiveness and equity, pivotal for the continued legitimacy of public administration, have become overshadowed. I have furthermore suggested that as efficiency and economy are easily transformed into quantifiable targets, they have become focused upon through continuous measurements and evaluative schemes. In accordance with the proverb 'what gets measured gets done', we are likely to find that actors align their behaviour with that which they perceive they are evaluated by. That is, when quantification stresses instances of efficiency and economy, actors will behave accordingly.

I have furthermore argued that the economification of the public sector has rendered instances of new social systems to emerge within public administration. The imposition of management has generated a readiness for associated techniques such as focus on outputs, increased quantification, and performance measurement. The imposition itself as well as the associated techniques has been readily implemented as means of undertaking public administration. These can be understood as supported by an alternative set of assumptions as previously associated with public administration.

From this perspective, the dilemmatic position which actors engaged in public administration face is one of different contexts containing differing assumptions concerning public administration. As actors enact such assumptions, manifestations become observable. Since 'old' understandings do not vanish as alternatives are introduced, the dilemmatic positions become one of balancing these different sets of taken-for-granted assumptions.

To further our understanding about how actors discuss this dilemma, it is important to explore how actors engaged in public administration enact such assumptions as I have discussed in this section. The manner in which actors enact such assumptions provides an opportunity to understand how dilemmas are dealt with, discussed, and made sense of by actors. The overarching research question that has influenced this dissertation is formulated as follows: *how do actors engaged in public administration make sense of the dilemma(s) they face?*

This marks the end of this section. In the following section I will elaborate how I have chosen to demarcate the study in terms of empirical focus.

1.5 Demarcating and explicating the empirical focus

So far in this introductory chapter I have discussed how dilemmas can be understood to be an intricate part of public administration: a dilemma which actors come to face as they engage in it. The aim of this section is to delineate and describe the empirical demarcations that I have made. Firstly, I am only focusing on a Swedish public administrative context. Secondly, I only focus on a central government perspective. More than that, I focus on a single agency within the Swedish central government: the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (sw: Försäkringskassan, abbreviated here as SSIA). Thirdly, I am not focusing on reforms of public administration as such, but on the manner in which actors discuss about the dilemmas that may occur as a result of the reforms. This means that reforms directed towards public administration serve as a contextual background – a way to problematize – in which this dissertation is situated.

Studies of public administration reforms have traditionally come to put a major focus on systems- or organisational levels. This means that there is an abundance of studies, all focusing on how reforms have come to change the organisations in which they have been deployed. Analyses regarding effects from reforms that primarily focus on actor levels are in minority. Studies of street-level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 2010 [1980]) such as police officers (Agevall & Jenner, 2006, 2007), teachers (Agevall & Jenner, 2008), social workers (Brodkin, 2011), and the medical profession (Östergren & Sahlin-Andersson, 1998; Kurunmäki, 2004; Östergren, 2009) are commendable exceptions. In this dissertation, I actively take an actor perspective in that I study the manner in which actors discuss and make sense of dilemmas when engaged in public administration.

The SSIA have been widely studied during the last decade. Academic studies within the field of economics and business administration have been scrutinising aspects of e.g. the use of balanced scorecards within the previous regional organisations (Müller, 2005), organisational reforms (Andersson et al., 2011), choices concerning organising for increased equity (Karlsson, 2012), and the impact of standardisations of actors' work (Bringselius, 2012). Within other academic disciplines, the SSIA have been the empirical focus for research concerning e.g. how street-level bureaucrats work with sick people to get them back to work (Melén, 2008) and how reconciliation meetings have been deployed as a tool within the agency (Hetzler, 2009). Studies have also engaged in exploring underpinning reasons for variance in Health Insurance benefits (Stensöta,

2009a, 2009b) as well as the evolvement of different cultures over time within the agency (Melander, 2013).

The interest has been quite substantial, especially in the aftermath of reforms that begun in 2005. From the backdrop of what I have so far discussed in this introductory chapter, there are three arguments of why scrutinising the SSIA can potentially provide extensions of our current knowledge about public administration in Sweden.

In this section I will firstly present three arguments of why the SSIA have been an important case. Secondly, I will reflect on what is studied empirically, as this has carried effect throughout the dissertation and when interpreting the findings.

1.5.1 Why scrutinising the SSIA?

The social insurance is an important part of the overall welfare provided for Swedish citizens by the Swedish state. Indeed, as I perceive it, the Swedish Social Insurance is the very backbone of the Swedish welfare state. Relative to the Swedish GDP, citizens' reimbursement increased from 7 % in 1965 to 21 % in 1991 (Riksförsäkringsverket, 1999, p. 15). In 2004 the amount of reimbursements amounted to 407 billion SEK[6], about one third of the state budget (SOU 2004:127, p. 14). In this section I will present three arguments of why the case of the SSIA has proven valuable for the context of this dissertation.

Firstly, reforms directed at the public administration within the SSIA can be understood as influenced by the overall economification of the public sector. Especially the massive restructuring of the organisation together with the implementation of business processes as a mechanism for control exertion is of interest in this respect. The SSIA is by no means exclusive in undergoing a merger of regional organisations with an emphasis on national centralisation. A large number of governmental agencies in Sweden have experienced similar events, with articulated aims of reducing the size of the Government without risking the level of service provided to citizens. According to The Swedish Agency for Public Management (Statskontoret, 2010, p. 7) the Swedish public sector has been reduced from 1 400 agencies in the beginning of the 1990's to 441 in 2008. These mergers generally go under the label of uni-agency-reform

[6] Approximately 43.4 billion EUR.

(sw: Enmyndighetsreform). One argument underlying such mergers has been that centralised agencies that are nationally governed create conditions wherein the four E's can be fulfilled. Several government reports have, however, revealed the fallacy of this assumption (cf. Riksrevisionen, 2010; Inspektionen för Socialförsäkringen, 2010:4, 2010:6, 2013:1). The case of the SSIA, as such, is not only descriptive of the specific organisation, but entails stories concerning contemporary public administration in Sweden during the early 21st century.

Secondly, scrutinising the SSIA presents me with an opportunity to further our current understanding of how actors face dilemmas within public administration. As I will argue, the implementation of business processes caused dilemmas between the conjoined sets of efficiency and economy on the one hand and effectiveness and equity on the other hand to become accentuated. The messages sent from higher levels of the agency were diffuse, presenting actors with a dilemma as they engaged in public administration within the organisation. Studying the SSIA therefore offers an opportunity for further our understanding concerning the effects reforms have on actors engaged in public administration.

Thirdly, having the impact that the SSIA has on the Swedish welfare system, it becomes tremendously important that the organisation systematically adheres to the four E's discussed extensively in this chapter. In many cases the livelihood of exposed citizens are at stake as actors engaged in public administration execute their work. If agencies of this magnitude are in disorder due to dilemmas emanating from different reforms, this disorder directly affects the welfare the Government provides its citizens with as well as those citizens' ability to maintain fair lives. The potential inadequacies inherent in public administration then directly affect the citizens it is supposed to serve. For this reason the perhaps strongest argument advocating the relevance of this dissertation is that inadequate organising within governmental agencies fundamentally risks overthrowing the general welfare system.

1.5.2 What is studied empirically?

This dissertation is theoretically oriented towards (1) dilemmas within public administration and (2) taken-for-granted assumptions. More specifically, I focus on exploring actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration as enacted to makes sense of different dilemmas. Empirically, however, I have

above argued that I primarily focus on a single agency – the SSIA – within a Swedish central government context. I furthermore explicated that I am not focusing on reforms *per se*, but the manner in which actors react to dilemmas that may have occurred as a consequence of such reforms.

It should be clear that I have a focus on actors. This means that I acknowledge that beliefs can only be found among actors and that all practices inevitably are local phenomena. I have made use of multiple methods in order to cast a wider net – so to speak – inherently aiming at reducing instances wherein findings are too local to say anything at all. I will return to this later in this chapter. But even so, it should be noted that all actor level research is restricted by this implication.

Some words about the study of taken-for-granted assumptions: I have argued above that taken-for-granted assumptions are to be understood as social dispositions, enacted in order for actors to make sense of different dilemmas. As such, taken-for-granted assumptions are primarily memory traces, which – at least for social scientists – are difficult to observe directly. What can be studied, however, are the manner in which actors discusses and acts within a given context. As such, they engage in situated practice, which is understood as the behavioural alignment with social systems within public administration. Inferences about taken-for-granted assumptions should therefore be understood just as that, inferences. They are theoretical abstractions and reasoning based in empirically observable manifestations.

The main focus is descriptive rather than prescriptive. By this I mean that empirical descriptions serve as basis for the analysis. This does not mean that I reject the usefulness of normative studies. Indeed, the modelling I undertake in chapter three largely draws on such normative work. This work should however be understood as an analytical approach for understanding empirical complexity.

1.6 Purpose

Public funds are limited, which makes it all the more important that they are put to the best use given the context in which they are deployed. In order to meet these demands, actors engaged in public administration have been subjected to continuous reforms primarily aiming towards increasing the conjoined set of efficiency and economy. The same reforms have furthermore been argued

to reduce the bureaucratic tendencies characterising the *modus operandi* within previous public administration.

The accentuation of efficiency and economy within public administration has presented a basis by which actors face dilemmas. By this I mean that previously established social systems concerning public administration have been challenged by new ones. The emerging social systems have followed in the wake of the economification of the public sector as well as the imposition of management in public administration. It is in the intersection between the previous and the emerged that actors enact taken-for-granted assumptions in order to make sense of the situation they are in.

From this backdrop, the purpose of this dissertation is to *explore actors' taken-for-granted assumptions when faced with dilemmas within public administration.*[7]

In the next section I will elaborate on the choice(s) of method that I have deployed in order to undertake the empirical part of the dissertation.

1.7 Choice(s) of method

I have so far presented a research question and a purpose that has formed this dissertation. I have furthermore argued that from an empirical perspective, social scientists are hard-pressed to actually observe taken-for-granted assumptions. For this reason I have argued that the dissertation has been demarcated so that I am focusing on manifestations. These manifestations are understood to be actors' behavioural alignment with social systems, which dominate a given context.

In this section I will begin with presenting the manner in which the studies have been undertaken. I have chosen to deploy as well qualitative as quantitative methods when studying manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. The combination of multiple methods has provided a number of merits, which I will discuss in this section.

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[7] Take care to notice that I make a conceptual difference in regards to 'exploration' versus 'studying'. Exploration entails a theoretical and abstract discussion of that which is empirically studied: the manifestations of taken-for-granted assumptions.

1.7.1 Research process and multiple methods

Undertaking a research fit for a doctoral dissertation is most commonly a long project. In this case, the empirical study was undertaken between 2009 and 2013. As I have already mentioned above, I have deployed qualitative as well as quantitative methods as part of studying manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration. One reason for this is that the general process has followed an explorative approach, by which I mean that findings emanating from empirical observation have continuously guided the progression onto new observation. This process has been one of iterating between theory and empirics recursively: sometimes callously referred within the social sciences as an approach of abduction. This section contains an overview of this process, whereas more specific discussions concerning choice of methods (e.g. the use of statistical methods in chapters five and six) are presented in the sections wherein they are deployed.

I have engaged in methods such as (1) open-ended interviews, (2) participatory observations, (3) self-administered surveys, and (4) focus groups throughout this dissertation. Empirical analysis thus have come to vary from interpreting stories retold by actors, conducting different statistical analyses, and interpreting the manner in which dialogue is enacted as means of making sense. Taken together they form an approach for studying how taken-for-granted assumptions come to be manifested when faced with dilemmas within public administration.

As is obvious, I have made use of several different methods for gathering empirical insights. This means that I have made use of methods traditionally situated within qualitative as well as quantitative paradigms. Although I have been employing different methods concerning the exploration of taken-for-granted assumptions, the methodology that I have used is firmly situated within a relativist paradigm. As such, I acknowledge that there is no one truth, but several, individually deliberated and locally constructed; truths that hold legitimacy for the individual holding it. I will not delve deeper into the philosophical underpinnings of this stance, but rather present my perspective of how the use of quantitative and qualitative methods connects in this dissertation.

I understand taken-for-granted assumptions to be social dispositions for potential behaviours. They are primarily memory traces, which are enacted unconsciously by the actor. In order to explore these processes I argued above that one have to focus on how they become manifested by actors. The behavioural alignment with social systems entails e.g. actors' values concerning e.g. 'good administration' within the organisation.

An important part of the methods approach was the modelling of taken-for-granted assumptions. I did this by making use of institutional theory (Original Institutional Economics) as well as Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984). From this approach, I was able to construct a framework consisting of (1) a structural and (2) an agency perspective. After connecting this framework with the specific constructions of social systems concerning Management and Civil Service (see chapter three, wherein I elaborate these concepts), I was able to conceptually identify manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions.

Understanding how actors perceive and understands their situations within an organisation demands not only to understand the present but also to understand the history. Of course, understanding history can be done in a variety of ways. I chose to engage in open-ended interviews with top-level actors as this gave me an insight into the reforms as well as on the strategic perspectives deployed within the organisation (these are presented in chapter four). Engaging in these interviews I allowed the participants to weave stories rather than answer a number of predefined questions. The questions that I did bring to the interview were open, serving more as a form of departure, allowing for the conversation between us run freely.

Engaging in open-ended interviews – one may perhaps define them as conversations – with top-level actors furthermore enabled confidence to be formed between me and the participants. Knowing who I was, I am sure, made the actors employed at the top more inclined to provide access to other parts of the organisation. The engagement in participatory observations (also presented in chapter four) was one such access, which was arranged in connection to the discussions with one of the interviewees.

During the second half of 2009 I joined a group of people comprised of participants from different parts of the SSIA. This group of people had been given the responsibility of developing a new process concerning how to administrate citizens' applications regarding insurance coverage in Sweden. This kind of participatory observation entailed a rather open-ended approach wherein participants' behaviour and reasoning became the object of study. During the participatory observations I joined the group when they undertook their initial fieldwork as well as their analytical work located at the Head Office in Stockholm. Gold (1958) argues that participatory observation can take on different characteristics depending on the degree in which the participant actually engages in the groups' natural environment.

All participants in the group were made aware of my status as a doctoral student at Lund University School of Economics and Management, and I made

no attempts to hide the fact that I was there to observe them and the work they undertook. I however kept a cautious distance when participants discussed and struggled with tasks, so that I would not be engaged in working together with them.

Whereas the interviews had provided a basis for understanding different reforms and dilemmas within the organisation, the participatory observations presented me with a hands-on opportunity of studying how these dilemmas became part of public administration. The participatory observations furthermore made it possible for me to evaluate whether the observed practice was aligned with the stories presented during the interviews with top-level actors. The combination of open-ended interview with top-level actors within the organisation and participatory observations presented me with a rather coherent and substantial understanding of how dilemmas were being played out within the organisation. It furthermore presented me with hands-on information of how dilemmas were continuously being (re)produced in the construction of processes as well as with stories of the underpinning reforms leading to these dilemmas. The stories and findings from the observations are presented and discussed in chapter four. But in order to establish that this was prominent throughout the entire organisation, and not merely a phenomenon in Stockholm, there was need for further study.

In order to come to an understanding about this latter part, the choice of self-administered survey was made (presented in chapter five). It is a rather efficient and parsimonious (yes, as a public employee I too am bound to the four E's of public administration) method as compared to travelling far and wide with intents of receiving more stories that aligned with what I already had.

From a fashion, the self-administered survey was also deployed in order to support the stories gained through interviews, and thus by extension the interpretations made during the participatory observations. The survey furthermore enabled me to study actors' considerations concerning 'good administration' as an inherent part of public administration. Making use of the survey thereby presented an opportunity for extending my understandings concerning the prevalent dilemmas. In chapters five and six I present the construction of the survey as well as the statistical analysis engaged in order to interpret the findings.

Stating the presence of dilemma does not, however, help in understanding how actors' understand and make sense of their situations. To understand this, I made use of focus groups as I then could observe how the participants engaged in dialogue with each other when discussing their roles as actors engaged in public administration. The use of focus groups presented me with an oppor-

tunity for close scrutiny concerning manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. Chapter seven is devoted to the empirical analysis of these findings.

Taken together, the scope of the different methods that I have made use of have made it possible to enact several different perspectives when exploring actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration. The combination of the different approaches has made it possible not only to understand different perspectives, but also to an extent validate the existence of coherent views within the agency. Ahrens and Dent (1998, p. 3) argue that:

> Small samples typically permit closer engagement with the field than large samples. Rich descriptions of organizational practice build on such closer engagement.

Focusing only on a single agency within central government in Sweden may be understood as a small case. By making use of several methods, together with an approach of letting findings promote the progression of further queries, the possibility for deeper and richer descriptions and interpretations increases.

1.8 Disposition

In this introductory chapter I have focused on presenting dilemmas that actors' engaged in public administration faces. I have furthermore qualified the occurrence dilemmas in a manner that it is understood as connected to the continuous reforms undertaken within public administration. Furthermore, I take a perspective wherein taken-for-granted assumptions are understood to be social dispositions for future behaviour. From this perspective I understand actors' process of making sense of dilemmas to be rooted within their individual taken-for-granted assumptions of their social reality. As will be obvious from the below presentation, there is no chapter solely devoted for discussing methodological issues in this dissertation. The reason for this, as I have mentioned above, partly explained by the general research process undertaken wherein I have progressed new areas of inquiry as they emerged. Specific discussions regarding method are for this reason kept together with the presentation of empirical analyses (i.e. in each of the four empirical chapters).

In chapter two – Taken-for-granted assumptions – I discuss the theoretical underpinnings concerning taken-for-granted assumptions. These underpinnings

stem from both an institutional perspective and Giddens' (1984) Structuration Theory. By combining these perspectives, agency- and structural levels are combined, enabling a framework of how taken-for-granted assumptions become manifested by actors.

In chapter three – Two social systems – I continue the theoretical discussion which I have engaged in chapters one and two. Two concepts are added in this chapter: Management and Civil Service. These two concepts are understood to represent the conceptual modelling of differing social systems. As such, the framework presented in chapter two is made less abstract in chapter three, explicating the manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in relation to the two different social systems. Taken together chapters one, two, and three form the theoretical backdrop.

In chapter four – They call it the ENSA 3.0 – I present the stories from top-level actors as well as the participatory observations made during my time within the group of employees within the organisation. These stories and observations help me to identify and describe the concrete dilemmas that actors engaged in public administration faces within the SSIA. I furthermore discuss how this dilemma is continuously perpetuated within the organisations.

In chapter five – Acknowledging the dilemma – I present findings from the self-administered survey. Firstly, I postulate six hypotheses. Two of these hypotheses are formulated based on the findings discussed in chapter four. The remaining four hypotheses aim at studying actors' values concerning 'good administration' within a public administrative context. I furthermore conduct Factor Analysis as means of (1) confirming the theoretical constructs and (2) reduce the amount of data emanating from the survey.

In chapter six – Statistical analysis – I continue the exploration begun in chapter five, and test the six postulated hypotheses. The aim is to study whether (1) dilemmas are perceived as prevailing within the organisation and (2) to further study manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions through values concerning 'good administration'.

In chapter seven – Making sense through dialogue – I study how actors engage in dialogue about e.g. their roles as actors engaged in public administration. By making use of the framework for categorising manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions deeper theoretical and empirical insights are gained. This chapter is an important part in understanding how actors engage in making sense through discourse and symbolic construction concerning the dilemmas they face.

Chapter eight – Conclusions – is the concluding chapter in which I discuss the empirical analysis and subsequent findings from chapters four through

seven. The chapter ends with a discussion revolving around what this dissertation teaches and a discussion revolving around the potentiality for future research.

2 Taken-for-granted assumptions and social systems

The constitution, emergence, and continuity of institutions are topics that have rendered a lot of academic contemplation throughout the 19th and 20th century. From philosophers such as Karl Marx through sociologists such as Pierre Bourdieu and further onto the contemporary works of organisational theorist Richard W. Scott, the notion of institutions have played intricate roles in understanding contemporary societies. This dissertation is, as you may already have understood, no exception. I join the long tradition and discussion about human social disposition and behaviour by taking an institutional perspective as my main departure. More precisely, as I have already stated in chapter one, I study manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions and the use by which actors enact these as a process for making sense.

The manner in which I define taken-for-granted assumptions makes it an intricate part within the theoretical domain of institutional theory. I write 'domain' as institutional theory is a rather disparate field of theories – and theorists – that all claims to present slightly different definitions of what an institution really is. Indeed, one of the major problems with institutional theory as such is the continuous failure of presenting a clear definition of how an institution is, and becomes, constituted. Institutional theory, thereby, either fails to be institutional or, when that is achieved, fails to be theoretical, as the underpinnings become eviscerated and definitions widened. In an attempt of allowing almost anything to be defined as an institution, the definition ends up meaning nothing. It is for this reason I find it imperative to delineate my perspective on institutions so that you may understand how I understand it.

In chapter one I argued that this dissertation concerns the exploration of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions as a process of making sense. Such a task requires a discussion about the underlying postulations of institutions in order for me to be able to operationalize it into doable research. This means establishing links as well as distinctions from some of the currently dominant institu-

tional theories as well as bringing in explanatory power from elsewhere. This chapter thus represent as well a theoretical stance from which the dissertation can be understood, but also a theoretical extension of what we know today. In order to understand actors' process of making sense, an elaboration of different theoretical underpinnings are needed. The analytical framework that is presented at the end of this chapter should, therefore, be understood both as a tool for understanding actors as well as being a theoretical elaboration.

As I will soon discuss, the construction of this kind of analytical framework requires an elaboration concerning the connection between institutions and surrounding social systems of a society. This have brought my attention to Structuration Theory as progressed by Giddens (1976, 1979, 1984) and to minor extent to the Institutional Logics Perspective as introduced by Friedland and Alford (1991). The integration of Structuration Theory and the Institutional Logics Perspective with institutional theory supports the framework in overcoming some of the more intricate problems such as e.g. the agency paradox (I will elaborate on this further on in the chapter).

Structuration Theory and the Institutional Logics Perspective mainly concern a structural perspective wherein society can be understood through the enactment of social systems. In addition, institutional theory, more specifically Original Institutional Economics (OIE)[8], represents an agency perspective that brings in actors and practice as important issues. The combination thus offers a holistic approach towards actors enacting different social systems as well as an institutional theory with clear definitions of its constitutive underpinnings. Whittington (1992) have argued for a similar integration, taking, however, a stance in New Institutional Sociology (NIS) and Structuration Theory. As I will argue below, NIS suffers from the theoretical problem of assuming a macro level of structures, which inhibits a theoretical integration with Structuration Theory.

In the following sections I will give an overview of the domain of institutional theory. It is by no means exhaustive but presents some of the more prominent lines of theorising used within institutional theory. In connection to this I will present the definition of how I perceive institutions. This definition will thereafter be presented in much greater detail through (1) an agency perspective

[8] Original Institutional Economics is sometimes referred to as old institutional economics, but proponents, myself included, rejects this description as it carries connotations of being out of date.

and (2) a structural perspective. The definition is quite thick and may seem incomprehensible so early in the chapter, but it is my hope that the seemingly incomprehensible will become understandable as I unpack it.

2.1 Some perspectives on institutions

As I have mentioned above, institutional theory is more a domain of different theorising strands than it is *a* coherent theory. This means that there is a rich amount of literature focusing on institutional analysis, but brings forth an implication of different perspectives of what an institution is. I will not discuss each perspective's definitions – indeed they are not coherent within the strands either – but rather present some of the more prominent strands that carry impact in 20th century research.

As I have mentioned above, I engage a theoretical stance that primarily may be found within literature of the OIE strand. OIE, however, have enjoyed a rather small part of organisational- and accounting analysis. More commonly, researchers seem to engage a sociological stance. In order to understand why OIE have been engaged, I will make a delineation of the sociological stance. OIE is furthermore distinguished from the contemporary economical institutional theories. These theories carry fundamentally different underpinnings as compared to OIE. The aim is to present some of the fundamental differences between the different perspectives.

2.1.1 Sociological perspective

The sociological perspective stems from a functionalist perspective, mainly in the early works of Karl Marx, Émile Durkheim, Talcott Parsons, and Max Weber. During the 1970's and 1980's, the sociological strands of institutionalism came to renaissance through works that viewed organisations as adaptive to their external environment through e.g. myths or ceremonies (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) or isomorphic pressures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). These works parted with both the traditional sociological institutionalism that was characterised by a functionalist paradigm and previous organisational theorists, which claimed that organisations primarily adapted to e.g. their technical environ-

ment. Through this break, the sociological institutionalism came to be labelled New Institutional Sociology (NIS).

The NIS strand have carried great impact through analysis of e.g. the institutionalisation of behaviour (Zucker, 1977, 1983, 1991), institutional practice (Lounsbury, 2001, 2008), performance measurement as an embedded phenomena in the public sector (Brignall & Modell, 2000; Modell, 2001; Modell, Jacobs, & Wiesel, 2007), and strategic responses to such processes (Oliver, 1991) just to mention a few. Even though the NIS carries a long list of highly intellectual analyses, its embers have slowly begun to die out. One explanation to this could be NIS' incapability of going inside the organisation (cf. Scott, 2008, p. 89) as it keeps focus on systems, societies, and organisational fields. An important implication from this is that NIS fails to give analytical consideration towards actors.

In beginning of the 1990's Powell and DiMaggio (1991) brought together an impressive number of NIS theorists with the purpose to write an anthology wherein the NIS perspective could be restarted: what has come to be called 'the orange book' of institutional theory. Quite paradoxically, one of the chapters – written by Friedland and Alford (1991)[9] – rejected the underpinnings inherent to NIS in favour of what they discussed as Institutional Logics. This was later picked up by Thornton and Ocasio (1999, 2008) and rendered a different perspective called the Institutional Logics Perspective (see also Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012).

What the institutional logics perspective utilises, which NIS fails to do, is the consideration of "the duality of the material and symbolic aspects of institutions" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 18). That is, the Institutional Logics Perspective facilitates both cognitions of institutions and the transformation of these into actions and behaviours: both symbolic orders as well as practices.

[9] Even though Friedland and Alford first presented the notion of institutional logics in the 1991 chapter, some of the basic ideas shaping the idea about multiple institutions in a society were presented earlier. Alford and Friedland (1985) presented their ideas about multiple institutions, although in the periphery, when arguing for an analysis of power in social systems.

2.1.2 Economical perspective

During the same time period as the NIS surfaced among sociologists – the 1970's – economists where reviving institutionalism within their field of research: the New[10] Institutional Economics (NIE). This has generally been attributed to the American economist Oliver Williamson (1975, 1985) and his transaction cost theory, although the important contributions from especially Coase (1937), North (1991), and Cheung (1969) should not be understated. NIE came to emphasize the importance of the actor and survival of institutions within social systems. The latter is linked to the presumed transaction costs connected to the employment of the institution (cf. Hodgson, 2004, pp. 5-6).

NIE came as a response earlier economical institutionalism – OIE – primarily stemming from 19th and early 20th century scholars such as e.g. the American economists Thorsten Veblen (e.g. 1909; 1914) and John R. Commons (1934). Coase (1998) acknowledged the intellectual work of many of the OIE proponents, but essentially claimed it to be anti-theoretical, a claim that I find highly questionable. OIE draws on nature and evolution theory (Darwinism) in exploring the creation of key institutions. The main theoretical influences come from (sociological) Marxism, the German historical school, American pragmatist philosophy, and instinct-habit psychology (cf. Hodgson, 2004, p. 7). Analyses undertaken within the scope of OIE puts actors' behaviour in centre.

NIE and OIE share a commonality of being actor centred (Scott, 2008, p. 89) but differ in two important respects. Firstly, NIE's assumption of methodological individualism that asserts the actor is the explanans of institutions[11]. Secondly, NIE's tendency to explain the continuity of institutions primarily to transaction costs relative to alternative institutions. Proponents of OIE within e.g. accounting reject such assumptions (cf. Scapens, 1994) and strive to go further into organisations, to study actors and their connections with, and reifica-

[10] It has, however, been argued that what Williamson produced might have been new, but not very institutional (cf. Dugger, 1990).

[11] Explanations are logically divided into sets of (1) explanans and (2) explanandum. An explanandum is a phenomenon that needs to be explained and an explanans forms that explanation. These concepts where constructed by Hempel and Oppenheim (1948) in an attempt of answering questions of why rather than what.

tions of, institutions. Ribeiro and Scapens (2006, p. 98) accurately put their finger on the difference between NIE and OIE stating that OIE

> [r]ecognise that individuals operate in a specific social setting in which institutionalised rules and values, rather than some principle of rationality, often shape behaviour.

NIE and OIE furthermore both claim an internal perspective on organisations; essentially differ in their analytical focus. According to Dugger (1990, p. 424) "[i]nstitutionalism explains the process of continual change while 'new institutionalism' explains the structure of the optimal state". Where OIE focuses on the emergence or continuity of institutions, NIE tends to take them as 'given' (cf. Burns, 2000).

2.1.3 Defining institutions

The above four strands together forms a dominant part of the different perspectives employed within the domain of institutional theory. Although interrelated, the different strands constitute institutions quite differently. This means that their subsequent analyses differ due to the difference in postulations concerning human social dispositions. I argue that institutions are understood as taken-for-granted assumptions. More specifically I argue that institutions understood as *taken-for-granted assumptions, located as memory traces, formed through habits of thought and action, which transforms into a path-dependent continuous patterning of situated practices.*

The above definition places me more inside the strand of OIE than any of the other strands. As I have already mentioned, the presented definition as it stands above is rather thick. The following sections in the form of (1) an agency and (2) a structural perspective are aimed at unpacking this definition so that it becomes comprehensible. The agency perspective contains a discussion of OIE as influenced by Thorsten Veblen. The concepts of instincts, habits, habits of thought and action together with taken-for-granted assumptions and a priori deliberation are discussed here. The agency perspective gains importance due to the plurality and heterogeneity introduced from the institutional logics perspective. The structural perspective contains much from Structuration Theory and lays out the essential building blocks of the interrelationship between social systems and institutions in society. The definitions of social systems, structures and institutions are discussed in this section.

2.2 The agency perspective

I have already stated that my perception of institutions – taken-for-granted assumptions – places me inside the strand of OIE. Due to the actor-focused approach inherent in OIE, I argue that it is reasonable to begin unpacking the definition from an agency perspective. Key concepts in this section are *instincts, habits, habits of though and –action, taken-for-granted assumptions, a priori deliberation, agency, intentionality, consequence, situated practice, and path-dependency*. The different concepts are just that; different. But even though they are different there are important interrelations that need to be clarified. In this section I present how that interrelation is constituted as it forms the basis for understanding institutions the way I perceive and use it in this dissertation.

2.2.1 Instincts, habits, and taken-for-granted assumptions

Instincts and habits are distinctly different – although interdependent – human qualities (cf. Hodgson, 2004 chapters three an eight). It is qualities that help explain how taken-for-granted assumptions are instigated in the first place. In short, instincts are understood to be innate qualities that help actors cope with an unknown world. Habits, however, are qualities that help actors cope with the abundant amount of information that flourishes in the contextual surroundings within that unknown world. In this section I will delineate the concepts of instincts and habits.

Biology, through Darwinism, plays an intricate role in understanding instincts. We come into this world without any preconception or understandings about the world we are to exist in, primarily prepared with a set of inherited behavioural dispositions that cause unintentional reflexes. Such reflexes are most noticeable with new-borns, who have instinctive reflexes of hunger, gripping, and mimicry. It is these instincts that make babies cry out for attention, a communicative attempt of sort, so that adults in the vicinity can respond accordingly. Instincts are inherent biological mechanisms that help actors to cope with different types of stimuli.

A note should here be made about the distinction between instinct, as inherent behavioural dispositions, and instinctual behaviour: that is the reaction to instincts. Veblen (1914, pp. 2-3); (as referenced in Hodgson, 2004, p. 165) argued that whereas instinctual behaviour can be changed, instincts cannot. In

other words, we cannot control when we feel hungry (instinct) but we can choose whether to eat or not (instinctual behaviour). In this way, actors are not predestined, but can control the behaviour as s/he coexists with other actors.

As social actors in a social world, however, we are driven by other factors than that of instincts. Instances of e.g. socialisation cannot be explained through instances of instincts in a satisfactory way. Hodgson (2004, p. 47) partly touches upon this in his reflection on the interconnection between biology and social science:

> Our genes tell us something of our fundamental human nature, but they tell us nothing of the specific and varied cultural contexts in which vital human dispositions are channelled and formed.

Although biology presents a valid form of inherited behavioural dispositions, it lacks the accentuation of socialisation as a process for aligning actors' thoughts and practices with the surrounding society. It is in this respect that habits come in use.

Habits serve as mechanisms for coping with the abundance of recurrent and on-going process of information within social systems (Hodgson, 2004, p. 164). Habits differ from instincts in that they are socially learned – through incentives and/or constraints or through imitation of others (cf. Hodgson, 2003, p. 374) – and serve as actors' social. They are unconsciously enacted as actors engage in the social reality that they exist in. Habits are initiated by the manner that other people act, and have been acting, in different situations. They are thereby ontogenetic, meaning that they are shaped and produced as they are learned.

Burns and Scapens (2000, p. 6) describe habits as "more or less self-actualizing dispositions or tendencies to engage in previously adopted or acquired forms of action" (Burns and Scapens references Hodgson, 1993 in relation to this quote). This means that habits shape the manner in which actors approach problems and perceive potential solutions and so forth. Actors learn to cope with the abundance of information in the social reality by acting as they think fit the context. This constructs a preconception of a common understanding that separates e.g. perceptions of good from bad behaviour.

Habits acquire a pivotal role in the constitution of taken-for-granted assumptions. Apart from being an effect of socialisation, instincts are integral in shaping actors' habits. Instincts serve as a fundamental, biologically inherited, capability of handling different types of stimuli. Habits cannot be learned if we lack these basic response capabilities. Hodgson (2004, p. 167) describes the

link, and more importantly the difference, between instincts and habits by stating that:

> Instincts are 'essentially simple' and directed to 'some concrete objective end'. Habits are the means by which the pursuit of these ends could be adapted in particular circumstances. In comparison to instinct, habit is a relatively flexible means of adapting to complexity, disturbance and unpredictable change.

Hodgson (2003, p. 373) states that "[h]abits are submerged repertoires of potential behaviour; they can be triggered by stimulus or context". Defining habits as 'repertoires' accentuate yet another dimension: they are not simply causes of thoughts or actions, they are actors' accumulated tacit knowledge concerning their social reality. These repertoires of potential behaviour defines actors' cognitive dispositions in a manner that facilitates habitual thinking and acting.

These habits of thought and action should be understood as the outcome of actors' habits, where habits are both an effect of socialisation and actors' instincts. That is, actors think and act in a manner that conforms to such a common understanding as discussed above. As actors continue to enact such habits of though and action they become assumptions or "settled ways of thinking" (Burns, 2000, p. 571). Actors' conceptions of things that are good or bad become taken-for-granted and reinforce the suitability of the preconceived common understanding.

This means that taken-for-granted assumptions are internalisations of a social reality that the actor herself has created (cf. Berger & Luckman, 1967). Taken-for-granted assumptions thereby carry a functionality of socialising actors as they are internalised. They become embedded as habits that turn into "shared rules and typifications" (Barley & Tolbert, 1997, p. 96).

In other words, taken-for-granted assumptions are the outcome of habits but also the reinforcement of habits. It is an on-going recursive cycle.

2.2.2 Actors' ability of a priori deliberation

Taken-for-granted assumptions are the outcome of habits and instincts, formed through habits of thinking and acting. Over time such taken-for-granted assumptions become embedded as habits as they affect actors' socialisations, which in turn constitutes new outcomes in the form of taken-for-granted assumptions. They become (re)produced. From a sociological perspective we may say that the subjectivity of the human product becomes transformed into a per-

ception of an objective non-human product (cf. Berger & Pullberg, 1966; Berger & Luckman, 1967). As this process goes on over time, it is presumed that the power of taken-for-granted assumptions, the degree to which actors take phenomena for granted, gains strength. This continues until the assumptions become unquestionable. That is, the assumptions are so in-grained that they have gained an autonomous legitimacy.

The implication of such states is that taken-for-granted assumptions become enacted without prior thought: a situation referred to as the agency paradox. The agency paradox claims that as assumptions become taken-for-granted and unconsciously enacted by actors, they also come to form restraints concerning their agency. The agency paradox thus states that if taken-for-granted assumptions create such restraints, how can actors think or act in a manner that contradicts reified taken-for-granted assumptions (cf. Holm, 1995, p. 398; Seo & Creed, 2002, p. 230)? In order to disentangle agency from this paradox, I argue that instances of a priori deliberation (cf. Fleetwood, 2008) is central.

In order to understand the concept of a priori deliberation there is first a need to elaborate three additional concepts: agency, intentionality, and consequence. The theoretical reasoning in this section is primarily derived from Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984) and not OIE as the previous reasoning is.

According to Giddens (1984, p. 9), agency is "not the intentions people have in doing things but rather […] their capability of doing those things in the first place". From this perspective, the actor have an opportunity of power in that s/he can act in one way or another, where power is the transformative capacity that transpires as agency is enacted. Agency thereby refers to the capabilities of action where the choice not to act is included.

Others have discussed agency as a phenomenological concept in that it is "the interpretive processes whereby choices are imagined, evaluated, and contingently (re)constructed by actors in on-going dialogue with unfolding situations" (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 966). Weick, Sutcliffe, and Obstfeld (2005, p. 15) on their part state that agency:

> […] is to talk about reality as an on-going accomplishment that takes form when people make retrospective sense of the situations in which they find themselves and their creations.

From my perspective, these latter parts coincide more with what Giddens defines as intentional agency, rather than only agency.

Intentionality has to be analytically separated from agency so that both intentional and unintentional agency can be theoretically constructed. Giddens presents two examples that highlight the difference. Firstly:

> An officer on a submarine pulls a lever intending to change course but instead, having pulled the wrong lever, sinks the *Bismarck*. He has done something intentionally, albeit not what he imagined, but thus the *Bismarck* has been sunk through his agency. (Giddens, 1984, p. 8 italics in original)

And secondly:

> Supposing an individual, A, were a malicious spirit and played a practical joke by placing the cup on a saucer at such an angle that, when picked up, it would be very likely to spill. Individual B picks up the coffee, and it duly spills over. It would be right to say that what A did brought the incident about, or at least contributed to its coming about. But A did not spill the coffee; B did. Individual B, who did not intend to spill the coffee, spilled the coffee; individual A, who did intend that the coffee should be spilled, did not spill it. (Giddens, 1984, p. 9)

Agency refers to the power – as a transformative capacity – to engage in action. Intentionality on the other hand, is the planning and imagination of agency. Intentionality thus precedes agency in that phenomenological manner described above whereas unintentional agency lacks the imagined outcomes associated with intentional agency.

A second important part of understanding agency refers to consequence. Giddens (1984, p. 11) defines consequence as "events that would not have happened if that actor had behaved differently, but which are not within the scope of the agent's power to have brought about". The implication of this definition is that there emerges a demarcation between unintentional action on the one hand and unintentional consequence on the other hand.

Unintentional action is connected to agency, whereas unintentional consequence is not. Take a look at the two examples above again. In the first example, the pulling of the wrong lever sinks the Bismarck. Even though the actor enacts agency and pulls a lever, s/he fails to imagine the outcome of sinking the Bismarck. Pulling the lever is characterised by intentionality but the consequence of the action, sinking the Bismarck, is an unintentional consequence of the actors' agency. Giddens (1984, p. 11) argues that as consequences are further removed in time and space from the context of the action, the likelihood of intentionality diminishes. This means that if actors fail to recognise an immedi-

ate consequence in relation to their actions, agency is likely to be characterised by low degrees of intentionality. Their possibility to enact agency, however, is not affected by this. The delineation of these three concepts helps me to explain a priori deliberation and its connection to actors' taken-for-granted assumptions.

A priori deliberation should be understood as the ability to make a priori consideration and reasoning before employing action, much like the discussion concerning intentionality and agency above. Taken-for-granted assumptions, in contrast, are formed through habits of thought and action. Under instances governed through taken-for-granted assumptions, actors' possibility for agency is maintained while their intentionality becomes reduced, perhaps even transformed into unintentionality. That is, actors are in positions wherein the consequence is so obfuscated that it is not recognised.

Writing on this topic, Fleetwood (2008, p. 193) argues that there is interdependence between a priori deliberation and taken-for-granted assumptions. This interdependence occurs as actors may face phenomena intentionally at first, but as time pass by the encounters transform into taken-for-granted assumptions. We may know why we do the things we do at first, but after a while we simply stop thinking about it because there is no need for it. That is, we enact taken-for-granted assumptions unconsciously without the need for prior deliberation; at least so far as we are familiar with the context within which we exist. If our taken-for-granted assumptions are interrupted for some reason, we are forced back into a priori deliberation in order to solve the interruption.

The link between a priori deliberation and taken-for-granted assumptions is an iterative process. The concept of a priori deliberation is required in order for new habits to emerge. As this happens, and gets settled, taken-for-granted assumptions are initiated and the need for a priori deliberation diminishes. A priori deliberation is furthermore accentuated in contexts where taken-for-granted assumptions fail. Complex contexts or unexplained phenomena require some form of interruptions (cf. Hodgson, 2004, p. 172), which I argue come in the shape of a priori deliberations.

The iteration between a priori deliberation and taken-for-granted assumptions might here become somewhat clearer with the use of an example. Imagine that you are about to cross a heavily trafficked street in your hometown. Which way do you look? If you live in a nation that drives on the right side of the road, you are likely looking to the left. You do this without thinking since you have experienced a process of socialisation where looking firstly to the left have become a taken-for-granted assumptions. This becomes especially salient if you travel to a nation where they drive on the left side of the road. You might then

come to realise that you still look to the left, even though you know that traffic is likely to come the other way. You become aware of your taken-for-granted assumptions when attempting to cross the street and the need for a priori deliberation (intentionally looking right instead of left) emerges. After some time, your engagement in the new environment will have settled and it begins to feel natural to look to the right. The need for a priori deliberation diminishes and the process towards taken-for-granted assumption is instigated.

This dynamic interplay between a priori deliberation and taken-for-granted assumptions relate to previous studies of institutional contradictions (Bush, 1987, p. 1080; Emirbayer & Mische, 1998, p. 973; Seo & Creed, 2002; Burns & Baldvindsdottir, 2005) or analogies (Foss & Lorenzon, 2009) as drivers for institutional change. When established taken-for-granted assumptions fail to handle an emerging situation – a phenomenon or a new context – the actor becomes temporarily emancipated from the embeddedness as the consequence of action is accentuated. Actors' intentionality is initiated, compelling actors' to enact a priori deliberation in order to solve the situation. This means that a priori deliberation occurs consciously under instances where the ordinary flows of taken-for-granted assumptions are interrupted or where they fail to have any existing significance. Similarly, a priori deliberations can become taken-for-granted assumptions when consequences are further removed from actions. As consequences become less accentuated, taken-for-granted assumptions are (re)produced as actors pursue their every-day life.

Actors' ability to move between instances of taken-for-granted assumptions and a priori deliberation thus partly solves the agency paradox, as the actor is granted temporary emancipation.

2.2.3 Situated practice and path-dependency

I have discussed above how taken-for-granted assumptions and a priori deliberations lead to a continuous (re)production of habits. But there is need for another piece in this jigsaw puzzle before we can understand how actors manifest this process. Situated practice presents such a piece.

Situated practice can be understood as the enactment of structural and cultural beliefs (cf. Seo & Creed, 2002, p. 230) that is situated in time and space (Giddens, 1976; Burns & Scapens, 2000). Enacting situated practice means for actors to conform to a common understanding, which in turn are understood to be an effect of their taken-for-granted assumptions. Situated

practice is thus governed by taken-for-granted assumptions, creating restraints for what is conceived as good or bad in different contexts. They should however not be reduced to a set of mundane tasks that does not carry any deeper meaning for actors.

In chapter one I argued that situated practice could be understood as a behavioural alignment with social systems that dominate a given context. As the alignment becomes enacted without actors' putting too much thought into it, we can understand it to have become practice. Simplified, situated practice can be understood to entail those activities that are undertaken within a given context without any deeper prior reasoning from the actor. As such, it is manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions.

An example of such situated practice – or manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions – is e.g. the act of greeting when people meet. This practice is so ingrained that it has become taken-for-granted. In western cultures, this practice of most often manifested through reciprocal handshakes. In other cultures we may see similar acts but manifested differently. I will return to this as I discuss the occurrence of multiple social systems below.

It is important that we do not conflate the concept of situated practice with that of taken-for-granted assumptions. This is something that we commonly see within e.g. the NIS literature wherein institutions are commonly referred to as practice. Situated practices are not institutions – although they can be institutionalised, which is another topic – but are rather manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. The separation between practice – manifestations – and taken-for-granted assumptions enables a rigid definition and analysis of actors' behaviour. By instigating this separation, there emerges an implication in that we can only make inferences about actors' taken-for-granted assumptions after scrutinising their situated practices.

Path-dependency concerns the manner in which our taken-for-granted assumptions are governed by historical and social contexts. This is an idea that the OIE shares with e.g. the NIS strand. Indeed, Powell (1991, p. 191) argues that path-dependency is one of the key factors for institutional reproduction. Powell's argument is that historical decisions govern the possibility of future decisions and thus create contexts wherein actors are implicitly bound by its historicity.

Hodgson (2004, pp. 95-98) discusses path-dependency bearing Veblen's use of Darwinism in mind. He argues that as taken-for-granted assumptions come to change, they do so gradually. This means that institutional change – from the iterative process of a priori deliberation and taken-for-granted assumptions discussed above – is an evolutionary, not a revolutionary, process. Our

understanding of path-dependency from an evolutionary perspective forms a basis for rejecting NIE with its rational choice perspective and view of institutional environments as tabula rasa (cf. Agevall, 2005, pp. 81-82).

2.2.4 Agency perspective summation

Before I move on I think that a quick summation of the main arguments presented within the agency perspective may be in place. I will not spend time on elaborating the arguments as I have already done so above. This is rather to be understood as a quick guide for the agency perspective as I understand it.

The agency perspective draws on the postulation that actors' have human qualities in the form of (1) instincts and (2) habits. Instincts are biologically inherited and innate qualities that form a set of behavioural disposition such as e.g. reflexes. They help actors cope with different stimuli. Habits are affected by instincts, but inherently formed through a socialisation process. As such, they form actors' social dispositions and helps in coping with information abundance within social systems. Actors' socialisation – shaping of habits – forms perceptions regarding good and bad behaviour and are understood as repertoires of potential behaviour that actors enact when needed.

When actors think and act in accordance to their habits, they comply with certain common understandings that dominate their social reality. As this process proceeds, certain thoughts and actions become assumptions that are taken-for-granted. As these in turn are enacted, habits become stronger resulting in stronger assumptions.

The enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions is a largely unconscious and unintentional process of agency. Consequences that once was recognised have become obfuscated over time and are not immediately available for actors. In contexts that interrupt actors' taken-for-granted assumptions, a priori deliberation is enacted as a process of intentional agency. A priori deliberation and taken-for-granted assumptions engages in an iterative process, continuously reinforcing one another.

Situated practice implies conformity with prominent common understandings among actors. They are constituted through actors' taken-for-granted assumptions and are manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. Path-dependency dictates that history matters – we are affected by our historicity – and that change is primarily evolutionary and not revolutionary.

This concludes the agency perspective and the manner in which taken-for-granted assumptions are constituted. The next section concerns the structural perspective and aims at explaining the multiplicity of social systems that actors' enact in social life. It furthermore extends the already presented idea about socialisation, as fundamental for the shaping of habits in this section.

2.3 The structural perspective

In the previous section I primarily discussed the different constitutive parts of institutions. I touched upon the (re)production in the manner of situated practice and the recursive nature between actors' habits and taken-for-granted assumptions. The process of (re)production is, however, not entirely disclosed. This is where the structural perspective comes in. Key concepts in this section are *social systems, structures, structural properties, the duality of structures,* and *institutional orders.*

The structural perspective is largely derived from Giddens' (1984) Structuration Theory[12]. Within Structuration Theory he combined earlier functionalist perspectives on structures with structuralist and post-structuralist perspectives in order to constitute a more holistic approach to social theory. Structuration Theory is not a theory on institutions, but explains the process of (re)production in an analytical and precise manner that fits well with my above discussion of institutions. Giddens ideas pioneered sociological research on society and social systems as it allowed for more autonomy and less predestination of actors. Structuration Theory has been argued to be a viable alternative to management accounting research (cf. Baxter & Chua, 2003) and readily used in order to take more of an internal or micro-perspective when advocating studies of how practice (Roberts & Scapens, 1985; Macintosh & Scapens, 1990; Scapens & Macintosh, 1996; Barley & Tolbert, 1997), routines (Burns & Scapens, 2000; van der Steen, 2007) and technologies (Orlikowski, 1992, 2000; Scapens & Jazayeri, 2003; Orlikowski, 2007) become established and institutionalised in organisations and create stability in management accounting systems (Granlund, 2001).

[12] Giddens publication in 1984 is broadly considered his major contribution when discussing Structuration Theory. But he have elaborated some of the inherent concepts in previous publications (cf. Giddens, 1976, 1979)

2.3.1 Social system(s), properties and structures

According to Giddens (1984) all societies are underpinned by social systems. Such social systems are in place to present actors with an expertise concerning social interaction within that given society. These social systems bind time and space, connecting actors in a manner not entirely different from the common understandings discussed above. It is social systems' binding of time and space that facilitates the existence of similar situated practices (e.g. the act of greeting by reciprocal handshakes, which I mentioned above) throughout history at entirely different places. The binding of time and space is made possible through inherent structural properties within social systems. Giddens (1984, p. 17) discusses these properties as the social systems' rules and resources. Both rules and resources, as concepts, need to be unpacked, especially the concept of rules since there is a risk of "misinterpretation because of certain dominant uses of 'rules' in the philosophical literature" (Giddens, 1984, pp. 17-18).

Rules as understood within Structuration Theory are not at all like rules within e.g. games (where they normally formalise prescriptions of right and wrong). Rules within Structuration Theory are a web of connections rather than a sum of individuals, meaning that a single rule cannot be connected to a single instance of behaviour in social life. This means that in order to analyse actors' behaviour, the entire web of rules has to be taken into consideration. Rules are in many ways the manner in which things should be done. As such, rules within structures are the informal protocol for social relations.

Rules can be either tacit or formalised (Giddens, 1984, p. 21). Tacit rules refer to the implied understanding concerning social relations that are inherent in social systems. This means that they are understood and acknowledged by actors without explication. Formalised rules, however, refers to specific actions of social relations. These are primarily found within judicial law-making or bureaucratic standardisation and "give verbal expression to what is supposed to be done" (Giddens, 1984, p. 21).

The transformation of tacit into formalised rules, however, comes with a price. As tacit rules are given verbal expression they become connected to a specific type of action or context and thereby loose its generalizability. It follows that "[f]ormulated rules […] are thus codified interpretations of rules rather than rules as such" (Giddens, 1984, p. 21).

Resources, on the other hand, should be understood as fundamental capacities to transform current situations. That is, resources are the modes through which social relations can change: resources are used to mobilise rules.

Giddens (1984, p. 33) distinguishes between two types of resources. Firstly, allocative resources that has commanding effects over material objects. Secondly, authoritative resources that has commanding effects over actors.

Structural properties within social systems – the rules and resources – are analytically separated into structures: structures of signification, legitimation, and domination.

Structures of signification represent meaning in the form of symbolic orders and discourses that dominates the social system. In other words, actors create meanings in everyday life through behavioural alignment with dominant discourses or by constructing symbols that embody such meanings. Structures of legitimation represent sanctions inherent in social norms, standards, and judicial laws inherent in the social system. Structures of domination, finally, represent actors' transformative capacity: their ability to mobilise instances within the other two structures. This is done either by engaging material objects (allocative resources) or other actors (authoritative resources). Resources are best understood as approaches to affect acts within the social system.

2.3.2 The duality of structure

Traditionally within the social sciences structures and actors have been separated: referred to as a dualism. I touched upon this topic at the beginning of this chapter when I discussed different strands of institutional theory. Such separations have resulted in methodological individualism as well as methodological collectivism, wherein explanans are reverted solely to structures or actors respectively. Essentially it leads to reductionism of either the structure or the actor depending on chosen approach.

Giddens rejected this classical divide of focusing either on structure or actor and argued that as actors continuously draw on structural properties in order to create meaning, sanction, and enact transformative capacity, the actor becomes produced by the structures. This means that social actions to some extent are predestined by the structures inherent in the social system. But recognising that this is only partly true, Giddens furthermore proposed that as actors are produced by structures, and thereby acts in accordance with it, the structure in turn becomes produced by the actor. The structure therefore, recursively, reproduces itself over time. This is referred to as the duality of structures.

Structuration Theory has been accused of being flawed in that the duality of structures lacks temporal persistence[13]. By this, opponents argue that Giddens' attempts of solving the dualism of structure and actor have resulted in a synchronic effects being built into the theory. That is, structures and actors are (re)produced simultaneously without giving temporal priority to either one. One solution to this is to understand structures as having temporal priority over any one individual actor. This implies that structures are in place within the social system prior to the actor, or rather the action by the actor.

Burns and Scapens (2000, pp. 9-10) drawing on the work of Barley and Tolbert (1997) included this proposition in their framework of accounting institutionalisation. From the Burns and Scapens perspective, institutions have a diachronic effect, meaning that actors (re)produce structures by drawing on the cumulative effects they have over time. In other words, structures affect actors with the full impact of history, but actors affect structures with (only) the impact of their present action.

This affects the manner in which change can happen. It does not rule out change, but it does control the starting point (Hodgson 2004 p. 39 & 180). In other words, change is possible but it is not up to the individual actor to actively choose the starting point of change. Acknowledging the temporal priority of structures – without falling into the fallacy of assigning any time or space location to it – makes actors path dependent, meaning that "history matters" (Hodgson, 1999, p. 139), which fits well with the discussion within the agency perspective above.

The duality of structures provides me with an analytical opportunity to understand what binds time and space in relation to social action. As I have already argued in chapter one, it is important that we do not conflate action with structure (Englund & Gerdin, 2008 make a perfect argument of this). What is said and done – i.e. the behavioural alignment into situated practice – are not structures *per se*. Rather, what is said and done are the manifestations of those structures. Actors draw upon structures of signification and legitimation for meanings and sanction; and domination for transformative capacity of their situated practice.

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[13] It is predominantly the critical realists Roy Bhaskar and Margaret Archer that have progressed this critique.

2.3.3 A multiplicity of social systems

I have so far discussed Structuration Theory from the idea of a social system as constituted out of rules and resources. This facilitates an analytical approach towards the idea – presented in the agency perspective – of how situated practice is connected to structures of signification, legitimation, and domination. In this subsection I will extend this notion to include several social systems.

In his formulation of Structuration Theory, Giddens (1984, p. 164) claims that "all societies both are social systems and at the same time are constituted by the intersection of multiple social systems". This means that within a society it can be expected that different social systems coexist simultaneously. In fact, as Giddens accurately puts it in the quote above, it is in the intersection between these different social systems that actors live out their lives. It is in this intersection that actors enact situated practice.

Let me return to the example I used above, about the ceremony of greeting. I there argued (in section 2.2.3) that situated practice could be understood as manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. That is, it is a practice that is so ingrained among actors that they enact it without prior thinking. In the above example I made use of the reciprocal handshake as practice for greetings. But, there are other manners in which greetings can be undertaken. Take for example the Asian tradition of bowings rather than reciprocal handshakes. This act manifests differing taken-for-granted assumptions inherent in different – from what we are accustomed to – social systems. There is no problem for actors adhering to these different practices to validate the presence of other practices, and align their behaviour accordingly. That is, even though we may be accustomed to greeting others by reciprocal handshakes, we have no problem of adjusting this act towards a bow if found valid.

The implication of this – the existence of multiple social systems – is that actors exist in a complex social reality. The coexistence of multiple social systems suggests that depending on context, different structures may affect actors' situated practice. It is inevitably so that the complex reality of contemporary societies entails different social systems with their own specific sets of rules and resources.

The Institutional Logics Perspective, although not a social theory but claiming to be and institutional theory, discusses similar topics. Within this theoretical strand it is argued that societies are governed by overarching institutional orders (Friedland & Alford, 1991), which can be understood to be "a governance system that provides a frame of reference that preconditions actors'

sensemaking choices" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 54). Such institutional orders consist of separate characteristic of both symbolic and material practices.

Friedland and Alford (1991, p. 242) argue that it is through the characteristics of these institutional orders that actors receive – or rather construct – their preferences, which in turn guides their behaviour. Actors adhere or oppose to dominating institutional orders by producing and reproducing categories of different institutional orders in different situations of everyday life. As such, it is the rationality of actors that constitute their individual set of tacit or formulated rules and resources that create constraints or enablers in everyday life (cf. Lounsbury, 2007, p. 289).

This means that by drawing on ideas inherent in the Institutional Logics Perspective in respect to actors existing in the intersection between social systems, it becomes possible to understand the complex reality actors make sense of. Several social systems coexists that carry different validations – what is referred to above as different institutional orders – concerning different contexts. This means that actors are inherently presented with opportunities of drawing on different social systems in order to make sense of emerging phenomena or contexts.

2.3.4 Structural perspective summation

I have written about the structural perspective in order to elaborate the manner in which (re)production is enacted by actors. In similarity with my summation of the agency perspective this is understood as a quick guide to understand the structural perspective as I understand it.

The structural perspective makes use of Giddens (1984) Structuration Theory. The central theme here is how social systems are constituted out of rules and resources. Social systems are considered to be the core of our societies. They entail the knowhow concerning our common understandings. Social systems consist of rules and resources, which can be either tacit or formalised. Tacit rules refer to an implied understanding concerning social relations. Formalised rules are essentially a verbalisation of actors' perception of the tacit rules. Resources are understood to be the transformative capacity that actors can draw on to make rules happen. They are analytically divided into allocative and authoritative parts. Allocative resources have commanding effect over material objects whereas authoritative resources entail commanding effect over other actors.

Social systems are divided into three analytically separated structures: signification, legitimation, and domination. Structures of signification entail meaning that actors' can draw on through enactment of discourses and construction of symbols. Structures of legitimation entail sanctioning through tacit and formalised rules. Structures of domination entail transformative power through allocative and authoritative resources.

The duality of structure is central in Structuration Theory. It states that there is an on-going recursive production and reproduction of actors as well current structures within a social system. As actors draw on structures and enact situated practice, the structures are reproduced and strengthened. The relation between actor and structure is understood as diachronic, meaning that structures affect actors with the entire history, whereas individual actors affect structure only through their practice that is specifically situated in time and space. It is recognised that societies consist of not one but many social systems. Depending on context, actors may have multiple systems to draw from when making sense of their situation.

This summation concludes the structural perspective. In the following section the two perspectives will be combined in manner that facilitates analysis of actors' enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions.

2.4 Manifestations of taken-for-granted assumptions

This is the final section of this chapter. As such I aim to bring together the two perspectives discussed above so that they come to form an analytical approach for understanding actors' enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions. I will furthermore present a schematic overview for how the two approaches can be facilitated for analytical purposes.

Habits are formed partly through our human dispositions – our instincts – but more prominently through a socialisation process in which we learn to identify good and bad behaviour. Socialisation occurs as actors interact with others. At first, this is restricted to a rather small group of people. As young toddlers we rely on the protection and wisdom of our parents or grandparents etcetera, and they come to mimic the behaviour they observe. After some time it is perfectly natural to act in a certain manner and the toddler continues in much the same manner. It becomes habitualised, an unconscious behavioural alignment to what is perceived by actors as a common understanding: a situated practice.

This process continues throughout our lives. The only difference is that as we get more experienced, our manifestations that stem from our habits come to affect the manner in which others perceive their world. After some time, the same actor may encounter behaviours that confirm the notion of good or bad. These behaviours are thought as underpinned by ideas that are perceived as an objective truth or taken-for-granted. This is what Berger and Luckman (1967, p. 67) refer to as mans production of himself.

It is the process of socialisation that creates the linkage between the agency- and structural perspective. Giddens (1984) discusses the duality of structures in a manner that is quite similar to the process of which I have just described. He states that as actors draw on structures, they do so in order to create meaning, sanction, and power in relation to their actions. That is, actors enact rules and resources as they draw on structures of signification, legitimation, and domination in everyday life. The temporal priority given to structures implicates that actors from previous time and space locations comes to affect the choices and rationalisations we make today. History inescapably comes to affect the present, as structures exist outside of time and space.

Giddens (1984, pp. 30-31) argues that structures within social systems can, really, only be separated analytically. Empirically they are most likely to be intertwined, interdependent, and even indistinguishable. This is the nature of empirical complexity. This does not change the power of categorisation provided through Structuration Theory and by which we can understand the process of (re)production better.

Theorising within OIE, which is what the agency perspective mainly draws upon, readily states that habits form taken-for-granted assumptions through habits of thought and action. The manifestations of these taken-for-granted assumptions function as a reinforcement of actors' habits. By combining Structuration Theory and OIE at the intersection that the process of socialisation constructs, it becomes possible to approach actors' taken-for-granted assumptions with the categorisation mentioned above.

This means breaking down the manner in which actors draw on structures in social systems, thereby enacting structural properties in the form of rules and resources. This means constructing connections between taken-for-granted assumptions and the structures inherent in social systems. It is important to remember that there is no conflation between structures and taken-for-granted assumptions: taken-for-granted assumptions are not structures and vice versa. Structures are merely a way of assigning labels and making the complex more comprehensible.

As I have argued previously, it is important to remember that it is difficult, not to say bordering on impossible, to empirically study actors' taken-for-granted assumptions: at least for researchers within the social sciences. It is rather actors' manifestations, the situated practice, of such assumptions that become observable as actors enact them. The framework (see table 2.1 below) contains such manifestations.

Table 2.1 Framework for manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions

		The agency perspective
		Manifestations connected to taken-for-granted assumptions
The structural perspective	Structures of signification (meanings)	Discourses and symbols that are enacted by actors in order to create meaning.
	Structures of legitimation (sanctions)	Sanctions in the form of common understandings and verbalised codifications of these.
	Structures of domination (powers)	Transformative capacities in the shape of allocative and authoritative resources.

The framework in table 2.1 above is understood as a general approach to understand the manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. It is through these manifestations that it becomes possible to make inferences concerning actors' taken-for-granted assumptions.

The first category concern meanings enacted through discourses and constructed symbols. The manner by which actors engages in social interaction with other actors reveal their perception and understanding of the world. Their choice of words is indicative of education, social status, gender, and ideological convictions and so forth. It is through the discursive use actors engage in that we are able to identify the environments in which actors exist (cf. Edelman, Riggs Fuller, & Mara-Drita, 2001, pp. 1593-1595).

Symbols, furthermore, embody such traits that are regarded as good or bad within a social system. They carry meaning as long as they are connected to the enacted discourses, and as far as there is a deep interdependence between them. By this I mean that active discourses and symbols are enacted so that they come to strengthen each other.

The second category concerns different sanctions that actors enact. Sanctions are understood as processes for creating a sense of legitimacy within a social system. As such, sanctions are those common understanding – tacit rules – that actors enact in order to validate and legitimise e.g. the meanings within the

social system. As I have discussed in length above, sanctions also can be understood to be verbalised codifications – formalised rules – through law of documents, dictating what is supposed to be sanctioned. These form a kind of code of conduct that actors are expected to abide by.

The third category concerns transformative capacities or powers. These powers can be analytically and conceptually separated into allocative and authoritative powers. Allocative powers refer to the transformative capacity actors have revolving material objects in their vicinity, whereas authoritative powers refer to the capacity to exert power over other actors. That is, authoritative powers refer to the capacity to get other actors to behave or act in a certain manner. These powers – or transformative capacities – are linked with actors' enactments of meanings and sanctions within the social system. They come to strengthen and be strengthened as meanings and sanctions are drawn upon.

The progressed framework above it to be understood as a facilitator for understanding how actors' taken-for-granted assumptions come to be manifested in everyday life. That is, although the framework in this format draws heavily on Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984), there is an underlying conjecture that on an actor level, the enactment of structures are equated with the enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions. That is, the framework should be understood as a structural as well as an agency approach for the analytical categorisation concerning manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions.

In the following chapter I will expand the discussion that I have begun in this chapter concerning actors' enactment of multiple social systems depending on context. In connection with this discussion, the framework presented in this chapter will be used in order to identify manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions within two social systems dominating public administration: Management and Civil Service. As such, the framework although rather abstract in this chapter, will be concretised in chapter three.

3 Two social systems

Our society is utterly complex in that it contains an equal amount of understandings of it, as there are actors. Each actor carries, innately, an understanding of how the context wherein they exists makes sense. In chapter two I discussed this as actors' taken-for-granted assumptions within different social systems. The social reality in which they partake makes sense partly because of the common understandings they share. As behaviour aligns with dominant social systems, actors gain confidence through the unconscious enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions. In this chapter I will elaborate the idea of two dominating social systems within public administration. I will argue that the proliferation of efficiency and economy stemming from the economification of the public sector have resulted in the emergence of a social system of Management. As such, this social system has come to stand as an alternative to what has previously been understood to dominate public administration: a social system of Civil Service.

The theoretical perspective presented in the previous chapter proceeded from the combination of Original Institutional Economics (OIE) and Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984). Therein I argued that any given society is likely to be characterised by multiple social systems. Each of these social systems entails different sets of taken-for-granted assumptions that can be analytically categorised according to structures of meaning, sanction, and power. By themselves the social systems enable actors to make sense of specific contexts within their social reality. Taken together they make out a complex web of assumptions that actors may enact in order to make sense of different phenomena.

This chapter contains four sections. Firstly, I will further the idea of what social systems are. Secondly, the concept of social systems is applied on a public administrative context. In this section I argue that public administration is dominated by two social systems and furthermore progress a manner in which we can understand them. For this purpose a descriptive presentation regarding Management and Civil Service is undertaken. Thirdly, I will elaborate the two social systems in accordance with the theoretical framework (cf. table 2.1) pre-

sented in chapter two. This elaboration is structured according to meaning, sanction, and power. Finally, I extend the general framework in chapter two by modelling the two social systems in public administration (see table 3.1 below) presented in this chapter.

3.1 Understanding social systems (a bit more)

This section is devoted to the elaboration of how we can understand social systems in contemporary societies. Although I have touched upon the topic in chapter two, there is need for further elaboration and explication. For this reason I will firstly discuss how we can understand what a social system is. Secondly, I will discuss how taken-for-granted assumptions are intricate parts concerning the continuation of a social system. In large this section can be understood to be a repetition of what I have discussed in chapter two. I find that it is, however, central for understanding the existence of multiple social systems within public administration.

On an abstract – highly theoretical – level, social systems are what hold our societies together. It constitutes restraints and opportunities that actors may enact when engaging in interaction with other actors. It contains ideas and perceptions of what is considered good or bad behaviour in different situations. As such, it instils actors with a notion of making sense in that meaning, sanction, and power are continuously drawn upon when enacting taken-for-granted assumptions. In other words, there is almost always a readily available rationalisation that can be applied to phenomena or contexts as they emerge in our societies.

Social systems are constructions that primary reside in individual's perceptions of social reality. They are located as memory traces belonging to individual actors. This means that social systems, as such, have no ontological status other than being actors' social constructions. In other words, it stops to exist as soon as the actor no longer recognises its viability and abandon it for other systems. One implication of this perspective is that actors are experts in the navigation within dominant social systems. This means that there is no amateurism involved as actors engage in social interaction.

Although social systems are actors' own construction, essentially located as memory traces, they have the ability to stabilise society by binding time and space. Knowledge and understanding – actors' expertise – concerning social interaction have an ability to transcend the individual actor as well as the tempo-

rary space s/he occupies at the moment. What does this mean? It means that certain understandings and behaviours are so ingrained that the actor performing it does so without having to spend much energy thinking about it. A priori deliberation is unnecessary, as the knowledge and understanding comes almost automatically.

The example of reciprocal handshakes that I mentioned in chapter two as examples of situated practice and the existence of multiple social systems, is furthermore an example of an act that require actors' knowledge and understanding about social interaction: at least from a western cultures perspective. As we meet a person for the first time, or if we want to formalise the meeting in a one way or another, we stretch out an open hand towards the other person, fully expecting them to reciprocate. There is a symbolism of offered friendship and transparency in that outstretched open hand which the reciprocator can recognise. The handshake is furthermore associated with underpinning sanctions of peace, coalitions, or reconciliation between former adversaries. The power – transformative capacities – lies in the formalisation of those sanctions: showing themselves and others that there is genuine intent behind the act.

One question is how these knowledge and understandings come to be a part of actors' perceptions of social systems. How do actors know that handshakes are the correct manner in which we great others in social interactions? From the perspective I take in this dissertation I understand this to be a process of behavioural alignment – situated practices – with social systems, which dominate a given context.

Situated practice is understood to be actors' behavioural alignment with social systems, i.e. manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. It is a habitualised behaviour that actors engage without prior deliberation, supported by the social system these actors draw on. As such, actors' enactments of situated practices simultaneously produce and reproduce the dominant social system.

As I have argued in chapter two, actors' taken-for-granted assumptions are an outcome of instincts as well as habits: in other words biological inheritance and social learning. Together they form actors' assumptions about their social reality and affect the manner in which they behave. By mimicking others' behaviour, actors learn what is considered acceptable social interaction as well as good versus bad behaviour. Take the example of children's learning. At first, this learning is dominated through the presence of the child's closest adults. As the child then grows and ventures into the surrounding society, other actors come to be present as the dominant teachers.

As the actor engages in mimicking observed behaviour, the reproduced behaviours gains dominance. After time it gains a status of being taken-for-granted assumptions, largely unconsciously enacted. As actors continuously enact these assumptions through behavioural alignment, a patterning of situated practice emerges. The individual actor's memory traces become materialised through this practice: it becomes manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions.

This means that e.g. the act of engaging in reciprocal handshakes as means of greeting or revealing alliances is undertaken unconsciously for the most part by actors. Even though actors have the ability to rationalise and explain why they engage in this specific behaviour, the act itself requires to prior deliberation. We take it for granted that this is how we are supposed to act and, thus, it makes sense to engage in the practice. It is from this perspective that I understand how social systems endure and bind time and space. As instincts and habits shape taken-for-granted assumptions, and actors manifest these; meanings, sanctions, and powers inherent in the social system become (re)produced.

A final comment regarding the multiplicity of social system has to be made here. According to this perspective, actors continuously move in and out of different social systems as they manifest taken-for-granted assumptions. Different contexts entail different justifications, each presenting actors with an opportunity to make sense of what is going on. Each system in turn can be analytically approached through the meanings, sanctions, and powers they entail.

From the perspective I enact in this dissertation, different contexts require us to behave differently. We inherently know how to act in these different contexts, as the situated practices are available for us to observe and enact them. An example of apparently different context is e.g. that of an office meeting and having dinner with your family in your home. On a rudimentary level, the activity is really no different from each other. It is an activity wherein several people, usually knowing one another, engage in social interaction. Both contexts may entail sitting down around a table, engaging in conversation concerning what is currently happening. But the context causes actors to enact different assumptions, leading to different manifestations. If these actors were to behave at home as they did during the office meeting, there would likely be frictions emerging

as a result[14]. Yet, the same actor manages to uphold and identify the contexts wherein the different practices make sense.

3.2 Two social systems within Public Administration

The existence of multiple social systems, each entailing different assumptions concerning how to behave, is asserted on the context of public administration. By this I mean that as actors engage within a public sector context undertake administration, there are two dominating system from which they can draw meanings, sanctions, and powers. I will come back to the specifics of these characteristics in the following section, where I make a detailed analysis of the two social systems, but in this section I will begin to explain the connection to the four E's.

In chapter one I argued that actors engaged in public administration are expected, indeed required to, adhere to four E's: efficiency, effectiveness, equity, and economy. Together the four E's create instances in which governments can administrate their respective welfare states from a manner that involves all citizens and assures them that they will be covered by benefits if needed.

I furthermore argued that as organisational and societal reforms have been directed towards the public sector, the four E's have come to be conjoined into two distinct sets: efficiency and economy on the on hand and effectiveness and equity on the other. This conjoining has among other things resulted in an association regarding increased efficiency to be analysed from a monetary perspective. That is, by associating efficiency with monetary resources it has become easily transformed into quantifiable targets that can be evaluated in retrospect. Analysis of whether efficiency can or has been achieved is therefore understood in the form of available resources. This means that increasing efficiency primarily is about maintaining inputs while increasing outputs or alternatively decreasing inputs while maintaining outputs.

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[14] The 'experiments' that e.g. Garfinkel (1967) engaged his students in, reveal how our taken-for-granted assumptions in everyday life can come to be challenged if others do not behave as we would expect them to.

Through what have been argued to be an economification of the public sector (Lundquist, 1997, 1998, 1999) the conjoined sets of efficiency and economy have had a disproportionally greater impact on public administration as compared to the conjoined set of effectiveness and equity. From the economification perspective, values of democracy have become overshadowed by the focus of economy within the public sector. Public administration has become more and more interested in the management of production and delivery of welfare, rather than administrating the service part of it.

This can partly be understood to be an effect of the neoliberal underpinnings inherited from e.g. the Thatcher and Reagan administrations during the 1970's and 1980's. During this time the organisational and societal reforms mentioned in chapter one was engaged with a clear aim of increasing focus on efficiency and economy. The public sector in general and public administration especially, was deemed as too formalised – too bureaucratic – to be able to meet the demands inherent in a rapidly changing global environment. Things needed to be done in a manner that provided citizens with good levels of welfare for the lowest amount of resources possible. In an attempt of achieving this – and perhaps in some sense increase the legitimacy of the public sector – techniques and models from the private for-profit sector were implemented: what I refer to as the imposition of management in public administration.

From the perspective I take in this dissertation, an economification of the public sector and imposition of management in public administration have given way for challenging social systems within public administration to emerge: social systems that can be used in order to strengthen either the continuous focus of efficiency-economy or effectiveness-equity. These provide actors with support for why certain behaviour is appropriate within public administration. I refer to these social systems within public administration as Management and Civil Service.

As I have touched upon – quite briefly – in chapter one, actors' behaviour alignment is always local. By this I mean that there really exists no macro-level system by which actors adhere. Actors observe situated practice in the context within which they exist. They copy this practice if they find it valid.

In the coming two subsections I will present a description of how actors engaged in public administration draw on the social systems of Management and Civil Service. Focus is kept on the manner in which public administration is understood within the two systems. A more thorough analysis in regards of the meanings, sanctions, and powers inherent in these systems is presented in later sections (in the section Management and Civil Service).

3.3 Public administration within the social systems

Understanding how Management and Civil Service, understood as social systems, come to affect actors engaging in public administration, I will in this section discuss some of the difference in between them. Focus will herein concern how the two systems differ. The main aim is not to focus on the apparent polarisation between the systems, but rather to exemplify how different assumptions concerning administration may become manifested by actors. I have deliberately kept this section rather brief, as the next section goes into deeper detail concerning the meaning, sanctions, and powers inherent in the two systems.

Ouchi (1979, 1980) argued that organisational control can be understood from the dimensions of (1) the manner in which the controlling part have an understanding of the transformative process and (2) the ability to connect quantitative measures to the process. He argues that organisational control can be exerted through measuring outputs, dictating behaviour, or by establishing rituals and ceremonies. Regarding Management and Civil Service, the first two types are focused upon.

According to Ouchi's reasoning, output control can be exerted when there are good opportunities for quantification. More importantly, output controls are suited when the controlling part lacks deeper knowledge about the process of transformation required for the undertaken activities. From the backdrop of exchanging public sector experts to generalists, one of the many reforms directed at public administration, we could suspect that the deeper knowledge among actors have come to change. Out of necessity, generalists have a broader, although shallower, knowledge of administration leading us to associate it with the use of output controls. In a sense, the exertion of control through outputs can be understood as made from a distance.

The alternative is when there are low opportunities for quantification but whereas the knowledge about the transformation process is known to the controlling part. In order to control those who handle citizens' applications, there is need for an expertise in e.g. current legislation. In these instances we may find the ability to supervise the activities from a much closer distance, through e.g. direct supervision or imposing rules and guidelines.

The two rationales described above are inherently different. In the first control type, output controls are preferred when supervisors are generalists, whereas the second control type concerns experts. One often highlighted reform directed towards public administration concern the exchange of experts for ac-

tors with a general knowledge of management (Hood, 1991, 1995; Pollitt, 2000; Lapsley, 2008, 2009). As these generalists, of course, lack the in-depth knowledge of e.g. the current legislation, it is reasonable that they have a preference of output control.

In regards of output control it has been argued that it better survives hierarchical transferences (Ouchi & Maguire, 1975). By this, it is implied that if higher ranking actors within an organisation want to have information about performance on lower levels, that information is not as easily distorted if it is constructed in quantitative terms. A shift towards output control can from this perspective be understandable, as reforms directed towards public administration have aimed at increasing instances of transparency and accountability.

From this backdrop I argue that within the social system of Management, it is likely that there exists a preference towards output controls whereas within Civil Service there is a preference towards behaviour control.

An inherent part of output versus behaviour control is the timing in when it is exerted. Output control in e.g. the form of performance measurements or actual versus estimated costs are logically exerted ex post. After all, it is hard to evaluate what has happened before it actually happens. Correction from this standpoint is used after actors have undertaken their tasks. Behaviour control, however, is exerted ex ante. Rules and direct supervision are two examples in which correction is exerted before actors undertake their tasks.

Making the inference that output control is manifested within Management, and behavioural control within Civil Service, it provides a suggestion about the status of actors within the system. Within Management, actors are assumed to be competent enough to perform within certain parameters. There is discretion given to actors, but if they fail to be responsive enough to meet performance requirements, they are held accountable for this. Within Civil Service, discretion becomes heavily reduced. This is due to the ex ante characteristic of behaviour control. As e.g. rules are used in order to direct actors' behaviour so that it aligns with the common goals, their options for action become limited.

By extension, actors' understandings of public administration within Management primarily support assumptions concerning the individuals' ability to perform. The assumptions within Civil Service, where behaviour control is central, primarily come to support the hierarchy's ability to perform. From one perspective this resonates well against the backdrops of market versus bureaucracy (cf. Ouchi, 1980). From another perspective is gives a hint about individualism versus collectivism.

I will make a final comment regarding public administration in the two systems. This comment refers to the instances regarding the four E's as dis-

cussed here and in chapter one. I have argued that the economification of the public sector has given lenience towards the conjoined set of efficiency and economy. These instances are susceptible for quantification and ex post evaluations. The conjoined set of effectiveness and equity, however, are less susceptible for the quantification. Adherence to legislation and organisational rules are expected in order for citizens to receive the benefits they are entitled to, and furthermore that they are treated in a fair manner when applying for them.

From this last perspective, I understand the four E's to play different roles within the different social systems. Within Management the conjoined set of efficiency and economy is likely to have an important role, whereas effectiveness and equity are likely to be important within Civil Service. It should however not be assumed that e.g. Civil Service disregards instances of efficiency and economy, merely that they play a smaller role within the system.

In the next section I will elaborate on the social systems of Management and Civil Service from a structural perspective. More specifically, I will discuss the social systems in regards of meanings, sanctions, and powers.

3.4 Management and Civil Service

In the above sections I have argued that social systems can be understood to be assumptions concerning how to engage in social interaction. Within a context of public administration these social systems can be understood to be Management and Civil Service. The driving argument I make here is that engaging in public administration, essentially imbalanced when it comes to the four E's, means enacting different assumptions about inherent activities in order to make sense of them. I have furthermore presented how the approach of control can be understood within these two systems: output control versus behaviour control.

In this section I will make a theoretical analysis regarding the two social systems associated with public administration: Management and Civil Service. The presentation follows the framework presented in table 2.1. I therein make an analytical separation between meaning, sanction, and power (the three structures inherent in social systems). I furthermore separate the two concepts within each structure.

3.4.1 Meaning

In chapter two I discussed how structures of signification entail meaning through actors' use of discourse and construction of symbols. The manners in which actors speak and interact with the surrounding society create a platform for understanding that actors' disposition regarding social status, family background, and ontological perspectives etcetera. Discourses become manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions wherein symbols are created. These symbols represent different traits that become noticeable through visualisation. In this section I discuss how discourse and symbols relating to Management and Civil Service are understood from a theoretical perspective. I begin with Management and then continue with Civil Service.

Management

Public administration has been subjected to a number of reforms. New techniques have been introduced and the manner in which we refer to these techniques is quite often by adopting a vocabulary that is connected to them. This is what I refer to as a managerialist discourse.

The manner in which actors speak about public administration within the public sector has changed as actors within the public sector have adopted words connected to these techniques. Words and expression usually connect to what is referred to as the private for-profit sector and come to change the manner in which actors engaged in public administration perceives things. It has been claimed that actors adoption of words and expression associated with the private for-profit sector follows a trend of economification (Lundquist, 1997, 1998, 1999) or new managerialism (Deem & Brehony, 2005). Since language is essential for our understanding and expressions about the reality we live in, it is no surprise that actors' rationalisations change in accordance with their language (Hartley, 2006, p. 48).

The managerialist discourse discussed in this section is understood to entail traits of being impartial and assuming objectivity. Numbers and statistics are often used in order to construct facts. These facts, then, are perceived by others to be an objective truth, partly due to the inclusion of the already mentioned numbers and statistics. Due to this apparent objectivity inherent in the managerialist discourse, the user wielding becomes potentially very powerful (Rombach & Zapata Johansson, 2005, pp. 19-20). The discourse can be used in order to persuade decisions makers into making certain choices, in a sense taking control over their deliberative ability. Through the seemingly objective,

impartial, rational, normative, and powerful nature, the managerialist discourse is essentially constructed for persuasion.

I have already mentioned the interrelation with new techniques being imported to public administration. In order for actors to deploy these techniques they need to assume the protocols for communicating with others. Words such as productivity, market, product, or measurable result (Agevall, 2005, pp. 153-158) are frequently used in these contexts.

Words carry meaning that actors may draw on in order to make sense of why the new techniques are used in the first place. Industrial similes and virtues of machines are adopted in order to discuss e.g. how control over actors' behaviour should be exerted (Hartley 2006 p. 48) within public administration. Actors' use of these similes accentuates a 100 year old connection back to the era of Scientific Management (Taylor, 1998 [1911]) where workers was primarily considered resources that needed some tuning and direction in order to function correctly.

As the managerialist discourse is enacted on a daily basis within public administration, actors making use of it creates affiliations with the surrounding business community. The construction of customer orientation (Huzell, 2005, p. 224) as well as an output orientation (Berglund, 2005, p. 55) discursively aligns actors within the public sector with those employed within the private for-profit sector. In a sense, the managerialist discourse emancipates the actor from the limitations presented by public administration. It provides actors with an opportunity for empowerment and a sense of ownership (Hartley, 2006, p. 48).

The managerialist discourse is observable at different levels of society and affects actors' understanding of different contexts and phenomena. Although I here construct the discourse as managerial, it should not be understood as anti-welfare. This would be a grave misconception of the concept. Gewirtz and Ball (2000, p. 266) rather accurately reflects on this by stating that:

> [...] the new languages of enterprise, quality and excellence grate against existing and embedded welfarist languages but may still encompass aspects of the welfarist project, even if the possibilities for the realisation of the project are significantly altered.

The only reason why we would find the managerialist discourse to be anti-welfare is due to our own preconceptions about what such welfare language should include. The enactment of the managerialist discourse – well, indeed with any discourse for that matter – is a sign of the prevalent practices. As new

techniques are implemented, actors' use of words and expression change. I have already discussed this above.

The managerialist discourse reveals a common understanding concerning the manner in which control should be exerted (cf. Barley & Kunda, 1992, p. 364). There is a recursive interconnection between how new techniques become introduced, talked about, and used within public administration. As new techniques are identified, they become associated with certain predominant discourses. Actors make sense of these techniques by adopting the manner in which they are spoken about: by extension, actors make sense of the emerging context. This means that identified practices and environments are partly shaped by the enacted discourse, which in turn is shaped by the existing practices and environments.

So far I have restricted the adoption of the managerialist discourse to be solely connected to the implementation of new techniques within public administration. There are, however, other important instances within contemporary societies that support the adoption of the managerialist discourse use. One such instance is management consultants, business schools, and the business press (Abrahamson, 1996). As more and more actors come to be schooled and versed in management throughout the world, the managerialist discourse becomes continuously promulgated.

Apart from discourse providing actors with meaning, Management also contains symbols that are discursively constructed, essentially carrying meaning for actors engaged in public administration. According to the Oxford Dictionary (available online[15]), the word 'management' means "a person responsible for controlling or administering an organization or group of staff". Remembering what I mentioned about rudimentary administration, the word management is a general term for being responsible for something. This responsibility is primarily understood to concern other actors' compliance so that common goals can be reached.

The discursive symbol, however, is not entirely value free in the manner that the Oxford Dictionary suggests. The symbol is commonly associated with attributes (Schein, 1973, 1975) as well as traditional characteristics (Bem, 1974, 1975; Powell & Butterfield, 1979) commonly found among male actors. The symbol within Management is affiliated with masculine stereotyping, infusing it

[15] http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/manager?q=manager, hämtad 2014-02-19

with virtues of strength, decisiveness, and a go-ahead spirit. It has furthermore been found that even though women take place in classically male dominant work environments, successful management remains associated with male characteristics (Brenner, Tomkiewitz, & Schein, 1989; Schein & Mueller, 1992). This means that actors of all genders assume and accept the symbol inherent in Management, essentially providing them with meaning for the activities they undertake.

I mentioned the virtue of decisiveness above, which is a virtue that can be found within classical management literature. Within this strand of literature it is associated with being on top of things, always alert, and always on the way forward. I understand and define these concepts as proactivity.

Proactivity emerges in the discursively constructed symbol of management through the inherent expectation that a Manager should compel others to do the work for them (Drucker, 1954, p. 6) and maintain "the organization in operation" (Barnard, 1938, p. 215). Proactivity infused in the discursively constructed symbols is furthermore strengthened as actors are expected to delegate responsibilities (Mintzberg, 1971, p. 99) as well as getting into the nitty-gritty details: commonly referred to as micro-management (cf. Alvesson and Sveningsson 2003). And if all else fails, actors drawing on Management need to engage in negotiations (Lax & Sebenius, 1986).

Taken together, the discursively constructed symbol embodies an individual that is primarily guided by an internal locus of control (Rotter, 1966; see also Mirels, 1970; Levenson, 1973; Prociuk & Lussier, 1975; Rotter, 1975; Duttweiler, 1984) or push motivation (cf. Delmar, 1999). This means that actors assume a personal obligation of embodying the proactivity already discussed and that it is only through the individual actors' engagement that things get done.

The combination of masculinity, proactivity, and internal locus of control suggests an individual in solitude. By this I mean that actors constructing a symbol of the Manager – drawing meaning from it – assumes as position wherein individuality is central. Although the Manager may be a valuable part of a whole within an organisation, it is a rather lonely role when push comes to shove. It is through the work of that lonely Manager that things get done.

Civil Service

Civil Service – like Management – entails a set of discourse and constructed symbols that present actors with meaning. In this section I will focus on the

specificities surrounding discourse and furthermore how meaning becomes visualised through the construction of symbols.

The term 'Civil Service' in itself is indicative of the inherent meanings of the social systems. By starting with a separation of civil on the one hand and service on the other, it becomes possible to begin an exploration into the meanings inherent in the social system. Civil, firstly, implies a courteous as well as a polite attitude towards someone or something. This highlights the importance of e.g. relationships as carriers of meaning. The word civil is furthermore a constitutive separation away from e.g. military organisations. Civil Service is not primarily focused on these latter organisations, but on the non-military parts of the society. Service, secondly, implies instances of providing something, or instances wherein actors' engage in helping others. The context of helping these others could be waged labour – as for instance the service we receive in restaurants – or voluntary activities – as helping someone with a bag of heavy groceries. From the perspective I take in this dissertation, I understand 'civil service' with reference to waged labour in which helping others is central: these 'others' are primarily understood as citizens.

I understand the discourse prevalent within the social system of Civil Service as a welfarist discourse[16]. The welfarist discourse is affiliated with the growth and retention of the welfare state, as we understand it in contemporary western democracies. As such, we are expected to find words and expressions that has a main function to support a general form of 'welfarism' (cf. Gewirtz & Ball, 2000) within public administration. With its connections and affiliations with the welfare state, the welfarist discourse carries connotations of legislative regulations, equity, and the states' sovereignty. It is through their verbalisation of expressions that the immaterial world of the actor can be found (Agevall, 2005, pp. 151-153).

The welfarist discourse is by tradition also associated with bureaucracies. This entail words and expressions enforcing the need for rules, regulations, and standardisation. The bureaucratic versions of the welfarist discourse can be perceived to be impermeable as it assumes a language commonly used in legislation when communicating with citizens. Although Sweden has constituted legislation (SFS 2009:600) as well as implemented a governmental agency – The

[16] Although I here refer to the discourse within Civil Service as 'welfarist' does not mean that I imply the managerialist discourse to be anti-welfare. I have discussed this above, but it is worth repeating.

Swedish Language Council – actively working to reduce the bureaucratised language elements within the Swedish public sector, it remains a vital part of the welfarist discourse[17].

It may be the case that the welfarist discourse enforced through bureaucratisation obscures the user of the discourse behind a veil of objectivity. This is the case if we accept the assumption that legislation is value free and, thus, objective. By assuming these versions of a welfarist discourse, the actor may strive towards the same kind of rational or objective costume as that discussed as inherent in the managerialist discourse. The difference in this variant – the bureaucratised welfarist discourse – is that a distance towards the recipient is constructed. This means that rather than enacting the discourse as a technique of persuasion, objectivity is used as a technique for creating a distance towards the recipient.

The discursively constructed symbols within Civil Service can be approached from several perspectives. I find it useful to begin this visualisation from the perspective of neutral competence (cf. Kaufman, 1956, p. 1060). The concept of neutral competence assumes that actors engaged in public administration engage in activities without partisan convictions (cf. Aberbach & Rockman, 1994, p. 1). Symbolically, then, civil service is separated from the political process (cf. Cook, 1992, p. 408; Mouritsen & Svara, 2002, p. 30) meaning that legislation assumes a prioritised role.

Legislation is furthermore assumed to be neutral. I have discussed this in the form of assumed objectivity inherent in the bureaucratised versions of the welfarist discourse above. As legislation becomes elevated as neutral and actor engage in invoking it in their activities, the symbol of Civil Service in part becomes affiliated with a sense of a conservatory character (cf. Terry, 2003). From some perspectives it may even be understood as the enactment of a neutral legislation serves as a force enabling the continuity of society (cf. Heclo, 1975, pp. 82-83). Symbolically, then, Civil Service is associated with underpinning the survival of the welfare state: an absolutely necessary part in modern western democracies.

The symbol of Civil Service is, however, more complex than only being composed of neutral competence. Whereas neutral competence primarily refers to the connections between the civil servant and politicians, there is an im-

[17] Personal communication with the Swedish Language Council, 2014-02-19.

portant part connecting it to other citizens. Cooper (2012) refers to this as the protean role of civil service, referring to the mythical god Proteus, who had the ability to change his appearance in the blink of an eye.

Although the simile of the civil servant as Proteus is limping at best, the nature of the shifting personage inherent in the symbol of Civil Service is prominent. According to this perspective there is need for actors to play several distinct parts when engaged in public administration. One refers to the relation with politicians as described above. Another is the relation with superiors within the organisations. A third relation is that with fellow citizens. Between these relations, there is a continuous tension in regards of which to prioritise.

The complexity infused into the symbol in the manner of multiple parts has been discussed vividly within research focusing on the public sector. One example is the above argued protean role (Cooper, 2012) and yet others have progressed e.g. the republican citizen (Sandel, 1996, p. 117) and the representative citizen (Chandler, 1984, p. 197); others have discussed the complexity through deliberative democracy (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000, 2001) and collective perspectives (March & Olsen, 1989). They all assert the importance for Civil Service to show allegiance with both citizens as well as superiors. Within a Swedish context this has been referred to as the guardian of democracy (cf. Lundquist, 1997, p. 68; 1998, pp. 72-74; 1999, p. 56). The symbol within Civil Service thus becomes infused with responsibilities concerning upholding the democracy.

According to Lundquist (1998, p. 190), civil servants continuously need to walk a thin line between adhering to the legislation, proving to be responsive towards superiors and show consideration to fellow citizens. An intricate part of being able to balance between these instances is that of civil courage. This civil courage could be manifested in protests, obstruction, or exit (a notion that Lundquist extracted from Hirschman, 1970) if orders are directly illegal or clash against ethical convictions of the civil servant. The civil servant should be a servant of democracy, not a lapdog of rulers (Lundquist, 1999, p. 156).

In summary, then, I understand meaning inherent in the system of Civil Service to stem from a welfarist discourse, expressing understandings of welfare and the states sovereign status. This discourse is furthermore influenced with bureaucratisation meaning that actors enact words and expressions in order to assume objectivity and distance towards the receiver. Symbolically, Civil Service entails a legally versed individual infused with a civil courage to stand up against political whimsicalities or straight-out illegalities in order to protect (1) the democracy and (2) serving its fellow citizens. The symbol of the civil servant is induced with neutral competence, which assures stability and constitutional con-

servation. Legitimacy is rendered through adhering to current law, proving loyalty against their superiors and showing consideration towards their fellow citizens.

3.4.2 Sanction

Sanction comes inherent as actors draw on structures of signification and are understood as actors' processes for constructing legitimacy. As I discussed in chapter two, such sanctions are understood to stem in tacit as well as formalised rules. Tacit rules are those common understandings that create legitimacy around actors' standpoints. They are understood as underpinnings, serving as a sanctioning within the social system. Formalised rules are, however, are understood as verbalisations of a social system's tacit rules. This is usually found within judicial law or organisational documents (e.g. balanced scorecards or guiding documents) which explicate the predominant values inherent in the organisation.

Tacit and formalised rules are heavily dependent on discourse and symbols as they infuse meaning continuously to the actor. In this section I will, however, try to separate the two, primarily for analytical reasons. Gewirtz and Ball (2000, p. 255) argue that whereas the previous public administrators where socialised within the specific contexts in which they where employed, the 'new managers' within the public sector are primarily socialised as managers. In the following section I discuss Management as well as Civil Service with respect of both tacit and formalised rules. The aim is to provide a basis for understanding how actors sanction comes in as a central role in manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions.

Management

As I mentioned above, and which I have discussed more in chapter two, sanction in inherently interconnected with the meanings actors draw on within a social system. There is a recursive and continuous support from both sides as actors enact them. This means that the sanctions discussed in this section should be understood from the backdrop of the managerialist discourse and symbol inherent in Management.

The first thing I am going to discuss regarding sanction refers to the notion of the neoliberal ideological stances inherent in Management. According to Bobbio (1987, 1994) neoliberalism takes as main departure the general down-

sizing, economizing, and creation of efficiency within the public sector. I touched upon these aspects in chapter one as I discussed the four E's, primarily those of efficiency and economy. These aspects are inherent as markers of sanction within the social system of Management. By this I mean that activities which actors undertake in order to e.g. increasing efficiency are essentially sanctioned from a perspective of Management.

Within Management, the individual is upheld as supreme. This supremacy of the individual in the corporative society can be observed in the expansion of e.g. the citizens' choice within western democracies. Citizens' choice essentially progress from the idea that individuals should have the opportunity to freely choose e.g. which health centre to visit or which school their children should attend. From this perspective the individual is understood as empowered and the Government's right of intervention reduced.

Another example of where individualism as a tacit rule gives sanction to the social system of Management is the occurrence of e.g. citizens' charters. Governments undertaking these activities commonly list a number of commitments that an agency has towards citizens. The underlying though of such activities is to increase quality in Government output by increasing transparency. What it furthermore does is to establish a contractual relationship between the Government and its citizens. This contractual relationship reconstructs citizens into customers, carrying a right to require certain actions to be taken.

The individualism that I discuss above is primarily devoted to affect the intersection between Government and citizens. From this perspective, actors are presented with a way out concerning perceived responsibilities regarding citizens' situations. By this I mean that when responsibility for citizens' choices is removed from the actor engaged in public administration, this actor has no reason for feeling guilty when e.g. revoking citizens' benefits. Individualism here presents actors with an opportunity to maintain a distance to the individuals being affected by undertaken decisions.

The other side of this coin is that touched upon under the previous heading. I refer to the constructed symbol of an individual infused with masculine features and virtues of proactivity and an internal locus control. This symbol refers to an individual that stands on his (sic!) own: it is lonely at the top. Together with the gradual reallocation of power from political levels to actors engaged in public administration (cf. Hood, 2000) responsibilities has also come to be reallocated. Politicians now have been given chances of plausible deniability as actors engaged in public administration assume these responsibilities.

As individualism sanctions the acceptance of responsibilities, it furthermore highlights the importance of the individual actor engaged in public ad-

ministration. Success – as well as failure – comes to be products of individuals' actions, rather than effects of the organisation wherein they are active. The main point I want to get through here is that as the individual comes to be elevated, sanctioned, within Management, the organisational hierarchy looses importance. Individuals' performances are highlighted, which reinforces the meaning of the individualistic actor, which is symbolically constructed. Main focus is turned towards whom it is that assumes a function rather than focusing on the function itself.

In the above section I touched upon the rise of the managerialist discourse. A driving force here can be understood to be the global growth of business schools, affecting language (Abrahamson, 1996) as well as practice (Barley & Kunda, 1992; Czarniawska, 2009). From the perspective of sanction, this growth provides an important underpinning. More and more individuals receive their degree from a business school, in which they have been taught – perhaps even indoctrinated – in beliefs and practices sanctioned through Management. Within Sweden alone, the accumulation of students having received a business degree has come to grow exponentially from 10'000 in the 1970's to 80'000 by the beginning of the 2000s (Engwall & Jungerhem, 2005, p. 106).

There are two implications from this. Firstly, as more and more individuals graduate from business schools, some – inevitably – become employed within the public sector with public administrative tasks. This means that business schools – implicitly – contributes to the rise of Management within public administration. Secondly, the growing market of business consultants likely absorbs those individuals that do not go to the public sector. It is known that such consultants have been used as intellectual resources – change agents – reforming the public sector (cf. Lapsley & Oldfield, 2001) giving legitimacy and credibility to the reforms (Saint-Martin, 1998, p. 348). From this perspective, again, business schools can be understood as responsible for sanctioning Management within public administration.

I have so far only discussed how tacit rules come to underpin sanction within the social system of Management. A second important part of sanction belongs to that of formalised rules. As I mentioned above, and elaborated in chapter two, formalised rules are understood as verbalisations and transformations of tacit rules. Within a context of public administration I will discuss one form of formalised rules that embody the tacit rule of individualism discussed above: the focus of goals rather than process.

One – quite often – discussed organisational reform discussed within a public administration context concern the intensified focus of outputs (cf.

Hood, 1991; Pollitt, 1993, 2000; Lapsley, 2008). According to these, control and evaluation have shifted character so that actors engaged in public administration now focus on what is done rather than how it is done. There is logic to this shift entailing a notion that as long as goals are specified correctly, and furthermore achieved, then the underlying process is of subordinated importance (cf. Brodkin 2011).

The focus on output rather than processes enforces the idea that actors engaged in public administration have obtained a generalist status rather than being an expert. From an Anglo-American tradition, actors engaged in public administration should have a general knowledge of what it means to be a 'manager' rather than in-depth knowledge of the specific activities undertaken within the agency. This generalist knowledge is obtained through management courses or even full degrees from one of the many business schools discussed above.

One implication, however, of having a general knowledge rather than a specialisation or expert status is that actors have less understanding about the underlying processes inherent in the activities. In order to attain control, exertion needs to shift to more general data: quantifiable outputs: I have discussed these in previous subsections above.

By extension, the argument about reduced understanding of the underlying processes can be extended through instances of e.g. increased transparency. Transparency is a complex concept, which is commonly put forth as an argument for public scrutiny. In this context, transparency is understood as an instance concerning full governmental disclosure. That is, actors engaged in public administration are constantly under pressure of being scrutinised – meticulously – as they undertake activities inherent in public administration. Through this continuous and ever present instance of transparency, it is assumed that actors will align their behaviour with the expectation of the society, since deviations will otherwise be made public. I will not challenge this presumption, but argue that such an environment fosters actors into further embracing the tacit rule of individualism discussed above.

The tacit and formalised rules discussed above together forms the sanctions for actors' engaged in public administration when drawing on Management as a social system. From this perspective individualism and a focus on outputs or goals are perceived as strengthening the meanings discussed in the previous section. Especially the symbol of the masculine and proactive individual becomes sanctioned through these rules discussed above.

Civil Service

I have so far argued that the sanctioning parts of Management can be found within the tacit rules of individualism and the formalisation into focuses of outputs or goals. Above I discussed how meanings became available for actors within public administration as the engaged in a welfarist discourse. Symbolically, an individual well versed in law was constructed. This individual was furthermore understood to protect the democracy as well as the citizens living within it. . In this section I will turn my focus on the tacit and formalised rules providing sanction within the social system of Civil Service.

Contrary to the individualism that I argued characterised Management, I understand Civil Service as highlighting family, cooperation, and the importance of the Government within society. This means a general Rather than implying that actors are on their own – the essence of individualism as I understand it – Civil Service provides actors with sanction through a collective approach. From this perspective I understand Civil Service to be sanctioned through a tacit rule of collectivism.

The tacit rule of collectivism can be understood when scrutinising some of the core values commonly associated with Civil Service. Such values, or ideas, entail presuppositions concerning e.g. citizenship, representation, responsiveness, impartiality, equity, and justice (cf. Frederickson, 1997, p. 5; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011, p. 16). Although these ideas can be found within the social system of Management, they are accentuated through the tacit rule of collectivism inherent in Civil Service.

There is a strong tradition of collectivism within the Swedish contemporary society. Blomqvist (2004) has e.g. argued that the Swedish public sector, through approximation thus also public administration, have a history of being egalitarian and collectivistic. The growth of especially the Social Democratic Party (SDP) during the post-war era – i.e. after the 2nd Word War – and total domination of the political scene have strengthened these characteristics.

Within Sweden, there is an important expression that entails the tacit rule of collectivism. I here refer to the expression about Folkhemmet (eng: People's home), which was integrated in the rhetoric used by SDP during this time. The expression Folkhemmet entails a building of the modern Swedish welfare state through hard work, cooperation, and solidarity from citizens. A fundamental idea within this perception was that fortunate and well-resourced individuals should pitch in and help those less fortunate.

Through constructing Folkhemmet, the SDP attacked the prevalent gap between the proletarian and bourgeoisie class as well as that between capital and

labour. Within the boundaries of Folkhemmet, all classes were welcomes and the welfare state should be built on the collective efforts of all these classes. Organisations representing employers as well as employees were guaranteed that the Government and parliament would refrain from intervening in the negotiations on the labour market. As a reciprocal demand, it was required that these organisations resolved issues concerning e.g. wages by themselves. The collective approach of achieving things within the society fostered the tacit rule of collectivism I discuss here.

In the above discussion concerning meaning within the social systems, I argued that the concept of neutral competence (Kaufman, 1956, p. 1060) could be understood as infused within the symbols of Civil Service. The concept serves a function within sanction too. From the perspective of neutral competence it is argued that actors engaged in public administration have an obligation to uphold the legislation and serve current politicians in an impartial manner. There seems to is a consensus regarding individual administrators' obligation to engage in activities that does not contradict the current policy argued by Government (cf. Lundquist & Ståhlberg, 1983, p. 16). This means that they, actors engaged in public administration, should not engage an own policy but comply with the one that is legitimised decision-making assembly.

The issue of neutral competence and the obligation to adhere primarily to the legislation is associated with bureaucratic form of organising (Weber, 1947). Indeed, it has been argued that actors engaging in neutral competence within civil service are primarily to be understood as bureaucrats (West, 2005, p. 148). According to this perspective, actors engaged in public administration may enact Civil Service in order to sanction their adherence to neutral competence. The motivation for this lies in the underpinning argument of *sine ira ac studio* (eng: without anger and partiality) implying that actors distance themselves from emotive schemes that may affect their behaviour (Lundquist, 1997, p. 43).

Bureaucracies, and by extension bureaucratic behaviour, have become synonymous with lack of empathy, rigidness, and abundance of documents: what is referred to as red-tape bureaucracies. Too a large extent it is these forms of bureaucracies that have come to render its bad reputation (cf. Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Aberbach & Rockman, 2006; Pollitt, 2009). From a theoretical perspective, however, the bureaucracy should entail rules that essentially are abstract constructions of the current legislation (Merton, 1940, p. 563). Such a setup present actors with a certain amount of discretion to undertake activities within an otherwise rigid structure.

On a formal level, the ideas underpinning the bureaucracy and neutral competence become manifested through the construction of rules. As Merton

(1940) suggests, rules present an opportunity of exerting control without having to look over everyones shoulder. Furthermore, when rules are consequently connected to the legislation, there is a presumption that bureaucratic behaviour can be predictable (Aberbach & Rockman, 1997, p. 75).

When rules become used within organisations, the process towards a goal, rather than the goal itself, becomes prioritised. By this I mean that the means of achieving ends are the primary focus, as compared to Management wherein ends are the focus. Built into this idea is furthermore the presumption that as actors engaged in public administration adhere to process, they are infused with impartiality. This connects back to the argument I presented above concerning bureaucratised varieties of the welfarist discourse. I there argued that distance towards recipients could potentially be achieved as the discourse in use within legislation is adopted and used in communication with citizen. By the same manner, rules pose opportunities for creating a distance.

The distance that adherence of rules and legislation in this manner vitalises is not, however, in place primarily to protect the actor. Rather it is the citizen who is focused upon. By deploying what is sometimes perceived as rigid structures of rules and procedures, the individual acting on behalf of the public is reduced, in some sense one could perhaps even speak of removal, so that the function s/he holds comes into focus. Through the obligation of rules together with the expectation that actors will follow them, Civil Service sanctions a metamorphosis in which the individual is weakened in favour of the office s/he holds (Weber, 1947, p. 330). The rule-of-law is safeguarded through this metamorphosis.

As process is constituted as a formal rule, the tacit rule of collectivism is strengthened. Following my reasoning above implies that as process prioritised as means of achieving goals, individuals are reduced to rule-followers. Individuals' initiatives are made obsolete, as processes have already been put in place. Empathy e.g. is an emotive scheme best left outside the scope of decisions makings as it *per se* endangers the – rational – impartiality sanctioned by Civil Service. As the individual assumes the role of being a rule-follower, acknowledging that legislation is the will of politicians as well as citizens. Keeping civil servants adherent to rules – and ultimately the legislation – preserves equity as individual actors within organisations disregard their self interests: they act *sine ira ac studio*.

Lastly, Civil Service has a paternalistic tendency. This is especially observable through the manner in which bureaucratisation has been undertaken. Civil Service is essentially underpinned by the idea that equity is a superior goal for

the public sector. However benign such an approach may seem, it also supports the Government's transcendence of citizens, claiming that it takes care of them. Actors engaged in public administration may therefore draw on sanctions allowing them to assume a hierarchical position (the father) by which they can exert power over citizens (the children).

Sanctions within the social system of Civil Service, then, can be found in the tacit rule of collectivism. Formalised, this have been found to entail the highlighting of process rather than goal, asserting sanction to actors by assuming that they assumes roles of e.g. being rule-followers. Hierarchy, and thus paternalism, is instigated as individual actors are reduced in favour of the function they fill within the public sector.

3.4.3 Power

The final structure inherent in social systems as I discussed them in chapter two is the structure of domination. Essentially, the structure of dominance is about the transformative capacities actors may draw on in order to enable the other two structures. I refer to these instances as power, which actors may draw on in order mobilise meaning and sanction. In this section I will elaborate on how power can be understood from the perspective of public administration.

Structures of domination are understood to encompass authoritative as well as allocative resources. As I make use of it in this section, I connect both forms of resources to other actors. In chapter two I explained that whereas authoritative resources refer to the power to affect actors, allocative resources refer to the power to affect material objects. I make a slight alteration to this in this section when I connect power so that it comes to refer only to actors. Authoritative resources refer to the manner in which actors engaged in public administration are situated within an organisation. Allocative resources, however, refer to the manner in which personnel are constructed. I will begin by discussing this firstly from the perspective of Management and then move on to discuss Civil Service.

Management

Understanding power within the social system of Management means connecting it to the sanctions and meanings already discussed above. By this I mean that the transformative capacity, although not an inherent part of them, may be understood by connecting it to the already discussed meanings and sanctions. I have argued that meaning within the social system of Management is derived –

partly – from the symbolic construction of an individual that is proactive and guided by an internal locus of control. This symbol is strengthened by the tacit rule of individualism discussed under sanctions.

When scrutinising classical literature concerning tasks and activities of managers, it becomes clear that it concerns men (sic!) "who directs the work of the others and who, as a slogan puts it, 'does his work by getting other people to theirs'" (Drucker, 1954, p. 6). Being an actor engaged in management, then, primarily concerns tasks and activities directed not so much towards the production of an organisation as it concerns getting others to focus on the production.

The tacit rule of individualism together with the notion that ends – goals – are the primary objective that the actor engaged in public administration should focus on, furthermore enforces the idea that the person is central. By downplaying the importance of process, actors are infused with a sense of discretion. This trust can be understood to draw on a – perhaps false – presumption of the competence that actors have. The logic is that as long as you are competent enough to achieve your goals, there is no need to stake out meticulous controls referring to how things should be done.

Barnard (1938, p. 220) stated in his seminal work that "[t]he most important single contribution required of the executive, certainly the most universal qualification, is loyalty […]". This loyalty is reinforced through the perceived trust the actor experiences as process is downplayed in favour of goals. Taken together, meanings as well as sanctions inherent in the social system of Management elevates the presences and importance of the individual, meaning that formal organisational structures are understood to be secondary. The survival and success of organisations is primarily understood to be the effects of competent people within the organisation.

The other side of the transformative capacities – power – refer to allocative resources. As I argued above, this is theoretically understood to be the power actors' hold over material objects. What objects does the actor have capability to transform? In the context of public administration, where power is primarily related to other actors, I take the perspective of the manner in how those other actors are constructed. More specifically, in what way are administrators that handle citizens' applications constructed and thought of.

Following the quote from Drucker above, actors enacting power from Management does so with an understanding of 'getting other to do the job'. The primary task is here understood as the use of managerialist discourse with an aim of persuasion and putting people to good use. In a manner of speak,

subordinated personnel are reconstructed into resources available for the manager.

The tacit and formalised rules sanction the perspective of reconstructing personnel into resources. As the achievement of goals have been prioritised and the individualism elevated as a tacit rule within the social system, other actors easily becomes perceived as resources. As competence is primarily an individual trait, team efforts relate primarily to the manner in which persuasion is successful. That is, as long as things get done there is no need to scrutinise the manner in which they have been done. A good goal is one that is achieved and by extensiton, a good actor is one that is put to use.

The two perspectives here are supportive of each other. Other actors will affirm their role as resources: although most likely with other words that have more positive connotations, as long as the confidence in the individual is upheld. Power, then, within the social system of Management is enacted by both upholding the individual as a competent actor (authoritative) as well as by the perception of other administrators as resources.

Civil service

I have above discussed the meanings and sanctions inherent in the social system of Civil Service as consistent of legality, civil courage, and infused with neutral competence. The tacit rules of collectivism strengthen the idea of processes rather than goals as primary objective. Actors are understood as protectors, or guardians, of democracy as well as citizens. The transformative capacities of Civil Service are tightly interrelated with the bureaucratic function of organising and controlling. In this section I will firstly discuss my understanding of authoritative resources within Civil Service and thereafter discuss the allocative resources.

An essential factor in the bureaucracy, as argued by Weber (1947), is the construction of hierarchies. I will not spend time here to fully elaborate the concept of bureaucratic hierarchy, as this would require a dissertation on its own, but rather present a description of it.

The bureaucratic hierarchy presumes levels of responsibilities and a clear chain of command. Top-level actors have commanding authority over all those further down the hierarchy. Tasks that are on a strategic level are pushed upwards within the organisation, whereas tasks on an operative level are understood as best handled at lower levels of the organisation. Such choice of organising reduces the risk of information clogging (cf. Thompson, 1967; Galbraith, 1973, 1977).

A second part of the bureaucratic hierarchy refers to the existence of rules. I have touched upon this above, and in essence they are constructed in order to control the behaviour of actors: preferably so that it aligns with the current legislation. It has been argued that the legitimacy of the bureaucracy stems from the adherence to the legislation rather than presumed expertise within the organisation (cf. Cook, 1992, p. 404). This means that even though civil servants are expected to have expert knowledge, the primary objective of the bureaucracy is to keep with the legislation.

A third important factor of the bureaucratic hierarchy is one where the function of the bureaucracy is elevated above the person currently occupying it. Elevating the importance of the function, and thus downplaying the person holding the position reduce individual emotive schemes. That is, impartiality emerges through the reduction of the individual (cf. Weber, 1947).

Power within the social system of Civil Service can thus be linked to the inheritance of Weber's bureaucracy. From an authoritative perspective, the tacit rules of collectivism give individual actors a role to play in something greater. One is important as one engages in something bigger than oneself. From the perspective of Civil Service, collectivism enforces the idea of the hierarchy. This means that in opposition of the power within Management, the person holding a function as public administrator is downplayed in favour of the position s/he holds. Power resides in the function within the hierarchy, not the person temporarily occupying it.

By extension, the hierarchical approach reconstructs personnel as subordinate actors. As one engages in public administration within the hierarchy, it is expected that others will recognise the position and responsibility of the function one holds. The collectivistic approach here, drawing on hierarchy and legislation, implies that people are perceived in relation to their civil service function. By this I mean that rather than putting faith in the person, hierarchical functions are highlighted.

3.5 Modelling the social systems

The aim of this chapter has been to present a theoretical analysis regarding the social systems of Management and Civil Service. As such it represent an expansion of the theoretical framework progressed in chapter two. I therein argued that all societies consist of social systems wherein structures of signification, le-

gitimation, and domination can be analytically separated. I refer to these structures as meaning, sanction, and power in that actors may draw on them to make sense of the context wherein they exist and the phenomena they encounter.

In this final section I will make use of the framework from chapter two in order to model the social systems discussed above. This means modelling manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in accordance with the previously progressed framework. These manifestations were conceptually linked to meaning, sanction, and power in accordance to Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984). The structural categorisation that I have undertaken (see table 2.1) in the previous sections has aimed at creating a basis for understanding manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration. This means that whereas the framework in chapter two was a general approach for understanding manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions, this final section contains a specification in regards of Management and Civil Service.

3.5.1 Modelling

The polarisation undertaken here means a presentation of highly abstract and theoretical parts in order to reveal the differences in the two social systems. The finding of empirical equivalents may be difficult. This is not the purpose. It is rather to construct and delineate how we may understand Management and Civil Service from a theoretical and conceptual perspective. This approach, I argue, enables the later interpretation of complex empirical phenomena.

The approach of working with modelling have been used in a number of studies concerning both institutional analysis (Townley, 1997; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; Lounsbury, 2001; Townley, 2002; Lounsbury, Ventresca, & Hirsch, 2003; Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006; Lounsbury, 2007; Marquis & Lounsbury, 2007) hybridisation of professionals (Östergren & Sahlin-Andersson, 1998; Kurunmäki, 2004; Kurunmäki & Miller, 2006, 2011), reforms within higher education (Deem, 1998; Meyer, 2002; Deem & Brehony, 2005), and more general conceptualisations of public sector reform (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2000; Gewirtz & Ball, 2000; Riccucci, 2001; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011).

The approach here was chosen as means for constructing a schematic that supports both understanding and categorising concerning manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. In this chapter I have primarily elaborated on the idea of multiple social systems coexisting, which actors can draw on sim-

ultaneously. This means that rather than adhering to the idea that manifestations can be understood from the backdrop of a single social system, I acknowledge two social systems that affect actors in public administration: Management and Civil Service.

3.5.2 A framework of Management and Civil Service

One of the key understandings that I wish the reader to have at this stage is that social systems are connected in time and space through a number of structural properties. This means that taken-for-granted assumptions can (re)emerge, through manifestations, within or between social systems by connecting time and space through the actors' enactment of rules and resources. Social systems, in turn, are understood as structured through a number of structural properties. I have above referred to these as categories of rules and resources.

They can furthermore be divided into structures of signification, legitimation, and domination. In this section I present a matrix of challenging taken-for-granted assumptions, built on the above theorising. In table 3.1 I have summarised the social systems of Management and Civil Service. It creates a bridge between the theoretical assertion presented above and the rather messy empirical reality presented in the following chapters.

Although I have here constructed Management and Civil Service as polarised positions, they should not be understood as a dichotomous. Firstly, which I have argued above, I understand the modelling to contain constructions wherein understanding manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions become possible. Secondly, a dichotomy would imply that there is, indeed, interdependence between the two constructs. That is, if this assertion were held to be true, then Civil Service as a social system would need the existence of Management in order to be described. Rather than perceiving them as dichotomous, I argue that the social systems are autonomous. This means that there exists lenience in both the expected impact that the different social systems have on actors' enactment, but furthermore that we can understand them to as existent without the other systems occurrence.

Table 3.1 Manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration

	Two social systems concerning public administration	
	Management	**Civil Service**
Meaning		
Discourse	Managerialist	Welfarist
Symbols	The Manager	The Civil Servant
Sanction		
Tacit rules	Individualism	Collectivism
Formalised rules	The goal	The process
Power		
Authoritative	The individual	The hierarchy
Allocation	Actors as resources	Actors as subordinates

The categorisation that I have made in table 3.1 can be understood as an abstract of the discussion that I made in the section 3.2. I will not take up much time in elaborating the two social systems here, but rather make a summation.

The social system of Management is understood as drawing on tacit rules of individualism. Actors enacting Management does this through a managerialist discourse in which the Manager is discursively constructed. The Manager is portrayed as a masculine individual infused with a belief in his (sic!) impact on the world. The Manager is furthermore a character that enjoys being proactive and thus gets things done. Sanction is drawn from rules concerning individualism and maintaining focus on the goal. The processes – the manner in which tasks are undertaken – are secondary to achieving the goals. Power is understood from two perspectives. From an authoritative perspective, power is focused on the individual holding a position within the organisation. The Manager gets things done by assigning other people to do it. From an allocative perspective, administrators are perceived as resources that can be put to use.

The social system of civil service, on the other hand, is understood as making use of a welfarist language (cf. Gewirtz & Ball, 2000) where the Civil Servant is discursively constructed. The Civil Servant, here, is understood as one that portrays a neutral competence in that s/he regards the legislation as primary and politics as secondary. The Civil Servant is compassionate about fellow citizens, but maintains regularity in decisions making by adhering to current law, and thus conserves the constitution. Sanctions are derived from a collectivist approach to welfare, where equity and impartiality are key characteristics. The history of Folkhemmet – the peoples' home – plays an intricate part of sanctioning actors' enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions. The Civil Servant is furthermore focused on process rather than goal. The underpinning assumption here is that if process is maintained, goals are achieved. The choice of

means is important as the manner in which things gets done matter. Power within Civil Service is understood to emanate from the hierarchy. This means that loyalty is preserved for the functions people hold within the organisation, rather than the people employing those functions. Administrators are perceived as subordinates, incorporated in the hierarchy, which have tasks that need to be done.

This concludes the theoretical and conceptual basis within this disseration. In the following four chapters I will present empirical analyses that, in different manners, concern the dilemmas which actors engaged in public administration faces and make sense of.

4 They call it the ENSA 3.0

In 2005, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (the SSIA) was constructed: essentially an organisation consisting of 21 regional insurance offices and the National Social Insurance Board (the NSIB), which served as the previous governing body. The new agency, the SSIA, was placed within the central government and was given presented with the challenging task of decreasing the discrepancy regarding citizens' applications as well as increasing the efficiency of administrating the Social Insurance. Citizens' applications were evaluated differently depending on where in the country they lived, they were placed in long investigations, the insurance was continuously being hollowed out, and costs were increasing. That is, all in all the previous organisations had been deemed to lack in efficiency, effectiveness, equity, and economy.

In this first empirical chapter, I will present stories and observations concerning the work undertaken within the SSIA concerning public administration. More specifically, I will present stories and observations that focus on the work of introducing business processes as means of control, standardisation, and resource allocation. These business processes carried the name 'ENSA', essentially implying a unified manner in which citizen' applications should be evaluated.

This chapter contains five parts. Firstly, I will discuss the methods approach I have made use of in order to observe and interpret behaviour within the newly constructed agency. Secondly, I will discuss how actors' work with rules and standardisations instigated dilemma within the agency. In section three I present observations regarding how the process of resource allocation came to accentuate the dilemma instigated by rules and standardisations. In the fourth section I present observation concerning how this dilemma continuously came to be perpetuated. Finally, I discuss some of the implications and inferences I make in connection to these presented observations.

4.1 Methods approach

In order to understand how actors came to manifest taken-for-granted assumptions within the newly constructed organisation I made use of open-ended interviews together with participatory observation. I discussed this approach in chapter one. In this section I will present more hands-on how I went about undertaking them. I will furthermore present how they were handled, interpreted and used in this chapter.

During April 2009, a colleague[18] and I conducted six interviews with senior actors within the agency. They were all, or had been[19], employed within the top management group. The interviews lasted on average 1.5 hours and were recorded digitally with use of a Dictaphone. The interview sessions were undertaken at the Head Office in Stockholm and conducted in a rather relaxed manner. Interviewees were asked to give their perspective on what had happened within the agency during the period between 2005 and 2008. We were, at the time, especially interested in the choices made regarding organising and exerting control.

All participants have been given random names throughout this chapter in order to ensure their anonymity whenever quoted. This means that neither sex nor nationality can be deduced from the manner in which I represent them. I have furthermore included the date for when the interview was conducted in order to increase transparency when it comes to who said what and when. Due to the anonymity I have given the interviewees in this chapter all citations should be seen as a representation of senior perspectives in general rather than from a specific individual having a specific function.

Throughout this chapter I present excerpts from these six interviews. All six participants are present in the chapter, although not equally distributed. This has not been my primary purpose. This chapter mainly contains stories and observations concerning the present and the history concerning public administration. As is the case with most qualitative methods, researchers gain knowledges over a period of time, and then present it in a condensed form.

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[18] My supervisor Gert Paulsson from Lund University School of Economics and Management partook in the interviews during this time.

[19] At the time of the interview, one of the senior managers had left his positions wtihin the SSIA. S/he was, however, willing to be a part of the interviews.

This presentation is thus the result of continuous interpretation and scrutiny with empirics as well as theoretical aspects. From this perspective the story in this chapter is in large my condensed version, formed through organisational members' stories and my observations. The excerpts that I use in this chapter is therefore not in place to reveal an objective truth as such, but rather to support the story I have chosen to retell.

Apart from the six interviewed that are represented through excerpts, a number of less formalised conversations was undertaken at the time. These conversations were engaged during coffee breaks, lunches, or simply casual conversation as people met in the hallway outside their office. These parts are not represented through explicit excerpts, but have nevertheless formed my understandings of what was happening within the agency. From this perspective, they have shaped the manner in which I have selected the excerpts in this chapter.

In addition to the interviews with senior actors in April 2009, I was invited to join a group of lower level actors engaged in constructing a part of the business process between August 2009 and January 2010. I accompanied them as they conducted fieldwork at two local insurance offices (in Sunne in the middle part of Sweden and Happaranda in the most northern part of Sweden) as well as their continuous work located at the Head Office in Stockholm. The participation involved observing their daily work, joining them during coffee breaks and lunches, and sometimes joining them during evenings as they went out to restaurants. My engagement with this group enabled me to follow the process of constructing new business processes within the agency, from the planning phase up until 'releasing' it within the agency. Field notes where continuously written as I observed the team.

The examples I use when presenting the participatory observations have been constructed in order to portray a vivid picture of what was going on. They primarily serve as setting the scene for that which I discuss in the different paragraphs.

4.2 Introducing dilemma

During the late 1990's and early 2000's several governmental reports (cf. SOU 1996:64; SOU 2003:69; SOU 2003:106) argued that administration of the Swedish Social Insurance suffered form inadequacies in the form of discrepancies and inequalities. This had caused the administration of the Social Insur-

ance to loose the political support as well as citizens' faith. The 'old' choice of organising the administrative duty through regional offices was deemed as part of the inherent problem. For this reason it was argued that a merger between these regional offices and the NSIB was one manner in which inadequacies could be overcome. Another change was the instigation of rules and standardisation together with more focused measurements and retrospect evaluations.

With the creation of the SSIA in 2005, two divisions were constructed, each delegated responsibilities concerning the administration of the Swedish Social Insurance: one division concerned 'the insurance' and the other 'the production' within the agency. This can essentially be understood as a separation concerning *what* versus *how*.

The division responsible for 'the insurance' primarily worked with deciding what was to be undertaken, how legislation should be interpreted, and in what manner internal guidelines and recommendations should be constructed. 'The production', however, primarily concerned themselves with the manner in which such recommendations could be transformed into actual work within the organisation. A majority of the employees was positioned within the 'production' part of the agency, making it much more influential.

The separation into 'insurance' and 'production' introduced a perceived separation between the 'what' and 'how': between instigating rules and focusing on output. It was perceived that rules should primarily be made so that it aligned behaviour within the agency in a manner that adhered to the current legislation. The focus on output within 'the production', however, concerned increasing the number of applications handled within the agency given a specific level of personnel. For actors engaged in public administration on lower levels within the agency, the separation between 'insurance' on the one hand and 'production' on the other instigated a dilemma. Should they adhere to rules or required outputs?

According to one of the senior actors within the agency, the inadequacy within the 2005 organisation was largely due to lack of hands-on control, loss of knowledge, and an immense bureaucratisation on higher levels. Regarding the first of these two, s/he commented that:

Svea, 2009-04-22

Det var också på det sättet att det var så långt avstånd mellan ledningen och medarbetare. Och många medarbetare kände sig överlämnade åt sina öden. Alltså det fanns inte produktionsstyrning där chefer var ute på golvet och stökade om i ärenden och så vidare.

It was also the case that there was a long distance between management and employees. And many employees felt left to their fate. Thus there was no control of production, where managers were on the floor messing with applications and so on.

According to this perspective, actors engaged in public administration within the agency lacked the ability to intervene in activities that concerned citizens' applications. There was, however, an abundance of actors employed at the Head Office that had nothing to do with making sure that citizens' beneficiary cases were administrated. S/he remembered coming a bit late to management meeting at the Head Office in Stockholm one time:

Svea, 2009-04-22

Vi var ju då tre chefer som ansvarade för hela produktionen och 90 % av alla medarbetare. Sen sitter man på ledningsgruppen då är det bara ett jävla hav av andra chefer som sitter åt Curts… och vi skoja någon gång, för då kom vi lite sent för ett möte, och satt längst ner och sa "undrar om de märker om vi går härifrån?"

We where three managers who were responsible for the entire production and 90 % of all employees. And then you sit at management team where it is just a bloody sea of other managers that sit for Curt's… and we joked at some point, because we came a bit late for a meeting, and sat down the back and said "wonder if they would notice if we walk out from here?"

This reflection, about leaving unnoticed although they were responsible for a majority of 'the production', suggests a hierarchical bureaucratisation. The Director-General at the time surrounded himself with an entourage of individuals, making the distance between senior staff and handling citizens' applications, quite substantial.

In 2007, it was recognised that the choice of separating between 'insurance' and 'production' had resulted in a preservation of those inadequacies inherent in the previous regional organisations. In other words, there still existed discrepancies regarding the manner in which citizens' applications were handled and the presumed gains in efficiency were absent. In an attempt of remedying this, a group consisting of top-level staffers as well as external business consultants was formed: a project labelled 'The Change Programme', later known as The Programme within the agency.

This project – The Programme – was assigned the task of proposing new ways of organising and controlling the agency so that public administration could be undertaken with greater efficiency. In other words, they were assigned the responsibility of coming to terms with the preserved inadequacies from the 2005 organisation.

The work conducted within The Programme ended up in a proposition of a 2008 organisation, fundamentally breaking with the 2005 version. In regards of dilemmas, three things are highlighted here. Firstly, the choice of regional organising was abolished in favour of what came to be called a 'matrix organisation'. Secondly, the work of coordinating questions regarding 'what' and 'how' became associated with business processes: what is referred to as the ENSA processes. Thirdly, there was instigated a procedure of measuring and calculating the time associated with each of the business process. This came to be known The Calculation wherein times and costs were an intricate part of estimating the need for resources within the 2008 organisation.

Accompanied with the 2008 organisation, new expectations linked to public administration emerged. The choice of organising and coordinating work through business processes lead to actors facing new dilemmas as they engaged in work. The proliferation between the conjoined sets of E's became accentuated.

4.2.1 New organisation, new requirements

The matrix organisation proposed by The Programme in 2007 more concretely meant an implementation of a Customer Meeting Organisation (CMO), wherein the manner in which the agency came into contact with citizens should stand in focus. The CMO in turn came to be structure into three 'channels', each responsible for different instances of the Swedish Social Insurance. In addition, a cross-functional department called Insurance Processes (IP) was instigated with the task of coordinating how citizens' application should be handled within the CMO.

Whereas the previous – 2005 and prior – organisation built around the idea of administrating a social insurance, the new – 2008 – organisation was about the relation between agency and citizen. For some, this meant that instead of being bureaucrats, merely following and implementing current legislation, they would now focus upon instances of achieving efficiency through flexibility and striving towards an appreciation of the citizens' needs – or customers' as it would prove.

More hands-on, public administration was required to change from coordinating through a rule-of-thumb and the expertise that individual actors may have had within the previous organisation. Within the 2008 organisation, business processes played an intricate part: a work lead by IP. Whereas the 2005 organisation had separated between the 'what' and 'how', the 2008 organisation delegated both of these parts to the IP department. That is, they became responsible for interpreting legislation, writing rules and regulations, and dictating how citizens' applications were to be handled. Performance, however, was left to the CMO.

The idea of working with rules and guidelines in the form of processes was not new. Indeed, within the previous organisation this was an imperative issue. What was new was the responsibility that was delegated to the IP department in relation to the CMO. Hanna, a senior actor within the IP department, had a long experience of working with rules and guidelines within the 2005 organisation. S/he reflected on the change in responsibility:

Hanna, 2009-04-22

Då var mitt uppdrag, till skillnad från nu så att säga, bara [att] jobba med process-utveckling och de så kallade hur-frågorna, medans försäkringsdivisionen hade det här ansvaret för normeringsfrågor och alla vägledningsdelarna och alltså vad-frågorna. Nu har försäkringsprocesser […] helhetsansvaret.	My mission then, unlike now, so to speak, was [to] only work with process development and the so called how- questions, whilst the Insurance Division had the responsibility for the norm questions and all the guidance and thus the what-questions. Now Insurance Processes have the […] overall responsibility

The instigation of business processes was understood to be a technique for achieving instances of the 'what' and 'how' in one big bang. Essentially, the business processes was thought of as a managerial technique through which activities could be identified and evaluated. As the 2008 organisation primarily built on an assumed responsiveness towards citizens' appreciation, each activity included in a business process was to be evaluated in accordance to the value it could provide.

From a theoretical perspective, the construction of business processes is based on the premise that activities deemed as invaluable should be removed from the value chain. The remaining activities should be arranged in a manner that minimizes the time for a process to flow through the organisation so that the end recipient receives a qualitative product as fast as possible.

As I have mentioned above, the 2008 organisation had to handle pressing matters of increasing instances concerning efficiency, costs, and the discrepancy

regarding the manner in which citizens' applications was handled. The IP department readily adopted this idea, essentially influenced by private for-profit sector managerial techniques. Hanna acknowledged that there exists an expectation of coming up with opportunities for increased efficiency:

Hanna, 2009-04-22

[…] förväntas också vara en effekthemtagning. I det här fallet att man faktiskt en hel del effektiviserar och hitta… Att alla jobbar på samma sätt och enligt det som vi just nu tror [är] det smartaste sättet.	[…] there's expected to be an effect repatriation. In this case that they actually to a large extent streamline and find… That everyone works in the same way and according to what we right now believe [is] the smartest way.

It is here, in the intersection between the construction of rules and processes and the expectation of increasing efficiency that the dilemma of public administration became observable.

4.2.2 Accentuated dilemmatic position

During my interviews with senior actors, it became obvious that there existed different perspectives regarding the amount of attention the CMO needed to put on the developed business processes. The CMO was of the conviction the business processes were developed essentially as a support for their work in handling citizens' applications.

Members within the IP department, however, rejected this idea and argued that business processes were non-negotiable directives that all employees within the CMO were obliged to comply with. Hanna, within the IP department, continued the story by explaining what s/he believed was the core function of the IP department as well as the developed business processes:

Hanna, 2009-04-22

Om jag med några få ord säga vad försäkringsprocessers uppdrag är så tycker jag att det [är] att omsätta riksdag och regerings uppdrag i […] effektiva[20] försäkringsprodukter och processer. Och det betyder ju att vi måste ha uppdaterade vägledningar. Vi måste ha effektiva […] arbetsprocesser och vi måste ha goda metodstöd.

If I with a few words may say what Insurance Processes' mission is I think that it [is] to translate the Riksdag's and Governments mission in […] efficient insurance products and processes. And that means that we have to have upgraded guides. We must have efficient […] working processes and we have to have good method supports.

From this perspective it became clear that the act of not following the business processes would *ipso facto* mean not following the current legislation. By extension, such a stance would imply not following the Government. This is a very bureaucratic perspective enacted by Hanna, and understandable considering the manner by which it affects citizens. On the other hand, too rigid rules run the risk of contradicting the flexibility that public administration may need as agency meets citizens.

Svea, a senior actor within the CMO, had a different perspective regarding the manner in which business processes should be exerted within the agency. When asked what the role of business processes should be in the agency s/he responded empathically:

Svea, 2009-04-22

[…] alltså produkternas innehåll och paketering, men kundmötet och performance det tycker jag att det bör man lägga på kundkanalerna. Och så bör man lägga ett […] krav på att de ska samverka i det här.

[…] that is the products' content and packaging, but the customer meeting and performance, that I think one should add to the customer channels. And one should add a […] demand that they shall cooperate in this.

Throughout the discussions and interviews that I have had with actors within the organisation, the complexity of having to work with unclear boundaries and blurred responsibilities came to surface time and again. Different actors had different ideas and perspectives on what was really complex and troublesome with

[20] The Swedish language does not separate between (1) efficiency and (2) effectiveness. The Swedish word 'effektiv' is therefore rather ambiguous, as it may reflect any one of the two (English) alternatives. I have consequently translated 'effektivitet' to efficiency in the quotes above.

the changed organisation. August, a senior actor within the Finance Department, embraced a theoretical perspective towards the issue and argued that implementing quite detailed business processes had served to highlight inherent problems within the organisation. S/he said that:

August, 2009-04-23

[…] om man har produkter och marknader eller oavsett vad man kallar det så har man liksom alltid problemet med matrisen. Det finns liksom två intressenter och frågan är ju bara liksom på vilken nivå man ska ha konflikten. […] Fördelen hos oss då kan man säga är att vi gjort konflikten synlig.	[…] if you have products and markets or whatever one calls it one has like always the problem with the matrix. There are like two stakeholders and the question is like on what level one should have the conflict[21]. […] The advantage for us then one could say is that we have made the conflict visible.

As the questions of 'what' and 'how' became delegated to the IP department, public administration within the CMO became more and more about just doing as told. The dilemma, however, emerged – again – as they were held accountable for their performance levels. The discrepancies between the responsibilities that actors within the CMO were required to adhere to together with the dictation from business process accentuated this dilemma.

The dilemmatic position concerning the delegation of responsibilities was furthermore furthered as the IP department claimed the authority to solely dictate the business processes, but whereas the alignment of performance was an instance left to the CMO. There was no one that had an overall responsibility for *a* single product. There was a responsibility delegated regarding the norm setting and development of procedures (i.e. the IP department) and there was a responsibility delegated for implementing these in the daily activities (i.e. the CMO), but the coordination and cooperation between them continuously failed. Hanna recognised the separate responsibilities, but seemed not to mind the intricacies they instigated. S/he argued that:

[21] August here makes use of the word 'conflict' although I have previously stated that what it, from a theoretical perspective, is about is rather a dilemma. The separation I make is a conceptual one and carries theoretical implication. In daily speech, however, the separation is most likely purely semantic. This means that, as is the case in al interpretative research, which the choice of words has to be understood from the context wherein it has been uttered.

Hanna, 2009-04-22

Men att det sen sker ute i kapillärerna och så, att man samverkar lokalt med arbetsförmedling och så. Det är ju lokala försäkringscenters (Int1: mmm) ansvar […] Så där tar Svante Borg… Där tar han över så att säga.

But that it takes place out in the capillaries and such, that one cooperates locally with employment services and such. It is the Local Insurance Centres (Int1: mmm) responsibility […] So there Svante Borg[22] takes… There he takes over so to speak.

The dilemmatic position that actors within the CMO was facing, was further challenging actors as the resource allocation process connected to the business processes: The Calculation.

The Calculation was essentially a time management technique wherein activities and tasks identified within the business process became quantified. The aim of these calculations was to create a format for bringing efficiency and economy explicitly into actors' mind-set as they engaged in public administration. As I will discuss below, the use of calculations did this rather brusquely.

The administration of the Swedish Social Insurance experienced suffered lack in beneficiary claims discrepancy and large financial deficits. The launch of the 2008 organisation was an attempt of coming to terms with these inadequacies. The intent of implementing management techniques inspired by the private for-profit sector was to increase efficiency and economy while simultaneously reducing discrepancies in citizens' applications. Even though this is understandable from a theoretical perspective, one has to ask how this affected the lower level actors engaged in public administration. Kasper, a senior actor within the CMO, commented on the implementation:

Kasper, 2009-04-22

[…] om man tittar ur vårt uppdrag. Att göra saker och ting kostnadseffektivt för medborgarna och så där. Så står ju… (Int 1: enhetligt och…). Ja, så står ju de här lite grand i motsatsförhållande…

[…] if one looks from our mission. To make things cost efficient for the citizens and such. Then the… (Int1: uniform and…). Yes, then these are a little bit in juxtaposition…

Kasper seems to suggest that the ever-increasing focus on costs and efficiency forced public administration into a situation of having to choose between these

[22] Svante Borg was at the point one of three senior staffers employed within the CMO. He had the responsibility for the performance within the Local Insurance Centre, one of the three "customer channels" within the CMO.

'juxtaposed' positions. In the next section I present a case of how the demands of increased efficiency was juxtaposed issues concerning e.g. equity.

4.3 Crunching the numbers

During late 2008, the Finance Department was faced with a rather difficult task: constructing a budget for the fiscal year 2009 but essentially doing this without the historical data as support. Put bluntly, they had no idea what it would cost to administrate the Swedish Social Insurance given the 2008 organisation. In this section I will present a sequence in the changing history of SSIA that accentuated dilemmas that actors engaged in public administration faced. I will begin this section by presenting a background to the budgetary process.

4.3.1 Game of budgets

As I have described above, the organising when administrating the Swedish Social Insurance had changed much during 2008. The new structure had small similarities with how the former organisation was constructed, and manner in which the administration was actually undertaken had pivoted. This caused problems for the Finance Department as they begun their task of producing a budget for the fiscal year 2009.

The main problem resided in the fact that they did not know how much the administration would cost within the new organisation. In other words, whereas the previous organisation(s) in large built on experience over a long period of time, the 2008 organisation consisted of an entirely new structure as well as exerted control. There was simply no way of asking well-seasoned actors how many resources they would require in order to achiever their decided goals. Alfred, a senior staffer within the Finance Department, stated that:

Alfred, 2009-04-22

Men förut hade du säkert kunnat fråga en länsdirektör och då hade han sagt så här "Jamen jag rattar bra resultat om jag får så här mycket". Och det kunde de.	But before you surely could've asked a County Director and then he would've said like this "Yeah, but I get good results if I get this much". And they could.

On top of this, the Government was eager to cut public spending. This meant that the Finance Department needed to figure out both the future resource de-

mands concerning the 2008 organisation and how to fit that with the restrictions imposed from the Government. To circumvent this trouble, the Finance Department needed to come up with a plan in which they could construct a forecast for the coming year. It was at this phase where The Calculation became an important part in the jigsaw. Alfred continued:

Alfred, 2009-04-22

Jamen är det inte [bara] att göra en riktigt ordentligt genomräknad kalkyl? En bottomup... Utifrån alla beslut vi har tagit och alla kunskaper vi har vad skulle det liksom kosta [i] idealläget då? […] Och på det sättet så kom processerna in. […] och blev också ett underlag för att beräkna ekonomin.

Well, is it not [just] a matter of doing a really properly calculated calculation? A bottom-up… Based on all decisions we have made and all the knowledge we have what would it like cost [in] an ideal situation? […] And thereby the processes came in. […] and they also became a basis for calculating the economy.

From Alfred's perspective, the use of the business process would create a basis in the activities undertaken within the agency. Constructing the budget from the bottom would legitimise and instigate a belief in it. By making use of business processes, the Finance Department could understand how administration of citizens' applications were to be undertaken within the new organisation, and thereby also determine the required resources.

By multiplying the determined time for each business process with the case volume of applications concerning 2008, the Finance Department constructed an elaborate estimation in which the number of needed employees was evident. August, another senior actor within the Finance Department, remembered this specific procedure:

August, 2009-04-22

[…] vi […] liksom tog bara alla processer som fanns. Och de var ju räknade då i minuter och så. Där allt var och så tog vi liksom alla […] volymer från försäkringsutveckling. Så bara gångade vi dem. Så sa vi så här 'det är jättebra det behövs liksom 482 medarbetare för föräldrapengen' […] eller årsarbetare var det ju. Det är klappat och klart och det handläggs av NFC. Var god skölj va…

[…] we […] like, just took all the processes there were. And they were calculated in minutes and such. There everything was and so we took like all […] volumes from Insurance Processes. Then we just multiplied them. And said like this 'this is great, it requires like 482 employees for parental benefits' […] or annual workers. It is cut and dried and it is handled by the NIC. Please rinse huh…

One can understand that the business processes and The Calculations posed a great opportunity for the Finance Department. Suddenly, they were able to

construct a budget that they understood as founded in the manner that activities were actually undertaken. After initial analysis, the Finance Department concluded that they lacked almost 8.1 billion SEK (approximately 0.88 billion EUR) in order to correspond personnel wages with the identified business processes. Something needed to be done.

The Finance Department began scrutinizing the underlying conjecture of The Calculation. One of these conjectures entailed an idea that administrators handling citizen's applications did so during six hours of a normal eight-hour workday. Alfred noted:

Alfred, 2009-04-22

[…] vi säger att det är sex timmar man jobbar i sådant som är processkartlagt. Sedan de andra två timmarna så är det lite olika saker man gör. Och då fanns det ett förslag på att jobba sex och en halv timme i det som är processkartlagt... Det ger ju mer effekt och då kan man vara färre personer fast man får ut lika mycket liksom.	[…] let us say that it's six hours that you work with things that are process mapped. Then the other two hours there are a few different things you do. And then there was a suggestion to work six and a half hours in what is process mapped… That gives more effect and then there can be less people even though one gains like as much.

By adjusting the underlying assumption of how much work a beneficiary administrator could put in during a normal day, the theorised deficit shrank. To further investigate if this was a viable alternative the Finance Department urged the IP department to scrutinize the business processes in order to find a way of making it more aligned with the budgetary restrictions at hand.

4.3.2 Assigning dominance to the business processes

The actions of the Finance Department were quickly met with fierce resistance. Senior as well as junior actors engaged in public administration within the CMO came to question the viability of the business processes as well as The Calculation. Did they really connect well with the way in which activities were conducted within the organisation? Rut expressed in it terms of a separation between theoretical cases and experienced reality:

Rut, 2009-04-22

Det är ju en sak att rita en process. Det är en annan sak [att] erfarenhetsmässigt [veta] vad det kostar så att säga. Alltså processerna stämmer ju inte tidsmässigt riktigt med den tid det tar att handlägga.

It's one thing to draw a process. It's another thing [to] experientially [know] what it costs so to speak. The processes are not really accurate in terms of how much the time it takes to administrate.

The perception that business processes and The Calculation did not fit with the reality of handling citizens' application caused the budget to come to a halting stop. The Finance Department and the IP department instigated an intense period of deliberations with senior actors from within the CMO. Every suggestion that was presented to them was declined with the same argument: the business processes did not represent the reality that the actors within the CMO perceived themselves of being in.

The CMO used the business process as leverage for not being able to cut their costs. The reasoning was that if the business processes already was the most efficient and equal manner in which handling citizens' application could be handled, then financial cutbacks needed to be implemented at the expense of something else. In other words, if resources did not match the requirements, something in processes underpinning handling citizens' applications had to be removed.

Representatives within the CMO required that senior staffers at the Head Office should give clear orders on what that something would be. Kasper commented:

Kasper, 2009-04-22

[om] Adriana säger… eller någon annan… "men nu får du skriva upp servicenivån men du får inga mer pengar [...] då måste jag ju effektivisera. Då måste jag få ner processtiderna.

[if] Adriana says… or someone else… "hey, now you have to turn up the level of service but you won't get any more money […] then I'll have to streamline. Then I'll have to reduce the process times.

The process of deciding the resource allocation for 2009 was so infected that in December 2008, the organisation was still without any budget. The issue had to be resolved by direct action coming from the Director-General in January 2009, where it was made clear that the proposition from the Finance Department and the IP department had a formal go. This resulted in more friction to emerge within the organisation.

From within the CMO it was argued that actors were situated in a rather difficult position. The difficulty resided in two instances. Firstly, resources were

allocated on the premise of the business processes and The Calculation. These techniques were perceived as decoupled from the context that these actors worked in. Secondly, the actors were prohibited from making any substantial personnel redundancies. Costs in relation to personnel were going to be solved through natural severance and a no recruitment policy. In effect, this meant that resources were reduced; requirements of adhering to a business process seemingly decoupled from their reality, and reduced manoeuvrability to affect costs associated with handling citizens' applications.

The complaints that inevitably came from this position – from the CMO – angered some of the senior actors within the Finance Department. According to the Finance Department, an inherent part of being engaged in public administration was about handling situations wherein resources did not match desired outcomes. August, quite irritated, responded to these seemingly intricate situations by saying:

August, 2009-04-23

NFC de håller ju hela tiden på att säga så här att "Jamen alltså det här fungerar inte i verkligheten. Processerna fungerar inte i verkligeten". [Så] säger de "Bara vi fick göra som vi ville skulle vi klara resultaten". Men […] det tycker jag är bullshit det är dåli… Poor management skulle vi säga…	The NIC, they keep saying "Come on, this doesn't work in reality. The processes dont work in reality". [Then] they say "If we only could do as we wanted then we would manage the results". But […] I think that's bullshit, it's poo… Poor management we'd say…

Other actors within the Finance Department revealed similar frustrations when faced with the frustration inherent in the CMO. From the Finances Department's perspective, they were the ones being situated in an impossible situation. The Government required the agency to deliver a Social Insurance that maintained effectiveness, increased equity, and that cost less than before.

In addition, the budget for the fiscal year 2009 was met with substantial resistance and suspicion. As August stated above, this was perceived as 'poor management'. Alfred retold an episode where s/he met a public administrator as they were presenting the budget:

Alfred, 2004-04-22

[…] för det var en där som satte sig me… riktigt med armarna i kors och så sa han "Ja… jag har inte fått så många som jag behöver för processerna och då kan jag inte leva upp till resultaten bara så att du vet". Nähä? ((skrattar)) Men det kanske är en del i din roll som chef att försöka lösa ut det där?	[…] because there was one who sat down wi… with his arms crossed and then he said "Well… I haven't received as many as I need for the processes och then I can't live up to the results, just so you know". No, really? ((laughs)) But maybe that's part of your role as manager to try and solve that?

According to the Finance Department and the IP department – and indeed the Director-General by enforcing the budget for 2009 – good behaviour for actors engaged in public administration was perceived as solving instances wherein reduced resources was instigated but requirements of maintaining effectiveness kept. As such, positions were enforced on actors within the organisation, mixed messages concerning control exertion emerged.

4.3.3 Mixing up the messages

The changes of the business processes as well as The Calculation aimed at reducing resource requirements within the organisation. Streamlining activities and increasing the estimated time administrators were supposed to work created a solution for the 2009 budget.

The yardstick of measuring whether this was achieved, however, primarily resided in quantitative measurements concerning the amount of applications that administrators handled on a weekly basis. In this situation, the proclamation of efficiency was used as a concept referring to cost reduction within the agency. That is, citizens' applications should primarily be handled swiftly, meaning that more applications should go through the 'system' without increasing the numbers of personnel doing the work.

Given the changes to the business processes together with the fact that resources had been reduced, one implication was that public administration within the CMO did not necessarily comply with the legislation at the time. Instances of reducing costs, as means of achieving efficiency was perceived as having priority over other instances as e.g. delivering the Social Insurance that the Government intended for citizens. Rut commented on this:

Rut, 2009-04-22

Sedan är också frågan om… vad man har för utgångspunkt i kvalitetshänseende när man håller på och kapar i processerna hela tiden. […] det handlade ju mera om att klara liksom utbetalningsmålet snarare än […] vilken kvalitet de skulle vara i handläggningen

And then it is also the question of… What one has as a base in when it comes to quality control purposes when one is cutting in the processes all the time. […] it was more about managing like the payment target rather than […] the quality of the administration.

Rut puts the finger on an important issue about the changes in the context of the budget process. The aim of the Finance Department was to align a shrinking appropriation from the Government, with an oversized organisation. In other words, the identified ways of handling citizens' applications according to the business processes were too costly in relation to the available resources. Rut continued:

Rut, 2009-04-22

För att klara handläggningen förra året så tog vi bort kontrollmomenten i handläggningsprocessen. Och vad ger då det för styrsignaler? Jo det ska va rätt men du behöver inte längre kontrollera utan du ska bara betala ut. Ja, man blir schizofren skulle jag tro om man avkräver kvalitet i handläggning och samtidigt ska du inte kontrollera. Ja styrsignalerna förra året måste ha gjort många medarbetare ganska förvirrade […]

To cope with the administration last year, we removed the controls from the administration process. And what kind of control signals does that give? Well it should be correct, but you don't have to verify anymore, you'll just have to pay. Well, one becomes schizophrenic, I would think, if one demands quality in the administration and at the same time you're not to verify. Yes the control signals last year must have made many employees rather confused [...]

In terms of sending a message, the decision to remove verifications in the administration process sent a clear one: the important thing was to handle citizens' applications in a manner that resulted in swift payments. This may indeed be quite an understandable and noble intent. After all, citizens who are dependant on monthly reimbursements from the Government can be put quite on the spot if those payments are not done. But excluding instances of verification inherently jeopardises public administration within the agency as well as the entire Swedish Social Insurance. Svea commented on this issue:

Svea, 2009-04-22

[…] det var ju rätt allmänt känt att jag var emot det där… Av lite olika skäl för att… för mig är handläggning… och som myndighet det är ju att kontrollera de inkommande uppgifterna och fatta ett beslut. Och om man tar bort kontrollen vet jag inte vad man gör i praktiken i handläggning.

[…] it was quite common knowledge that I was against that… Because of a few different things… to me, administration is… and as an agency it is about verifying the incoming data and make a decision. And if one removes the verification, I don't know what one does in practice in administration.

The comment that Svea makes about verifications is valid. What does actors engaged in public administration do when they receive a message about downplaying the importance of verification together with a message to focus their efforts on reaching the payment targets and reducing resources. Rut answered this rather straight forwardly:

Rut, 2009-04-23

Ja man gör avkall på kvaliteten. (Int 2: Vad gör vi då?) Man tar genvägar man genar överallt naturligtvis. Man hoppar över handläggningsmoment. Och sen kommer naturligtvis att vi inte klarar målen. Det är ju så, vi klarar ju inte målen.

Well, one compromises the quality. (Int 2: What do we do then?) One takes shortcuts, and cuts everywhere naturally. One skips elements in administration. And then, naturally, we can't meet the targets. That's a fact, we don't meet the targets.

It may have been the case that the IP department held a firm belief that changes in business processes would lead to direct changes of handling citizens' applications. But according to Rut, the tradition within the SSIA was quite the opposite:

Rut, 2009-04-22

Vi har en kultur i Försäkringskassan att 'tillsagt inte alltid gäller'. (Int 1: mhm) Man följer alltså inte dom givna processerna och det vållar ju naturligtvis vissa bekymmer då för både för cheferna på kundmötesorganisationen och cheferna då på försäkringsprocesser.

We have a culture within the SSIA of 'told not always applies'. (Int 1: mhm) One doesn't follow the given processes and that naturally causes some concerns for both managers at the customer meeting organisation and managers at Insurance Processes.

A person within the SSIA told me, during a coffee break, that changes come and go. Sooner of later, the imposed changes – primarily coming from the Head Office – would be in accordance with the way things were done previously. For this person, changes imposed from 'above', was much like clothing fashion. You may be out of style for a time, but if you wait long enough and are

persistent in your style, your clothes – or ways of undertaking public administrations as it were – will be fashionable given enough time. This kind of comments strengthened the perception of mixed messages within the agency as well as changes affecting public administration: you can do as you are told, or continue doing what you have always done.

In the next section, I will present interpretations from the conducted participatory observations. As will be clear, this work perpetuates the dilemma between working swiftly and adhering to the legislative boundaries.

4.4 Perpetuations of a dilemma

In the previous section I presented stories and perspectives indicating instances of mixed messages being sent within the SSIA. Such mixed messages resided in the requirement of adhering to constructed business processes as well as accepting the reduction of available resources for handling citizens' applications. Actors engaging in public administration thereby came to be positioned in a rather difficult situation: a situation wherein a dilemma between efficiency and economy on the one hand and effectiveness and equity on the other was accentuated.

In this section I will elaborate on how this dilemma continuously came to be perpetuated through the use of business processes within the agency. I will argue through examples from my participatory observations that the search for increasing efficiency still remained within agency even though this processes had become decoupled from the resource allocation process. That is, the dilemma instigated and elaborated on in the above section, was prominent in the construction of business processes and The Calculation within the agency.

My focus herein lies on the manner in which one specific business process was constructed and how the team assigned the task went about achieving this. As this section is based on observations rather than interviews, the empirical examples are primarily intended to infuse a feeling of being there (they are recognisable through the italic format). As such, it is a slightly different approach as compared to the above sections. My aim is to infuse an understanding of what was going on at the time, but the examples carry no objective truth. They are, simply, extracts from my perceptions at the time.

The work of constructing – or reconstructing as it was – business processes entailed three distinct phases. Firstly, there was a phase of identifying the current state of affairs within the agency. Secondly, there was a phase of construct-

ing a theoretically viable procedure for handling citizens' applications. Thirdly, there was a phase wherein the business process was consigned to the CMO. Together they formed phases of (1) the present, (2) the future, and (3) the implementation.

4.4.1 Phase of the present

The work of developing new procedures began with an assemblage of a team. Internally they were referred to as 'process teams', but in this text I will simply refer to the group as 'the team'. The team commonly consisted of two employees from the IP department: a team leader and a process leader. The team leader had the responsibility of progressing the work of developing a new procedure. The process leader was there to primarily support the team with methodological support on how to develop business processes.

In addition to the team- and process leaders, actors from the CMO populated the team. They were included to support the construction of a new business process with experiences in public administration as well as handling citizens' applications.

The work of constructing a new business process began with a plan concerning how to engage in finding out how things were done today as well as planning for the reconstruction of this process. The actual work of identifying the manner in which activities were undertaken began by fieldwork wherein the team came to scrutinise administrative behaviour. I joined one of these field sessions in August 2009.

Wednesday, 12th of August 2009. It is 8.45 am. Six people have just sat down around an oval table. I am one of the six; the other five are people from the so-called process team, now charged with the task of developing a new procedure for deciding citizens' insurance coverage. A thermos of coffee stands on the table, just beside some small disposable paper cups and pods with milk and sugar. People are sorting their papers, taking out pens, chatting about ordinary things. Something about the weather and a political move that was recently made. One of the members note "it feels a bit like coming out to the countryside to check up on them". 15 minutes later, about 9 am, personnel from the local office arrive and sit down around the table. They choose places on the opposite side of the five people. They remain reserved. The team leader makes a brief description of the work that the team is supposed to do. "We are not here to control how you work, but to learn" s/he says. Issues regarding citizens' insurance coverage are handled at four local offices in Sweden: Malmö, Sunne, Haparanda, and Visby. Today we visit Sunne in the middle part of Sweden. Employees at this local office are considered experts regarding issues of immigration from Norway, due to the proximity of the border. The team is anxious to get started and after the brief presentation an administrator is called into the conference room to show how s/he works with citizens' applications. There is a profound level of nervousness. One of the members of the team leans over to another and whispers, "this feels uncomfortable"…

Undertaking fieldwork, as researchers are well aware of, means scrutinising practices and behaviours among different actors. It means observing what, how, and when things are done in order to extrapolate patterns that can be conceptualised. The approach taken by the team was not conceptually different from this. What made the situation a bit intimidating, though, was the fact that the team as well as the administrators at the local office recognised the obvious power discrepancy concerning who had the preferential right of interpretation.

The team, normally located at the Head Office in Stockholm, had been given sanction from top levels. This sanction meant that they, not the administrators sitting at the table, had a permission to evaluate the work undertaken within the agency. Furthermore, they had permission – indeed a responsibility – to evaluate if this was a good or bad conduct and furthermore whether the activities should be a part of future business processes.

Wednesday, 12th of August 2009. 9.30am. The team remains sitting as the administrator logs onto the computer in the room. A projector starts buzzing and a picture slowly becomes visible on the silver screen. The administrator is asked to focus on the beneficiary case as if this was an ordinary day. With pens ready, the team carefully follows every procedure that the administrator undertakes. Each click, each new window that is opened is noted. After a couple of minutes the team begins questioning the administrator's choices. What are you doing now? What are you looking at in this picture? What do you do then? The administrator answers every question, and from time to time makes small apologetic comments. Seeking confirmation about doing things right. The team breaks for lunch. We enjoy a local buffet in the proximity of the office. The conversation revolves around what they have just observed. During the afternoon, different administrators visit the team. All are asked to perform their 'normal work'. They all do. Each time something is printed out, the team requires copies. Copies that will be brought back to the Head Office for further scrutinizing…

During the fieldwork, the team travelled to different local offices with the aim of collecting information on how citizens' applications were handled. Interviews were held, documents collected, and individual actors working with citizens' applications observed. The aim, as told to me, was to gather as much information regarding the current way things were done. It was argued that the team intended to construct a holistic understanding of how – perhaps why – things were done the way they were.

The team that I followed visited three different local offices. During these visits they found a number of different manuals, constructed on site in order to make handling citizens' applications a bit easier. The centrally constructed guidelines presumed to be followed within the local offices, was thus continuously reinterpreted, reconstructed, and realigned with current local practices. In other words, what was being communicated from the Head Office in Stockholm did not always have any impact in the daily activities within the agency.

After the three local offices had been visited, a vast amount of documents printed and collected, and several interviews conducted; the team returned to the Head Office in Stockholm to compile a concise description of what they had found.

Wednesday, 2nd of September 2009. The team have ended their fieldwork and are back at the Head Office in Stockholm. Some of the team members look tired. They are in Stockholm for two days each week, and otherwise at their respective local offices. They usually fly in early Wednesday morning and fly back home Thursday evening. We sit in a small room, not much larger than a cubicle. The walls are covered with colourful posters, which describe the different phases of developing the business process. The process leader sits at a computer with a projector aimed at the silver screen. The team leader looks through the papers brought back from the fieldwork. The task for today is to assign priority to different task within the business process. Scores are given to each activity, weighted depending on the perceived impact they have. "It's not about new-Taylorism or micro management" the process leader quickly says, "it's about support for administration". I get a feeling that the comment is as much directed towards me as it is towards the team members…

The main task after finishing the fieldwork concerned the evaluation of the collected material. This task was undertaken in two ways.

Firstly, each identified activity was evaluated in relation to perceived causes and effects. The aim was to identify those activities that were highly likely to be wrong or cause trouble within the administration. By identifying these, it was argued, the business process could be constructed in a manner that actually covered the potentially problematic issues. For each activity, the team assigned a score ranging from one to three concerning four different questions: (1) was the activity time consuming, (2) was the activity often cluttered with errors, (3) was the activity adding value to the customer, and (4) was the activity recurrent?

Secondly, activities were plotted into a matrix consistent of the dimensions (1) value creation and (2) covered in legislation. Activities deemed to be covered by legislation were automatically kept in the new process, independent of any perceived value creation. If the activity was not covered by legislation, but perceived to create a value it was temporarily kept, but could be subject to later exclusion. Any activity deemed as neither covered by legislation nor perceived to add value were subject for instant removal.

At first glance, this approach should appeal to most technocrats. It is portrayed as a rational approach, but from my perspective – as an observant bystander – this was a façade put up to legitimise the business processes in later stages (e.g. in the phase of implementation). During the observations, on several occasions I might add, the approach was filled with subjective opinions. Frequently, employees coming from the CMO presented such opinions. The large amount of documents and observations brought back from the fieldwork were not consulted during these instances. This makes the analytical outcome volatile

and somewhat questionable. Never the less, the judgements passed out by the team became the basis on which the phase of the future was built.

4.4.2 Phase of the future

> *Wednesday, 23rd of September 2009. I enter the small room where the team is assembled. The table at the front is occupied by a large piece of linerboard. It's covered with green post-it notes. The post-its form a path, a process, of how the beneficiary administration is thought to proceed. The brown paper process they call it. The whiteboard behind the table is filled with scribbled notes. They are notes of the perceived beginning and end of the processes. I take a seat in the back of the room. There's a heated discussion going on. Members from the CMO want to move on, get somewhere. They want results. The process leader wants them to go over the definitions again. Makes them go over the definitions again. It's not enough to present general descriptions. The business process needs to be constructed in great detail…*

The work of constructing the revised procedure for beneficiary administration moved into a phase of remodelling the perceived current state of affairs. This phase began with what the team referred to as ' the brown paper process'. The 'brown paper' essentially meant that every activity was sketched out on a piece of linerboard – as described in the example – making it possible to view how activities came to connect with each other.

The observation that I presented above, that the team primarily relied on the knowledge of team members and not on material gathered during the fieldwork, was further reinforced during this phase. The team- and process leaders continuously asked members from the CMO questions such as "What do you do then?" or "How is this done?". The distancing to the local insurance offices, and the handling of citizens' applications, were thereby further enforced and the business process.

During the observations, I noticed that a lot of effort went into making sure that each activity was firmly based in current legislation. It soon became evident that the main objective within the team concerned the construction of a business process that aimed for aligning administrative behaviour with the legislation. This position was especially salient among members from the CMO.

The team- and process leaders portrayed a more efficiency related perspective, meaning that they argued that activities should be included in the process as long as they did not make the administration slower than it currently was. During several occasions the discussions in the group became quite heated

when discussing what activities should be included and which was to be abolished. In most cases there where long periods of discussion and deliberation between the team- and process leaders and members from the CMO. The former seemed to have ideas that entailed reduction of the amount of required tasks within a business process. The latter argued that changes were unnecessary, and that things should be kept they way they were. The discussions most commonly ended in a compromise being made between the different positions.

Thereafter, the team engaged in transferring the developed business process from the linerboard to a computer. This instance enabled the team to sit in front of a silver screen and go through all included activities. Simultaneously, the team began to write extensive descriptions about the activities that was included and how they should be undertaken. These descriptions later became the actual guide or recommendation for handling citizens' applications.

Because of the way in which the process was constructed (primarily from the experience of the team members from the CMO) I wanted to know if there existed any feedback to their respective local offices. The lack of feedback could be an indication that the business process was mainly a product constructed at the Head Office, than a procedure founded on current practice within the organisation. During a lunch break I therefore engaged one of the team members with this questions. S/he explained to me that there where no regular meetings with administrators regarding this topic. Some times, s/he continued, information was "released" and "explained" to them, but this was most of the time done in an informal manner. S/he furthermore explained that the team had no responsibility of making sure that the developed business process had any legitimacy within the CMO: that was a later issue.

An important part of the phase of the future was the construction of The Calculation. The idea underpinning The Calculation was to create a basis for measuring the required resources for handling citizens' applications when conducted in accordance with the developed business process. This stage of the phase was begun when the team had a somewhat workable business process, ready for testing.

The work of constructing The Calculation began with a selection of a local office, where administrators handling citizens' applications were asked to work in accordance with the developed business process. These administrators were given a week to get acquainted with the new ways of conducting work. After that time, personnel from the IP department visited the local office and measured the time needed to work according to the new procedure. On a practical level this was done by sitting down together with an administrator from the CMO and clocking the activities as work was conducted. The personnel

then returned to the Head Office in Stockholm and studies the measured times in order to construct The Calculation. The following work of constructing The Calculation contained two basic corrections of the collected data.

Firstly, measurements were assessed together with the team- and process leaders. Times that were estimated to be wrong got manually changed to fit the perception of how long it should take. This means that even though measurements were taken in the field adjustments were primarily made based on the intuitions and perceptions of people within the team and the IP department.

Secondly, all activities were assessed for theoretical impact. Frequently occurring activities were assigned higher theoretical impact than other activities. This meant that time consuming activities that were estimated to occur less frequently, would receive a lower theoretical impact factor.

During an interview, I asked a member of the team constructing The Calculation how they went about with identifying this impact. The response was that as far as possible, they tried to find historical data that would correspond, but in many cases they where simply forced to work with estimations made by experienced administrators. That is, perceptions and assumptions concerning the recurrence of activities served as important bases when calculating the estimations of costs concerning business processes.

An outspoken purpose of constructing The Calculation was to identify over- and underemployment within the CMO. This meant an analysis concerning the current amount of employees in relation to the theoretical requirement extrapolated through The Calculation. This was done in three steps.

Firstly, the workforce was estimated by calculating available time per annual worker. Available time per worker was assumed to be 205 days annually and on an average 6 hours of efficient process related work daily. This summed up to 73 800 minutes, or 1 230 hours, annually. This meant that 'annual workers' were able to undertake 73 800 minutes of work related tasks under one year.

Secondly, the amount of incoming applications from citizens was set by estimating the expected volumes. This was undertaken by identified historical statistical data together with manual measurements. It should however be noted here that the estimations were not made by the team, but by the analytical division within the SSIA.

Thirdly, by combining available time per 'annual worker' with estimated incoming case volumes it became possible to calculate the need of annual workers. This was done by multiplying total weighted time from the calculated busi-

ness process with the expected volumes of applications. The sum was then divided with the available time per 'annual worker'.

The Calculation was undertaken in a way that provided a base for evaluating how many employees was necessary in order to meet the requirements stated within the developed business process. Connected, however, to the purpose of finding under- or overemployment within the CMO, The Calculation became a technique for identifying opportunities of efficiency and economy.

An outspoken requirement for legitimising the work put into the business processes as well as The Calculation was that efficiency should be increased by 10 %. For this purpose, the IP department calculated what they referred to as an 'employment index' for each constructed process. Historical data of logged hours from handling citizens' applications were divided with the theoretically presumed – calculated – need of annual workers. Indexes resulting in scores exceeding 1.0 thus showed signs of overemployment and suggested room for increased efficiency through e.g. redundancy.

4.4.3 Phase of the implementation

> *Wednesday, 11th of November 2009. We sit in the room that by now have become quite familiar to us. The team leader sits on a chair in the front of the room, the other members of the team on chairs around the big table occupying the majority of the room. I sit in a corner, out of the way but still an unavoidable part of the meeting. Each of us in the meeting has a large pile of papers. I quickly flip through them. It seems to be about 200 pages. The team leader announces that the process is to be submitted to a referral during Christmas. This prolongs the deadline for the time a couple of weeks…*

The last phase of constructing the business process revolved getting it ready for implementation. Some of the situations that I describe in this phase overlap the finalising parts, as described under phase of the future. Essentially this phase aimed at achieving an organisationally wide approval for the developed business process and furthermore to have the CMO implement it. Two main steps were identified within this phase: (1) the referral process and (2) the hand-over.

The referral process can be understood as a remnant from the old bureaucratic manner of the previous organisations, which essentially drew on an idea of anchoring ideas within the organisation. In the referral process, the business process was sent out internally to a number of advisory instances. The idea was that different parts of the organisation would come in with opinions about the business processes before it was implemented.

After the referral process, the team went through all the comments: some were adhered, others were rejected. In the end it was up to the team leader whether the comments required any substantial change done within the constructed business process. This meant that there was no formal obligation to heed the comments made by advisory instances. The team- and process leaders, finally, presented the constructed business process to the senior staff of the IP department, who then recommends whether it should be implemented within the CMO or not. The formal decision, however, is an issue solely for the Director-General to make.

After the decision was been made – given the approval of the General-Director – the phase goes into the second stage: the hand-over. This was differently done depending on the focus of the business process. In the case of the team that I followed for almost six months, the hand-over was undertaken in June 2010: almost a year after the work had started. In this case the new business process affected about 12 000 employees within the organisation. For practical reasons it was decided that gathering all these employees for a presentation would be a too time consuming activity. Instead, seven insurance specialists and five actors engaged in public administration gathered in Stockholm for a one-day presentation of the new business process.

Two things were especially stressed during this day. The implementation should be conducted as fast as possible. They, the insurance specialists and the actors engaged in public administration, should make sure that each administrator made a 'gap analysis'. The gap analysis was about recognizing that the way they were working now (phase of the present) was different from how they should be working (phase of the future).

4.4.4 Final comments

In sum, then, the development of business processes was launched as a technique for identifying new ways of handling citizens' applications. The work involved fieldwork in order to more comprehensibly understand what people were doing as well as constructing a theoretical process that meticulously defined and described all activities.

In the previous section I argued that actors engaged in public administration and faced dilemmas as instances of adhering to rules or increasing outputs came to be polarised. Rules in this context were understood as the activities inherent in the business processes. Outputs, however, were primarily understood

as the quantification process by which the business processes undergoes: what I refer to as The Calculation. In this section, I have described the continuous work of developing business processes that in large came to perpetuate this dilemma, essentially embedding it in the recommendations concerning how to handle citizens' applications.

This ends this part of the chapter, and what remains now is a concluding discussion. I will there argue that the manner in which reforms have been undertaken within the SSIA, have caused actors to face a dilemma between the conjoined sets of efficiency and economy on the one hand and effectiveness and equity on the other. I will furthermore argue that the work of identifying and constructing business process – together with The Calculation – perpetuates this dilemma.

4.5 Discussion and further implications

This chapter has so far been a straightforward presentation of empirical findings: firstly from interviews with senior actors and secondly from participatory observations. As such, it serves as understanding the context wherein public administration has been subjected to reforms during the period between 2005 and 2009. I will discuss some of the implications of this below.

It furthermore serves as a chapter that set the scene for the further progression of my inquiry concerning how actors engaged in public administration makes sense of dilemma(s) they face. In this section I will advance this setting. I will begin by discussing the mixed messages inherent in public administration within the SSIA.

4.5.1 Dilemma

That there are mixed messages within the SSIA during the period of which I present findings should be quite obvious at this point. These messages, however, have been different in the different organisations. My focus will here be on how messages concerning adherence to rules and legislation have sometimes been polarised through an accentuation of measuring outputs.

I have above argued that the previous organisations were perceived as highly bureaucratised. This was especially the case with the 2005 organisation, where the regional offices had been merged with the NSIB into what is now

understood as the SSIA. All levels of the previous hierarchy had, however, been maintained, resulting in a colossal organisation taking form. Several layers of managerial functions created a distance to the activities that were undertaken regarding citizens' applications.

With the 2005 organisation there came to be a separation between questions of 'what' and 'how' according to the 'Insurance Division' and the 'Product Division'. Questions of 'what' focused on how the Government's intentions and current legislation could be transformed into operative rules within the agency. Questions of 'how', however, concerned the manner in which public administration was exerted so that it affected the manner in which citizens' applications was handled. Although it was later recognised that the separation of the questions 'what' and 'how' was problematic, it came to create a foundation for the dilemmatic position which actors faced.

With the reform inherent in the 2008 organisation, ideas of how to organise and control large contemporary organisations were collected by studying the private for-profit sector. Structures resembling matrix organisations were introduced: a relation that put the CMO on a theoretical collision course with the IP department. The IP department was assigned the responsibilities of working with both the 'what' as well as the 'how' whereas the CMO was assigned the task of performing it. In effect this meant that whereas performance previously had been about constructing questions of 'how' – the transformation of legal requirements into measureable outputs – it was now about consigning with the constructions from the IP department.

The real intricacy concerning public administration within the agency occurred as the budgetary processes for the fiscal year 2009 was instigated. An important part of this process was for the Finance Department to come to terms with the reduced appropriation from the Government and the requirement of maintaining efficiency and equity. In addition to this precarious situation, the structural changes that had been implemented had removed all prior knowledge concerning performance. In other words, no one really knew what the administration of the Swedish Social insurance was costing any more. In order to undertake this feat, the use of business processes as well as The Calculation became important. This is what I presented in the section of the Game of budget above.

In order to achieve an understanding of the current need for resources within the agency, the Finance Department conducted what was referred to as a 'bottom-up calculation'. This meant associating the business processes and The Calculation with monetary resources and thereafter estimating the amount of

incoming applications from citizens. But the resulting deficit of 8.1 billion SEK, forced them to do something radical. By reassigning the conjectures inherent in The Calculation, the Finance Department and the IP department managed to reduce the theoretical need for resources within the CMO. Two of these changes concerned the increase in assumed time that administrators spent on citizens' applications and the removal of several verification processes. This was done fully knowing that the CMO did not acknowledge the premise of the current processes. But these actions unavoidably sent mixed messages to the CMO.

One message that was sent through these actions was that it does not really matter how you do it, just make sure that citizens receive their reimbursements on time. Removing verifications when scrutinising citizens' applications were understood to increase the opportunity for swift administration. These instances of swift administration together with evaluations concerning the number of applications that was handled resulted in shortcuts being taken. It seems that meeting the limited resource requirements was superseding adherence to the legislation. Such actions seem reasonable when in a squeezed position.

4.5.2 Focusing on different E's?

In chapter one I argued that actors engaged in public administration is expected – indeed required – to adhere to four E's. These refer to instances of efficiency, effectiveness, equity, and economy. According to the reasoning in chapter one, I argued that the economification (Lundquist, 1997, 1998, 1999) of the public sector had resulted in conjoined E's into two distinct sets. On the one hand there are instances of efficiency and economy and on the other hand instances of effectiveness and equity. The conjoining means e.g. that increasing efficiency is primarily understood in monetary terms. Increasing effectiveness, by proxy, thus means making sure that equity is inherent in public administration.

The work undertaken by the IP department within the SSIA can be understood as an attempt of putting focus on all of the above four E's. Through the construction of business processes, there is indeed an attempt of (1) identifying activities that are required by legislation, and (2) identify whether these activities create values within the agency. Under the first instance – legislative required activities – effectiveness and equity are perceived as targeted E's. This was furthermore present in the discussion regarding how the team worked with the development of business process.

Through the observations made during my time with the team, I noticed that representatives from the CMO were especially interested in the attainment of legislative correct administration. On several occasions actors from the CMO engaged in heated discussions with the team- and process leaders. These discussions concerned whether activities should be kept or abolished within the developed business process. According to the perspective that personnel from the CMO had, activities should be kept to a large part, as they were required by legislation. The team- and process leaders, however, argued that activities within the business process should be kept at a minimum as this would open up for resources to be put to maximum use.

Within the development of the business process, it seems that different focus concerning E's of public administration were present within the team. The team- and process leaders were primarily focused on increasing efficiency by streamlining activities. By removing activities from the process, actors could – at least from a theoretical perspective – do more with available resources. Increased efficiency in this context meant increasing the things that can be done without increasing the allocation of resources to administration.

Representatives from the CMO, however, had a more legalistic approach to the development of the process. Although they played along with the general idea about streamlining the process, they sometimes acted as legislative guardians. The perspective here resided in the fact that effectiveness and – perhaps more importantly – instances of equity should be safeguarded. These representatives had a long experience undertaking work within the agency, and carried a firm belief in the legislations superiority. It seems that equity was an ever-pressing issue, presumably solved through rigid adherence with legislation. If activities were constructed through clear rules, effectiveness and equity – the second conjoined set of E's – could be upheld within public administration.

For actors engaged in public administration there was a dilemma inherent in the business process. This dilemma, however, did not become especially accentuated until The Calculation was constructed. As I described above, one of the driving conjunctions inherent in the construction of The Calculation was finding out whether there existed an under- or overemployment within the CMO from the perspective of the developed business process. With more or less elaborate techniques for identifying such instances, activities within the business process became subjected to large instances of quantification. Activities were timed, evaluated, and calculated so that the process could be transformed into values of monetary resources.

As the business process and The Calculation were handed over to actors within the CMO, there was a dilemma instigated. On the one hand the business process was understood as entailing activities that were (1) bounded by legislation and (2) added value to either agency or citizens. The rhetoric used within the agency suggested that the business process was best practice regarding how citizens' application should be handled. The Calculation, however, put a quantitative focus on this process. From this perspective, activities were measured and evaluated in regards of how swiftly things could be done. This quantification and the outspoken aim of increasing efficiency with 10 % and limit actors' opportunities for making changes regarding personnel, accentuated the dilemmatic position.

In sum, the development of business processes as best practice, well based in current legislation, for handling citizens' applications in essence represented instances of effectiveness and equity. The quantification of these processes, with the aim of increasing efficiency through streamlining the activities, represented instances of efficiency and economy. The continuous evaluation in relation to The Calculation here has given lenience to the proliferation of efficiency and economy to gain dominance within the agency. Together with continuously reduced resources and narrowing actors' authority concerning personnel changes, accentuated the dilemma within the agency. Should things be done in accordance to the constructed business process, or in a manner that aligns behaviour with available resources?

4.5.3 'Good administration'

As I presented in the section about the budget of 2008, the Finance Department made use of business processes in order to identify costs associated with the administration of the Swedish Social Insurance. By assigning standardised times for different activities – The Calculation – it became possible to identify how large these costs were within the 2008 organisation. The theoretically identified deficit of 8.1 billion SEK was a severe challenge for the continuation of the agency.

By making use of the business processes together with standardisation in the form of The Calculation enabled more outputs when handling citizens' applications. The mixed messages and the differentiated focus in regards of E's, challenged actors engaged in public administration with making sense of their situation.

During one of the interviews with the senior actors, the concept of 'poor management' was brought up. The dilemma that actors within the CMO were facing placed them in a rather difficult position. These actors argued that with reduced resources they were unable to fulfil the tasks delegated them. From the perspective of the Finance Department and the IP department, however, such complaints were readily dismissed. One of the senior actors (August) referred to the complaints as being 'bullshit' and 'poor management' and another (Alfred) that "that's perhaps your role as manager to try and solve that".

These statements can be understood as indicative of assumptions concerning how public administration within the SSIA should be undertaken. There is an insinuation that 'good administration' within the agency entails an acceptance of the current situation. If resources are too small in relation to the appointed tasks, or reduced, then an important part of engaging in public administration means finding solutions to the problem. It is expected that actors engaged in public administration recognises the problematic situation, but resolves the issue in a manner that maintains levels of quality in what is being undertaken. Complaining about the situation or suggesting that you are pinioned by restraints of reduced resources or rigid rules for instance, is dismissed of as 'poor management'. If you are unable to find a solution for the problem, then perhaps you are unfit to be engaged in public administration, seems to be the general take here.

There are deeper meanings in the assumptions concerning 'good administration' as indicated through these statements. There is a stance taken against that of the collectivism underpinning Civil Service, as discussed in chapter three. Rather, the image of the proactive, individualistic, Manager is portrayed. 'Good administration' is hinted to be about accepting challenges and having the competence to solve problematic instances. Although there are clear instances of behavioural control instigated in the agency, primarily through the form of adherence to business processes, there is an intense use of outputs. These outputs are most readily found through measurements and evaluations associated with increasing the number of citizens' applications. The proliferation of efficiency and economy furthermore highlight the use of out output control, rather than behavioural control, as these are more suitable for quantification.

4.5.4 Further exploration needed

In this chapter I have engaged in a presentation of stories and observation from within the SSIA. The construction and use of business processes together with The Calculation have presented actors engaged in public administration with dilemmas associated with the conjoined sets of E's. As measurement and evaluations came to focus on outputs, there has been a proliferation of efficiency and economy within the agency, making contexts for actors engaged in public administration more complex.

I have furthermore argued that the statements made about 'poor management' can be understood to be indicative of assumptions concerning public administration within the SSIA. More specifically, there seems to a suggestion that behaviour aligned with assumptions concerning 'good administration'. At this point, however, it would be presumptuous to draw the conclusion that Civil Service equated with 'poor management'. There is need for further scrutinising before such analysis can be undertaken.

Taken together, this empirical chapter has provided a background concerning how public administration is undertaken within the SSIA. There are indications of dilemmas being present and of assumptions concerning 'good administration'. These instances have to, however, be further qualified. The stories and observations that I have here used as basis for my presentation, is essentially drawn from a quite small number of people. Making inferences regarding the acknowledgement of dilemmas and what 'good administration' entails from this group would be overconfident. In chapter five I engage in exploring if, and in such case how, widespread these ideas were within the SSIA.

5 Acknowledging the dilemma

I concluded chapter four by stating that the construction and use of business processes together with The Calculation presented actors engaged in public administration with dilemmas. These dilemmas primarily associated with the conjoined sets of E's as discussed in chapter one. Business processes represent instances of effectiveness and equity in that it was based in current legislation and the intent of the Government. Identified activities were transformed into rules, of sort. The Calculation, however, aimed at identifying opportunities for increasing efficiency from a resource perspective. Analyses concerning the under- or overemployment in relation to identified business processes enable such strive toward efficiency.

The stories retold by senior actors within the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (SSIA) together with my participatory observations, as presented in chapter four, lead me to make an inference about actors engaged in public administration, being squeezed into difficult positions. Mixed messages regarding what to focus on was inherent in the manner by which the agency was organised and controlled. I furthermore argued that as actors engaged in public administration began challenging the accuracy of the business processes, and the impossible situation they had come to be positioned in due to reduced resources, they were stigmatised as 'poor managers'.

This chapter aims at expanding the findings presented in chapter four and to explore whether the inferences made can be found within a wider set of the agency. Essentially, then, this chapter is about exploring if actors engaged in public administration within the Custom Meeting Organisation (CMO) within the SSIA recognises the dilemma discussed above and in chapter four. The chapter furthermore concerns an exploration of how values associate with 'good administration'.

This chapter contains three parts. Firstly, I will postulate six hypotheses that are related to the findings presented from chapter four. Secondly, I will present the methods approach used in order to explore and scrutinise these hypotheses. This section contains a discussion about the use of self-administered

survey, how items and constructs have been operationalized, as well as a discussion regarding the use of Factor Analysis. The third section contains a presentation of the Factor Analysis and the subsequent outcome of identified dimensions inherent in recipients' responses. In a final section I discuss implications and inferences regarding the findings in this chapter and how these lead me into further exploration in chapter six.

5.1 Postulating hypotheses

In chapter four I presented stories from senior actors within the SSIA in which it was argued that there existed asymmetries between business processes on the one hand and The Calculation on the other. These stories furthermore contained suggestions that the asymmetry made actors search for shortcuts concerning the handling of citizens' applications. Fundamentally, these shortcuts were undertaken in order to bridge asymmetries inherent between the two techniques.

One manner, in which the asymmetry was bridged, was by the removal of verification processes regarding citizens' applications. This meant that the process could be undertaken more swiftly, leading to financial reimbursements reaching citizens more quickly. The removal of verifications, however, jeopardised the validity of the Social Insurance as well as the public sector in general. But to make such a generalising inference at this point would be close to pure speculation. As it stands at the moment, all I have to show that supports my inference is the stories and observations presented above.

In this section I will elaborate six hypotheses that concern (1) the mixed messages inherent in the organisational controls and (2) activities associated with 'good administration' among actors engaged in public administration in the SSIA. All six hypotheses are consequently formulated as null hypotheses.

5.1.1 The mixed messages

I have above argued that actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA experienced how mixed messages emanated from the construction and use of business processes together with The Calculation. In this section I will elaborate two hypotheses that concern the perceptions concerning these mixed messages.

The business processes as well as The Calculations are understood to be examples of techniques for exertion of control within organisation. In essence, they are in place with an aim of creating instance wherein actors' behaviours come to align with the goals of the agency. The notion of controls sending multiple, sometimes confused or mixed messages is in itself nothing remarkable. This is, indeed, not the focus from which I engage the subject. Rather, it is imperative that we come to understand what happens to actors' perceptions through the exertion of control within organisations.

The proverb 'what gets measured gets done' essentially implies that as measurements and evaluations are directed towards specific sets within an organisation, actors' attention will inevitably be directed towards it. Furthermore, as attention is directed towards it, behaviour will come to align with the controls so that new practices emerge. I discussed this in chapter one above and mentioned the phenomena in chapter three when discussing how social systems within public administration can be understood. By extension, the implementation and exertion of control partly affects actors' perception of what is considered as important within a specific context. By this I mean that as actors are subjected to control, they become aware of the things that higher sections within the organisation perceives as especially important.

Within the SSIA I have discussed the use of business processes together with The Calculation as means of exerting control. The instigation of these two techniques was – at least partly – a reason for the emergence of mixed messages within the agency. This was especially noticeable during the period in which the Finance Department and the IP department engaged in pivoting some of the underpinning conjecture of the two techniques.

Business processes were essentially implemented mechanisms for assuring that current legislation was followed at all times. Instances of effectiveness and equity were assumed to be safeguarded by undertaken a meticulous analysis of all activities undertaken concerning handling citizens' applications. The Calculation, on the other hand, essentially functioned as a planning- or resource allocation process. Activities became quantified in order to increase commensurability between different standardised beneficiary case applications. Conducting meticulous measurements furthermore made it possible to associate differentiated costs with the operations. From this perspective, The Calculation came to concern instances of efficiency and economy within public administration.

In the concluding section of chapter four I argued that as mixed messages emerged as a consequence of the construction of business processes and The Calculation, actors engaged in public administration came to face a dilemma.

This dilemma is conceptually connected to the choice of adhering to different conjoined sets of E's as discussed on several places above. But this inference was made on the basis on a relatively small number of interviews and observations. As I have argued above, making use of self-administered survey enabled me to explore whether this dilemma was spread among actors engaged in public administration.

I argued that exploring whether actors engaged in public administration acknowledges the dilemma that I inferred is existent in chapter four, requires scrutinising their readiness to engage in the two techniques. The stories presented in chapter four suggest that a substantial part of the dilemma is built into these two different organisational controls. If actors make use of the two techniques equally in daily operations, this is indicative of the presence of a dilemmatic position. Actors' preference concerning only one of the tools would reduce the potential for dilemma within the organisational controls.

In the context of the SSIA, my inquiry concerns actors' readiness to make use of both business processes and The Calculation in their daily activities as they engage in public administration. This leads to the first null-hypothesis, which is formulated as:

> *H1: There is no significant difference in use of business processes and The Calculation when engaged in public administration.*

Acknowledging that actors engaged in public administration use these two techniques within the organisation does not, however, reveal more than just that: they make use of them. Hypothesis one fails to present any substantial evidence whether these actors perceive a dilemma to be present as they engage in public administration within the agency. One way of delving deeper into this question is to study actors' perceptions of delegated responsibility.

Apart from monetary resources – an issue I discussed in chapter four – the ability to engage in public administration can be related to formally delegated instances of responsibilities and authorities. Within a hierarchical organisation, responsibility and authority are most commonly transformed into public administration through the delegation from senior actors. By this I mean that senior actors charge another actor with an activity and thus hold that individual responsible for delivering results. Being responsible thus, in this context, means that someone else within the organisation expects certain activities goals to be achieved.

Authority, on the other hand, is the means by which these actors can engage in order to achieve the charged tasks. In this context, I focus on such au-

thority that is formal in that it assigns the actor with direct influence over material aspects of public administration. One example over such materiality is the authority to make decisions regarding the size of the personnel you engage in order to achieve the goals you are responsible for.

Although it is separated from the presence and use of the two techniques of control exertion discussed above, instances of actors' perceived responsibility and authority provide further insights into the potentially squeezed positions in which I was told actors engaged in public administration are situated in. From a theoretical stance, it is often assumed that there should be an alignment between the level of responsibility and the authority an actor has. In other words, actors should control the means that are needed in order to achieve the goals they are responsible for.

In chapter one I argued that reforms directed towards public administration have come to affect the four E's. The economification (Lundquist, 1997, 1998, 1999) of the public sector has resulted in a conjoining of efficiency and economy on the one hand and effectiveness and equity on the other. In other words, instances of efficiency are primarily understood from a reduction of resources perspective, whereas instances of effectiveness primarily translate into manners of equity and legislation. In chapter four I presented stories and observations from within the SSIA that indicated that existed a differentiation between these two conjoined sets. This was observed by the manner in which business processes and The Calculation was constructed and implemented within the CMO. Even though the business processes dominated how public administration was to be exerted concerning citizens' applications, the construction of The Calculation together with reduced allocation of resources squeezed actors engaged in public administration into taking shortcuts. Reduced resources together with requirement adhering to the business processes mixed with the increased use of measurements and evaluations of quantifiable targets accentuated the proliferation of efficiency and economy as important within the agency.

I expect that this proliferation is evident within actors' perceptions of responsibilities and authorities. By this I mean that actors' perceptions concerning responsibility and authority are skewed in favour efficiency and economy in the accentuated dilemma. In other words, I expect actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA to perceive themselves of having more responsibility and authority regarding efficiency and economy as compared to effectiveness and equity. The second null-hypothesis is thus formulated as:

H2: There is no significant difference between perceived responsibility and authority when compared across efficiency/economy versus effectiveness/equity.

This means that I expect instances of the conjoined E's in relation to actors' perceptions of responsibility and authority to be asymmetric.

Hypotheses one and two, thus, focuses on actors' perceptions concerning the potentially dilemmatic position as they engage in public administration. I expect actors to make equal use of business process and The Calculation and furthermore that they perceive themselves as more responsible for instances concerning efficiency and economy than effectiveness and equity.

But whereas these two hypotheses may reveal that there are perceptions and – a theoretical – acknowledgement of the dilemma, it reveals little or nothing about assumptions concerning 'good administration'. In the following section I will elaborate this question and construct four additional hypotheses concerning what 'good administration' entail.

5.1.2 Undertaking 'good administration'

In chapter four I presented how actors within the agency deemed certain traits among other actors as 'poor management'. These traits specifically concerned instances wherein actors from the CMO rejected the premises and viability of the business process and The Calculation. I presented how these comments were referred to as 'poor management' and that they could be used in order to extrapolate desired activities within public administration: 'good administration'.

According to my inferences, 'good administration' entails instances of accepting that resources are scarce at the same time as it is accepted that effectiveness and equity are important instances. 'Good administration' can be understood to be an acceptance concerning these instances and a continuous balancing of the four E's. It could, however, be argued that as public administration has been subjected to an imposition of management, 'good administration' has come to associate with instances of economy and efficiency. The comments made by actors presented in chapter four – concerning 'poor management' – could be indicative of this. Two contexts are of special interest regarding this topic.

Firstly, what is 'poor management'? According to the comments made by senior actors during interviews in 2009, it entailed accepting reduced resources and stop complaints. In order to qualify this, there is need to identify some of

the central activities deemed as important by actors engaged in public administration. In this context it is thus of interest to explore whether these activities align with manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions associated with the social systems of Management or Civil Service.

Secondly, the group of 'actors engaged in public administration' is a rather elusively defined group. In order to further my understanding of how 'good administration' may be understood, there is need to explore differences within this group. I will return to the first context as I discuss the operationalization of items. In this section I will elaborate hypotheses concerning how different actors engaged in public administration enacts values of 'good administration'. I will do this by exploring actors' (1) age, (2) education, (3) tenure, and (4) organisational function in relation to their values of 'good administration'. Due to the lack of studies focusing on these parameters within a public administrative context, I have turned to literature regarding management and management control in a general context.

I argue that actors' age may prove to have explanatory value in regards to how they deem different activities as associated with e.g. 'good administration'. The underpinning logic of this statement resides in the fact that with increasing age the actors – naturally – gain new perspectives, which they draw on in situations of e.g. decisions making. Studies of this latter context has e.g. come to suggest that there exist a connection between increasing age and reduced risk averseness as it endangers a current social status (Carlsson & Karlsson, 1970; Vroom & Pahl, 1971). Gained positions organisations as well as in society in large affect the manner in which actors engages in different things. This is not very strange as we may assume that with increasing age, actors perceive to be more reluctant to loose that which they have worked hard and long for.

By extension, the observation that increasing age correlates with reduced risk averseness implies that younger actors more readily engage in activities that may be harmful for organisations. Such behaviour can lead to great profits and gains both on organisational as well as personal levels. Indeed, it has been found that issues such as growth and increased revenues are associated with younger actors in organisation (cf. Child, 1974).

When we differentiate a larger group of people according to their current age, we by extension differentiate between different social belongings. By this I mean that actors that today are 60 years have been raised within a society that in many regards are fundamentally different from that a 30 year-old person have been raised within. It has been suggested that age (and gender) affect the

ethical beliefs a person has (Perryer & Jordan, 2002). Such observations may be proximal to the society they were raised within.

Similar experiences tend to increase social cohesion, causing perceived experience and beliefs to align among people of similar age (Rhodes, 1983; Wiersema & Bantel, 1992). This means that people have things in common not due to their age, but to the context they have shared. Age in itself is thus not to be understood as causal for my findings, but a parameter for scrutinising actors' common experiences over time.

In the context of perceptions regarding 'good administration' within the SSIA, age can be used as a differentiator regarding the acceptance of reforms directed towards public administration. By this I mean that actors within higher age spans have been raised in a society that predates most of the reforms discussed in chapter one. Although they may have been part of them as they were implemented, it is assumed that they were 'schooled' in the previous traditions. I expect these actors to deem 'good administration' as activities associated with the social system of Civil Service. Actors within a younger age span, however, may more readily have accepted the social system of Management, and furthermore may have aligned their behaviour accordingly as it would otherwise jeopardise their future careers. Null-hypothesis 3 is formulated as:

> *H3: Actors within lower age spans do not value activities inherent in public administration differently as compared to actors within higher age spans.*

In connection to the progressed idea above concerning social cohesion, education may prove to be more influential than age span. It has for instance been suggested that highly educated actors have a greater ability to handle large amounts of information (Schroder, Driver, & Steufert, 1967), and are relatively sympathetic to innovation (Becker, 1970; Kimberly & Evanisko, 1981). From this perspective, education has an explanatory value concerning the manner in which activities are undertaken in different contexts. It has been suggested that the level of education an actor has reveals something about their cognitive ability (Wiersema & Bantel, 1992). Actors with degrees from higher education indicates a perceptiveness – perhaps even responsiveness – towards change (Wiersema & Bantel, 1992).

In chapter three I argued that education within business schools together with the impact that business press and -consultants have on society, have come to affect the discourses and practices in society. The economification of the public sector and indeed the imposition of management on public administration can be understood to be affects of such trends. The discursive power of

economists and business consultants, them being our contemporary equivalent to the priesthood of the Middle Ages, has to a large extent entered most instances of higher education regardless of educational specialisation.

It is for this reason expected that highly educated people would be more readily aligned with practices associated with the social system of Management. Null-hypothesis 4 is formulated as:

> *H4: Actors with higher levels of education do not value activities inherent in public administration differently as compared to actors with lower levels of education.*

As discussed in length in chapter two, actors' taken-for-granted assumptions are a product from a lifelong socialisation process in which instincts and habits play an intricate part. As far as hypotheses three and four concern, this socialisation is explained through the power given by both the social climate that they have been brought up within as well as the educations they have entered. According to the above reasoning, it was expected that younger people that have undergone higher education was expected to more readily turn to activities connected to the social system of Management.

Given this expectation, it is reasonable to assume that these actors have a restricted experience with public administration within the organisation. That is, if you hold a Bachelor's or Master's degree from university and are e.g. under 35 years of age, it is reasonable to assume that the time within the SSIA has not been that long. Another area of query therefore is interesting: is there a connection between actors' tenure and their understandings of 'good administration'?

Underpinning this conjecture is a reasoning that actors' perception and acceptance of inherent values and beliefs is essentially affected by the organisation they work within. It has been suggested that longer tenure is associated with a higher commitment to the ways activities are undertaken (Stevens, Beyer, & Trice, 1978; Staw & Ross, 1980) and an alignment with the dominant organisational beliefs (Schmidt & Posner, 1983). It has furthermore been suggested that people with long tenure have a greater understanding concerning the organisational policy (Kanter, 1977), which reinforces the suggestion about actors' alignment with dominant beliefs.

The ability to enjoy long tenure within an organisation should be associated with actors' ability to align personal beliefs with those beliefs that dominate the organisation they are in. By this I mean that I expect actors that have a long tenure within an organisation to have internalised – or at least accepted – the beliefs that dominate the organisation. Failure to internalise or accept beliefs in

ones surrounding should give cause to unease and essentially lead to an eventual exit by that actor. I furthermore assume that the beliefs that are present as an actor enters an organisation, fundamentally affects the beliefs s/he internalised. By this I mean that although the domination of certain beliefs may vary over time, a greater importance is given to those that were dominant as you began working.

Within a public administrative context, this means that beliefs about e.g. the balance between the four E's would be different if you entered the public sector as an employee during the 1960's as compared to the mid 2000's. This assumption covers the instance already hypothesised, about younger versus older actors, but furthermore instances wherein actors have previous experience within a private for-profit sector whereas they now – recently – have begun within the public sector. This means that the experiences as employees within the public sector may lead to other values than as compared to people from the private sector. In essence I here refer to the readiness in which activities associated with the social system of Management and Civil Service, are valuated by actors. The fifth null-hypothesis is formulated as:

> *H5: Actors with a long tenure do not value activities inherent in public administration differently as compared to actors with short tenure.*

Within the SSIA, there are two hierarchical levels of actors engaged in public administration of interest in this dissertation. These are understood to be located on unit and area levels. Unit level administrators are charged with the task of managing a local office, where citizens' applications are handled. Area level administrators have the task of coordinating a number of unit level administrators. Through this choice of organising, area level administrators become positioned farther away from the actors working with citizens' applications as compared to unit level administrators.

From an organisational control perspective, it has been argued that the distance to the ones executing the controlled activities define the characteristics of the control itself (Ouchi & Maguire, 1975; Ouchi, 1978; Merchant, 1985, pp. 70-71; Quattrone & Hopper, 2005, p. 736). From this perspective it is argued that actors that are in close proximity will more likely execute behaviour controls, whereas managers far removed will execute output controls. This reasoning can be used when discussing how activities are valued depending on the hierarchical distance to the handling of citizens' applications.

In chapter three I argued that the two dominant social systems of Management and Civil Service could be conceptually linked to output- and behav-

ioural control. According to the reasoning there, it was likely that output control became associated with the social system of Management due to the quantification and evaluative schematic as well as the individualism it engages. Contrary, then, the social system of Civil Service is more associated with behavioural control.

From this perspective I assume that activities that are valuated as 'good administration' may differ depending on whether the actor is employed on a unit or area level. Since area level administrators are farther removed from the handling of citizens' applications, it is reasonable to assume that they will resort to output control. Unit level administrators, however, are closer to the activities and thus expected to be more receptive to the idea of using rules and direct behaviour control. By extension, then, I expect area level administrators to adhere to output controls. This means that I assume that area level administrators value control associated to the social system of management higher than control associated to Civil Service. The sixth null-hypothesis is formulated as:

> *H6: Actors employed as unit level administrators do not value activities inherent in public administration differently as compared to actors employed as area level administrators.*

5.1.3 Hypotheses summarised

In this section I have presented six hypotheses. Together they form a basis for extending and validating the findings discussed in chapter four.

Hypothesis one concerns the mixed messages that is an outcome of the techniques referred to as business process and The Calculation. I argued that these techniques essentially connect to the two conjoined sets of E's, and that actors engaged in public administration essentially faced a dilemma as they engaged in using them. Whereas hypothesis one concerns the dilemma in regards to the enactment of different techniques, hypothesis two concerns the dilemma regarding perceived responsibilities and authority. Following the reasoning about an economification of the public sector, I argued that the proliferation of efficiency and economy would be prevalent when scrutinising actors' perceptions of these two contexts.

In addition to these hypotheses, another four were constructed. These hypotheses take a slightly different angle wherein I focus on how actors' value different activities inherent in public administration. I will return to the specifica-

tion of these activities as I discuss the operationalization within the self-administered survey. High valuations from actors concerning these activities become indicative of what constitutes as 'good administration' within the SSIA. Age, level of education, tenure within the organisation, and organisational function and the connections to the social systems of Management and Civil Service was discussed in these hypotheses.

In the following section I will discuss methods approaches for testing these hypotheses. I will firstly discuss the collection of material: through a self-administered survey. Secondly, I will discuss the use of Factor Analysis for categorisation and data reduction. The output of this analysis is a number of categories, representing the underlying dimensions in recipients' answers. The tests of the six hypotheses are presented in chapter six.

5.2 Methods approach

As I have already made clear above, this chapter contains queries that aim at extending and validating the findings presented in chapter four. Constructing the six hypotheses and furthermore the construction of a self-administered survey enabled this. This empirical exploration was undertaken between November 2010 and January 2011.

In this section I will firstly elaborate the manner in which recipients were selected and secondly how the hypotheses were operationalized. As a third section I will discuss the use of Factor Analysis: a multivariate statistical approach for data reduction and categorisation.

5.2.1 The survey

With the self-administered survey, I aimed at investigating whether the findings presented in chapter four, were senior actors told their stories, could be found at lower levels within the organisation. Aided by the Human Resources Department I contacted all unit and area level administrators within the CMO: in total 525 recipients. Due the relatively low number of recipients, I chose to conduct a survey on the entire population.

In order to validate the usefulness of the survey, a pilot survey was constructed and sent to 20 recipients between August and October 2010. The main aim of this pilot was to test whether the recipients understood the formulation

of the included items. Selection of the pilot group followed a systematic sample approach (Bryman & Bell, 2005, p. 116), where all recipients were organised in a list, ordered by the first letter in their surnames.

Each recipient was assigned an individual number, ranging from one to 525. Using a ten-sided dice, the initial number was selected (which incidentally turned out to be the number 1). Starting not from recipient with the number one, but with 21, I structurally selected each 21st recipient until I reached a total amount of 20. The distribution between departments and function is presented in table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Test group recipients distributed over organisational departments

	Unit level	Area level	Σ
Department	18	2	20
TCS & SS	3	1	4
LIC	9	1	10
NIC	6		6
Response-rate			*50 %*

The response rate from the pilot group was 50.0 %. The answers gained through the pilot survey revealed that 27 recipients within the total population had job descriptions that separated them from other actors engaged in public administration: more specifically they had no responsibility concerning other actors handling citizens' applications. Subsequently these 27 recipients as well as the 20 recipients engaged in the pilot were excluded from the real survey.

The sample for the survey was consequently reduced to 478 recipients out of whom 400 recipients (84.68 %) were on unit level and 78 recipients (16.32 %) on area level. A review of the distribution between (1) unit and area level and (2) departments are presented in table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Recipients' distribution across organisational positions

	Unit level	Area level	Σ
Department	400	78	478
TCS & SS	44	4	48
LIC	218	56	274
NIC	138	18	156
(N)	400	78	478

The survey was sent by ordinary mail accompanied with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the survey (cf. Eijlertsson, 1996; Bryman & Bell, 2003; Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). To make it easier for recipients to answer

the survey, the cover letter included information on how to reply via Internet as well. Every parcel contained a prepaid and addressed envelope that was marked with an individual listing number. When returned, the envelope was opened by personnel from the internal post office at the university and then forwarded to me in two separated piles. The survey itself was not marked with any identification, actually hindering me from connecting the surveys to recipient. I could for this reason only keep track of who responded, not what they responded.

In total, three reminders were sent via email and seven days after the third reminder the website was closed for additional entry.

Table 5.3 Frequency of recipients' answers

		Type of answer			
		Mail	Web	%	Acc. %
Correspondence (n)		195	170		
Ordinary mail	2010-11-08	134	44	37.2 %	37.2%
1st reminder[1]	2010-11-23	40	108	31.0 %	68.2%
2nd reminder	2010-12-01	18	16	7.1 %	75.3%
3rd reminder	2010-12-10	3	2	1.0 %	76.4%
Adjustments		113			
Non-valid recipients		9		1.9 %	78.3%
Non-response		104		21.7 %	100.0%
(N)		478			100,0%

[1] Reminders was sent by email only

Table 5.3 represent the sequence of sending and receiving the survey. The response rate was 76.4 % (n=365), which should be considered very good (Mangione, 1995, pp. author-year pp. 60-61).

9 recipients (1.9 %) were actors that had left their position as public administrator between me getting the lists from the H&R Department and the recipients receiving the survey. Another 104 recipients (21.7 %) chose not to respond to the survey. The distribution of valid responses within the survey is presented in Table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4 Real responses distributed over organisational positions

	Unit level	Area level	Other[123]	Σ
Department	296	62	7	365
TCS & SS	31	4	1	36
LIC	163	46	5	214
NIC	101	12	1	114
HQ	1			1
(n)	296	62	7	365

[1] Non-valid recipients. In this group are respondents that have responded with another occupation than unit or area level administrator.

As I argued above, a response-rate of 76.4 % should be perceived as very good. However, a good response-rate might still be unrepresentative of the population. To investigate this I compared the relative number of recipients in the sample with the registered responses. This is presented through discrepancies in table 5.5 below.

Table 5.5 Descriptive discrepancy analysis between sample and actual responses

	Unit level			Area level		
	Sample	Response	Disc.	Sample	Response	Disc.
Department						
TCS & SS	91.7 %	86.1 %	-5.6 %	8.3 %	11.1 %	2.8 %
LIC	79.6 %	76.2 %	-3.4 %	20.4 %	21.5 %	1.1 %
NIC	88.5 %	88.6 %	0.1 %	11.5 %	10.5 %	-1.0 %
Total	83.7 %	81.1 %	-2.6 %	16.3 %	17.0 %	0.7 %

When summating the response group (not presented in table), one will notice that it fails to add up to 100 %. This is due to the non-valid responses presented in table 5.4 (Other). Even though a perfect match would be preferable, it would also be highly unlikely. The results presented in table 5.5 indicate that received responses are generally well representative for the total sample.

A conclusion from this section is that the survey generally represents the sample. The survey has a response rate of 76.4 %, which is considered as very

[23] These seven recipients should not be confused with the nine reported non-valid recipients from table 5.3. The nine where recipients that had quit their job within the agency, whereas the seven remained at their job, but responded with as having another position than that of unit or area level.

good. The undertaken discrepancy analysis reveals that there is no immediate risk for misrepresentation. In the next section I will continue the methods discussion by presenting the underlying argumentation for the operationalization of the hypotheses.

5.2.2 Operationalization of hypotheses

In the previous section, I constructed six hypotheses concerning the mixed messages and perceptions concerning 'good administration' among actors engaged in public administration. This section aims at elaborating how these hypotheses have been operationalized through items within the self-administered survey. In order to do this I progress constructs concerning (1) organisational control (2) organisational responsibility, and (3) organisational valuation regarding 'good administration'. Inherent in these three constructs lies the dilemma between conjoined sets of E's as discussed throughout this dissertation. There is furthermore a connection to the social systems of Management and Civil Service as progressed in chapter three.

Organisational control relate to my first hypothesis above, that there is no difference in use of business process and The Calculation when used by actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA. Business processes are essentially formalised rules that direct attention to instances of effectiveness and equity when handling citizens' applications. The aim is to identify and formulate rules so that current legislation is maintained. The Calculation, on the other hand, directs attention to instances of efficiency and economy. The aim herein is both to transform identified business process into quantitative and commensurable measurement as well as to identify instances wherein tasks can be undertaken through less resources. I argued that as actors engage in both of these techniques, it instigates instances wherein actors face a dilemma.

With the aim of capturing actors' use of these two control techniques, I constructed six identical items concerning the two contexts (i.e. 12 items in total). All items were formulated as statements connected to each respective technique and recipients were asked to state their agreement on a five-point Likert scale (1 = do not agree and 5 = agree fully). The statements were furthermore constructed so that it connected with different contexts wherein the technique

was used. For example, the specific context followed the statement "As a manager[24] I use the business processes to…":

1. Together with personnel discuss their performance
2. Define performance targets for personnel within my unit
3. Motivate personnel within my unit
4. Affect how beneficiary administration is conducted within my unit
5. Allocate financial resources within my unit
6. Change the goals for operations within my unit

The six items differ in temporality as well as hierarchical level. Items one and two reflect an ex post character, where control is exerted retrospectively. Items three and four reflect an ex ante character where intervention is used as control mechanism.

Whereas items one through four represent controls directed toward the handling of citizens' applications specifically, i.e. individual level, items five and six focus on departmental level. As such, items five and six are implicitly affecting the handling of citizens' applications as they affect the context wherein the other controls can be exerted.

Organisational responsibility connects to my second hypothesis, that there is no difference in actors' perceptions regarding responsibility for items connected to the conjoined sets of E's. Formally delegated responsibility and authority, as such, can be used as an approximation for the argued squeezed position in which actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA exist. As we acknowledge an entrusted responsibility, we admit that which is implicitly understood to be important within the context. That is, when I believe that I am responsible for something, I also perceive it as being important to myself or someone else.

I argued that from the background of an economification of the public sector, actors' perceptions concerning formal responsibility should be reflective of this. In other words, I expect actors engaged in public administration to perceive themselves to be relatively more responsible for instances concerning efficiency and economy as compared to effectiveness and equity.

[24] The Swedish word 'chef' is here translated as manager. This is not a perfect translation as 'manager' carries connotations that the Swedish equivalent word does not.

Ten items were constructed to capture both perceived responsibility and authority from an operational management perspective. In a similar fashion as with organisational control, different contexts were used. All items were formulated as statements and the recipients were asked to state their agreement on a five-point Likert scale (1 = do not agree and 5 = agree fully). The ten items were formulated as:

1. I am responsible for my unit's financial performance
2. I am responsible for having sufficient amount of personnel to reach the goals
3. I am responsible for assuring that my personnel have the right competence for the work
4. I am responsible for beneficiary administration within my unit is equal
5. I am responsible for keeping my unit's costs within budget.
6. I have full authority to make decisions regarding office furnishing
7. I have full authority to make decisions regarding the daily activities
8. I have full authority to make decisions regarding in-house education
9. I have full authority to make decisions regarding personnel wages
10. I have full authority to make decisions regarding personnel size.

The ten items concerning perceptions of responsibility and authority should be indicative of how the conjoined sets of E's come to affect the ability to undertake public administration within the SSIA.

Organisational valuation regarding 'good administration' responds to hypotheses three through six. Within this context I argued that different activities undertaken within the SSIA could be used in order to further understand what the concept 'good administration' actually entail. Whereas hypotheses one and two were elaborated to validate the presence of dilemma within the SSIA, hypotheses three through six is explorative in that 'good administration' is elaborated.

19 items were constructed in order to capture how actors valuated activities inherent in public administration. The items were constructed so that they reflect a wide variety of different situation in which the four E's are represented. The items were furthermore constructed as statements and recipients were asked to respond with the agreement on a five-point Likert Scale (1 = do not agree and 5 = agree fully). In order to make the items viable for the actors employed within the SSIA, they were contextually associated with my understandings of the specificities of the organisation. Specifically, I focused on fictional instances wherein control had to be exerted. The items were furthermore for-

mulated so that they would capture instances of Management and Civil Service. All items are presented in table 5.6 below.

Table 5.6 Items for organisational valuation concerning 'good administration'

1.	Administrators should be advised to follow the posted rules for administration even if this results in longer processing times
2.	Decisions in complex cases should always be established with a Specialist or another administrator
3.	We must actively work to increase the number of applications handled by each administrator
4.	Decisions in applications must be equal regardless of the administrator conducting the proceedings
5.	By continuously measuring the performance of administrator and managerial levels, more citizens' applications can be handled
6.	To actively work with rules for how work should be performed allows us to work more efficiently
7.	A central task in the work as a manager is to ensure that the insured receives a legally proper administration of their application
8.	Our internal controls of administration processes must be designed so as not to oppose increased production
9.	Managers should actively work to keep costs at a low level
10.	It is unthinkable that we abandon our defined procedures (e.g. process maps) when administrating
11.	Managers must actively work to keep the backlog of applications to a minimum.
12.	A detailed process map counteracts high productivity in the form of handled applications per administrator
13.	An important task for managers is to keep production at a high level
14.	It is important that we can provide a quick response to the insured
15.	If a beneficiary case is appealed by the insured, the review shall always be done by a different administrator than the one who previously considered the matter
16.	Administrators should be encouraged to always call the insured in case the insured person is faced with a denial
17.	Through active personnel planning we can increase the throughput of cases
18.	The investigative duty often stands in conflict with increased productivity
19.	As a manager one sometimes have to prioritize payments to the insured above further investigations of the case

Hypotheses three through four furthermore entail background variables that I hypothesise can explain differences in actors' valuations concerning 'good administration'.

In hypothesis three this variable was age. Recipients were asked of their year of birth and this was later subtracted from the year of the inquiry (2010).

Four age spans was thereafter constructed: recipients with an age of (1) less than 40 years, (2) 41-50 years, (3) 51-60 years, and (4) more than 60 years of age

Hypothesis four focuses on education. To investigate this, recipients were asked to respond with their level of education according to five levels: (1) Elementary school, (2) Upper secondary school, (3) Foundation degree, (4) Bachelor's degree, and (5) Master's degree[25]. In retrospect it was found that several recipients responded with other types of educations. A common response was that of having a degree from 'realskolan'. Even though this educational level is abandoned since 1970, when the elementary school reform (of 9 years) was implemented in Sweden, I have chosen to code these responses as equivalent to upper secondary school level. Responses of having taken occasional courses at university were coded as equivalent with having a Foundation degree.

Hypothesis five focus on tenure within the organisation. Recipients were asked to respond with the year when they entered the organisation. Tenure was thereby defined by calculating the time between entering the organisation and the year of the inquiry (2010). An initial visual descriptive analysis (histogram) of recipients' answers to this question revealed three distinct peaks in terms of time within the organisation: 6-10 years, 20-23 years, and 30-40 years (not presented in this dissertation). It is plausible that these peaks suggest a recurrent retirement cycle within the organisation and I have therefore constructed three groups that fit this: (1) <12 years, (2) 13-25 years, and (3) >26 years within the organisation.

Hypothesis six focuses on organisational function. Recipients were asked to respond with their formal hierarchical and functional position according to three positions: (1) administrator, (2) unit level administrator, and (3) area level administrator.[26]

This ends this section about how the six hypotheses presented above have been operationalized in the self-administered survey. As I mentioned in the beginning of this chapter, I have furthermore made use of Factor Analysis as means of data reduction. In the next section I will present this method.

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[25] In Swedish this was 'Grundskola', 'Gymnasium', 'Högskoleexamen', 'Kandidatexamen', and 'Magisterexamen'.

[26] In Swedish this translates to 'Handläggare', 'Enhetschef', and 'Områdeschef'

5.2.3 Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis is a multivariate statistical method for analysing underlying structures of correlation between items (Hair, Andersson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). Factor Analysis is first and foremost a method for identifying different dimensions in quantitative data and furthermore explains the power each variable has within the dimensions. This means that data can be grouped in manner that creates coherence. In this study, Factor Analysis has primarily been enacted for data reduction purposes. This means that items from the survey have been selected for summation purpose.

The method has furthermore been employed in order to confirm (or reject) the presence of underlying dimensions in the responses. By this I mean that the constructs discussed above was subjected to analytical scrutiny in order to explore underlying dimensions among recipients' responses. In this section I explain the choices of computation that I have made in connection of using Factor Analysis. All computations have been made in SPSS 20.0 (IBM Corp, Released 2011).

Using Factor Analysis, one can begin by exploring (1) cases or (2) items. In the first alternative correlations are sought in order to find groups of recipients. In this study, however, I focus on how different items correlate. From this perspective groups of interrelated items are used to construct groups. Choosing items rather than cases as my main focus can be understood if we recollect the arguments put forth in chapter two. I there argue that as multiple social systems are shaped and maintained in society, actors continuously draw on several, or indeed all, taken-for-granted assumptions under different context in order to make sense of their social reality. Validity from an actor perspective is thereby found in plurality rather than being bound by one single taken-for-granted assumption. An implication of this thus is that I seek correlations between responses and that recipients can be understood to be located within one or several groups, extrapolated through the Factor Analysis.

Sample-size is an intricate part of Factor Analysis. Since Factor Analysis builds on the assumption that there exist correlations between included items, a certain level of cases is needed. This is because correlation usually weakens with low amounts of cases. It is generally argued (cf. Hair et al., 1998, pp. 98-99) that the dataset should contain at least 100 cases.

From the responses I received through the self-administered survey, there were 365 cases from the start. The set, however, contained missing values, which meant a reduction of 92 cases leaving 273 valid cases. Another issue in

this respect is the ratio of valid cases per variable included in the analysis. A minimum is here considered ten cases per variable (Hair et al., 1998, pp. 98-99). As I will present below in the undertaken analysis, the lowest variable per case ratio was 16.06 (for organisational valuation concerning 'good administration'), still fulfilling the mentioned requirement.

The correlation between analysed items was assessed by means of three tests: (1) the Keyser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy, (2) the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity, and (3) items' commonalities. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy assesses the correlations between items and the appropriateness of conducting Factor Analysis. According to Hair et al. (1998, p. 99) the measure ranges between zero and one, where more than .60 is considered satisfactory. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity tests whether the correlation matrix has significant correlations. To be deemed statistical significant it is expected that the p-value does not exceed .001. Communalities refer to each variable's variance as explained by the factors. The results from these tests are presented in the analysis in the next section.

The aim of Factor Analysis is essentially the extraction of factors, or underlying dimensions, from the variables. This requires careful consideration. Too many factors will include a large amount of variance, but may be very hard to interpret meaningfully. Too few factors, on the other hand, makes interpretation easier but include too little variance to be of importance. In order to decide the cut-off points regarding number of extracted factors, I have made use of two rules: (1) the Latent Root Criterion and (2) the Percentage of Variance Criterion.

Using the Latent Root Criterion, I used an eigenvalue of one – the latent roots – as a cut-off point. Through this criterion it is reasoned that only those factors that accounts for the variance of at least one variable is deemed significant. In addition, the Percentage of Variance Criterion suggests that the extracted factors should explain at least a specified part of the variance from variables. This criterion aims at warranting a practical significance in the extracted factors. As a rule-of-thumb, it is considered adequate – within the social sciences – if the extracted factors explain at least 60 % of the variance. Initial extraction was undertaken through Principal Component Analysis. After extraction, each factor was rotated using VARIMAX. In essence, the rotation concerns a redistribution of variance from previous factors to succeeding ones in order to create a more theoretically sound factor pattern (Hair et al., 1998, pp. 106-107).

The output of the rotation, the factor loadings, refers to each variable's correlation with the extracted factors. To minimize ambiguity within the mod-

el, it is important to decide which loadings to keep. I have used the criteria of practical significance (Hair et al., 1998, p. 111) as a cut-off point. This means that only items that progressed a factor loading of at least .4 have been kept in the final model: indicating a correlation of 40% with the factor. Variables that proved to be practical significant on several factors was removed from the model in order to reduce ambiguity. The highest loading suggests the factor's topic, but an overall interpretation of the items included in the factor was undertaken. Labels for each factor in accordance to the interpreted characteristic were then assigned.

As mentioned above, Factor Analysis is first and foremost a technique for identifying underlying dimensions in recipients' answers. An effect of identifying these underlying dimensions is that the amount of data received can be reduced into a smaller number of variables. Each extracted and rotated factor in itself represents such an underlying dimension. This means that data reduction is inherent in the process of using Factor Analysis. To be able to fully test the hypotheses presented in this chapter I have made use of summations. This essentially means calculating a weighted summated scale.

To ensure reliability of these constructs, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each weighted summated scale. The Cronbach's alpha is a measure for internal validity, ensuring predictability of one variable in a series of items. High scores of a Cronbach's alpha indicate that the first score of a variable is aligned with the scores of the following items'. Hair et al. (1998, p. 118) argues that for explorative studies a Cronbach's alpha of at least .60 is acceptable and affirms internal validity of the construct.

5.3 Categorisation by means of Factor Analysis

In this section I will present results from the undertaken Factor Analysis in regards to responses gained from the self-administered survey. As such, it is not a test of whether actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA acknowledges the presence of different valuations regarding 'good administration'. The aim is rather here to present how underlying dimensions from recipients' responses can be understood to support the idea progressed so far: that there are dilemmatic positions which actors face.

By making use of Factor Analysis, I was able to investigate whether the responses given in the survey corresponded to the constructs presented above: (1)

organisational control, (2) organisational responsibility, and (3) organisational valuation concerning 'good administration'. These constructs were undertaken in order to capture (and test) the dilemma concerning conjoined E's in public administration within the SSIA. As I will show in this section some revisions of the three areas had to be undertaken to identify viable factors from recipients' responses that cohere with the overall construction in the survey.

5.3.1 Exploring organisational control

The 12 – six for each context of business processes and The Calculation – variables that operationalized organisational control were tested through Factor Analysis with the purpose of identifying underlying dimensions in recipients' responses. During an initial test I found that one item (using business processes in order to change goals) loaded with practical significance over two factors: and was for this reason removed from the model.

Table 5.7 Summary of Factor Analysis concerning organisational control

Number of items	11
Cumulated initial Eigenvalues	74.427 %
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.804
Bartlett's test of sphericity	p=.000
Items' communalities	>.400
VIF	<4
Variable per case ratio	24.818

Table 5.7 contains a summary of the Factor Analysis undertaken in regard of the 11 remaining variables. These explain 74.427 % of the variance from recipients' responses across three factors: a level that is well above the rule-of-thumb of 60 %. KMO, Bartlett's test of sphericity, and items' communalities all show adequacies for Factor Analysis. Multicollinearity was found to be at satisfactory levels (VIF<4). The model extrapolated from the Factor Analysis, furthermore contains 24.818 variables per case, which strengthens the adequacy.

The rotated factors are presented in the table 5.8. Variables that load with practical significance are marked by means of underscore. The pattern indicates a separation between the use of business processes and The Calculation. These are represented in factors one and two respectively. This validates the general construct as discussed in the section of operationalization above. The use of the business processes and The Calculation takes precedence over the temporal character of the joined control contexts.

Table 5.8 Rotated Factor Matrix[a] for organisational control

	Factors		
	The Calculation	Business processes	Unit level control
The Calculation, discuss performance	.863	.097	.100
The Calculation, performance targets	.899	.078	.161
The Calculation, motivation	.889	.174	.078
The Calculation, affect administration	.773	.157	.252
The Calculation, resource allocation	.095	.055	.892
The Calculation, change unit goals	.365	-.022	.737
Business processes, discuss performance	.149	.898	.005
Business processes, performance targets	.274	.796	.137
Business processes, motivation	.190	.867	.035
Business processes, affect administration	-.078	.689	.170
Business processes, resource allocation	.088	.292	.799
Cronbach's alpha	.904	.852	.790

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 4 iterations.

A third factor was furthermore inherent in recipients' responses. This factor consists of variables indicating a mix of the two techniques, but for distinct contexts and is subsequently interpreted as referring to unit level control. This factor entails variables from both techniques, making it somewhat ambiguous as compared to factors one and two. The implications and further interpretation of this factor grouping will be elaborated on when testing the hypothesis in chapter six. Cronbach's alpha (c.f. table 5.8) for the three factors is at satisfactory levels, suggesting good internal validity.

5.3.2 Exploring organisational responsibility

The construct of organisational responsibility described above concerns recipients' responses to perceived formal responsibility and authority inherent in public administration within the SSIA. Ten variables were identified above – when I discussed the operationalization of the hypotheses – and all were found to load with practical significance over three factors. No variables were deemed to load over several factors.

Table 5.9 Summary of organisational responsibility Factor Analysis

Number of items	10
Cumulated initial Eigenvalues	65.532 %
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequcy	.744
Bartlett's test of sphericity	p=.000
Items' communalities	>.400
VIF	<3
Variable per case ratio	27.3

Taken together, the three extracted factors explain 65.532 % of the variance: a level that is adequate. KMO, Bartlett's test of sphericity, and items' communalities all show adequacies for Factor Analysis (cf. table 5.9 for summary) and no multicollinearity was found (VIF<3). The model has 27.3 variables per case.

Table 5.10 Rotated Factor Matrix[a] for organisational responsibility

	Factor		
	Authority	Economy	Equity
Responsibility, economic performance	.180	.864	.038
Responsibility, personnel size	.300	.717	.125
Responsibility, competence	.183	.110	.859
Responsibility, equal administration	-.050	.083	.867
Responsibility, low costs	.059	.879	.095
Authority, furniture	.559	.311	-.293
Authority, daily operations	.717	.136	.009
Authority, education	.739	.094	.271
Authority, personnel wages	.765	.069	.174
Authority, personnel size	.602	.372	-.219
Cronbach's alpha	.749	.812	.760

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

The rotated factors are presented in in table 5.10, where the practical significance is underscored. I hypothesised that the economification of the public sector would render differences regarding perceptions of responsibilities and authorities. This is partly observable for the construct of responsibility, which generates two factors in the model (factors two and three).

Factor two entails variables concerning economic performance, personnel size, and cost-efficiency. The larges variable is that of low costs, whereby I make the interpretation that this factor represents instances of economy. Factor three entails variables concerning levels of competence and equal administration. The

largest variable – responsibility for equal administration – suggests that this factor should be interpreted as representing instances of equity.

The separation into two factors representing (1) economy and (2) equity is indicative of the separation between the conjoined E's as discussed throughout this dissertation. The third factor – or the first depending on your chosen perspective – concerns the construct of authority. The construct of authority, as compared to responsibility, did not, however, prove to render several factors. That is, the identification of economy and equity as inherent in the two factors concerning responsibility was not evident within the construct of responsibility. Implications of this will be discussed in chapter six.

The three extracted factors of organisational responsibility all have satisfactory levels according to the calculated Cronbach's alpha tests (cf. table 5.10).

5.3.3 Exploring organisational valuations

In this final analysis, I will present the Factor Analysis undertaken concerning the 19 variables referring to 'good administration'. During the initial analysis I found that two variables were subject for removal: variables one and three as presented in table 5.6. Variable number three was removed from the model due to multiple loadings on several factors, and variable number one – after the exclusion of variable number three – was found to lack practical significance in any factor. This means that the Factor Analysis was undertaken with the 17 remaining variables.

Table 5.11 Summary of organisational valuation concerning 'good administration' Factor Analysis

Number of items	17
Cumulated initial Eigenvalues	60.420 %
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequcy	.810
Bartlett's test of sphericity	p=.000
Items' communalities	>.400
VIF	<2
Variable per case ratio	16.06

Six factors were extracted, explaining 60.420 % of the variance. KMO, Bartlett's test of sphericity, and items' communalities all show adequacies for Factor Analysis, and no multicollinearity was found (VIF<2). With the exclusion of

the two non-adequate items already mentioned, the variable per case ratio was 16.06. The rotated factor solution is presented in table 5.12

Factor one contains five variables with practical significant loadings. All five variables reflect different activities associated with efficiency. For instance variable eight, 13, and 17 all touch upon productivity, whereas items nine and 11 are more directed toward efficiency.

Within the second factor, I find variables that reflect activities concerning equity. The heaviest loading, and thus the most influential variable, is number 15: when a case is up for appeal it is important that another beneficiary administrator makes the decision. This is a fundamental issue within the equity and essentially aims at removing potential obstacles for arbitrary decisions making. The remaining three items (numbers four, seven, and 14) found in this factor support my interpretation of this being about equity.

Factor three is closely related to factor one in that it touches upon activities associated with the conjoined E's of efficiency and economy. But rather than being instances of parsimony with public funds, these activities found in factor three represent instances of performance measurement. I have, however, labelled this factor 'economy' as it associates with instances of measuring and adjusting activities so that they can be undertaken more swiftly.

Factor four contains variables that reflect the dilemma, or the mixed messages, within the organisation. These three variables touch upon activities that essentially imply the existence of choice between different tasks.

Factor five contains two variables: urging administrators responsible for handling citizens' applications to call citizens when these getting a rejection and getting support from colleagues in cases that are specifically complicated. If factor two, then, reflects legality or equity, factor five carries an association with effectiveness.

Factor six only contains one variable. As such it is not really much of an underlying dimension as it is a residual from the other factors: a variable that does not fit with the five previous factors. The variable, number ten, reflect the necessity of following defined procedures in beneficiary administration. Although it may be associated with factors two and five, it becomes separated by the manner it invokes rules as important for control within the SSIA.

Table 5.12 Rotated Component Matrix[a] for organisational valuation concerning 'good administration'

No.		Component					
		Efficiency	Equity	Economy	Dilemma	Effectiveness	Hierarchy
2	Complicated cases should always be established with colleagues	-.022	.121	.224	.257	.649	.335
4	Case decisions should be equal irrespective of BA	-.034	.597	.353	.019	.113	.269
5	By continuously measuring performance more cases can be administrated	.271	.041	.760	-.086	-.039	-.130
6	Actively working with rules of conduct results in more efficient work	.066	.124	.741	.000	.099	.189
7	A central task as manager is to satisfy the insured with a legally proper administration	.374	.408	.378	-.006	.071	.107
8	Internal controls must be constructed so that they do not contradict increased productivity	.680	.020	-.162	.221	.102	-.022
9	Managers should actively work with keeping low costs	.667	-.075	.253	-.046	.230	.095
10	It is unthinkable to deviate from defined procedures in administration	.189	.057	.037	-.119	.019	.824
11	Managers must actively work with keeping un-administered cases at a minimum	.566	.316	.185	.059	-.057	.335
12	Detailed business processes counteracts high productivity in terms of administrated cases	-.096	-.036	-.053	.699	.061	-.198
13	An important task for managers is to maintain high production levels	.654	.249	.174	.011	-.158	.226
14	It is important that we provide a quick response to the insured	.371	.601	.164	-.018	-.014	.093
15	When a case is appealed it is important that another BA makes the reconsideration	.054	.812	-.100	.039	.076	-.104
16	BA's should be encouraged to call the insured when endangered to get a case rejection	.196	.062	-.037	-.071	.838	-.139
17	We can increase productivity through active personnel planning	.541	.162	.317	-.129	.158	-.089
18	Our investigative duty often stands in conflict with increased productivity	.028	.066	-.165	.726	.108	.261
19	Managers sometimes needs to prioritize payments above further investigations	.171	.019	.103	.736	-.086	-.098
	Cronbach's alpha	.669	.592	.602	.578	.449	n/a

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.

5.4 Discussion

In this chapter I have discussed the presence of dilemma within the organisational control within the organisation. As I argued in chapter four and in this chapter, the dilemma resides in the mixed messages that become proliferated through the two techniques referred to as business processes and The Calculation. Conceptually, the dilemmatic position that actors engaged in public administration faces is that between the conjoined sets of E's.

In chapter four, I argued that the continuous use of business processes and The Calculation, together with the connection of the resource allocation process to that of The Calculation, actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA became squeezed. As such, they were faced with the dilemma of having to adhere to current legislation – the business processes – or to align performance with the available resources – The Calculation.

But whereas I in chapter four primarily presented findings that emanated from interviews and participatory observations among a small number of actors, I aimed at extending these understandings through the use of a self-administered survey. In other words, are the findings presented in chapter four understood as primarily a local phenomenon or can they be representative of the organisation in large?

Two hypotheses were constructed with the attempt of exploring actors' perception of the mixed messages and the dilemma inherent in the two techniques. Hypothesis one concerned the exertion of control from a public administrations perspective. I argued that as actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA, they continuously made use of business processes as well as The Calculation when they exerted control.

The hypothesis was that actors would use these two techniques equally, thus accentuating the dilemma they face. Hypothesis two concerned actors' perceptions of formal responsibility and authority. I expected that these two instances would prove to be affected by the economification of the public sector and thus the proliferation of the conjoined set of efficiency and economy. As such, it was expected that formal responsibilities would be skewed in favour of this latter part, leaving effectiveness and equity behind. Hypotheses one and two were furthermore operationalized through constructs of (1) organisational control and (2) organisational responsibility.

Apart from the mixed messages discussed in chapter four, I found that senior actors within the SSIA expressed opinions regarding instances of 'poor management'. I used this concept to extrapolate the opposite, which should be understood to be 'good administration'. In this chapter I constructed four hypotheses concerning actors' valuation of activities inherent in public administration. The four hypotheses concerned difference regarding how such activities were valuated depending on actors' (1) age, (2) tenure, (3) education, and (4) hierarchical functionality. The hypotheses were operationalized through the construct of organisational valuation concerning 'good administration'.

5.4.1 Empirical validation of theoretical constructs

Recipients' responses regarding the three constructs were furthermore subject for Factor Analysis in order to found a base for data reduction as well as validating actors' agreement with my conjectures.

I found that recipients' responses concerning organisational control resulted in three factors: (1) The Calculation, (2) Business processes, and (3) unit level control. Factors one and two refer to the use of the two control techniques in different contexts, whereas the third factor was a bit ambiguous.

The construct of organisational responsibility was found to result in three factors: (1) Authority, (2) Economy, and (3) Equity. Factors two and three refer to actors' perceptions regarding responsibility and resonate well against a backdrop of economification as discussed in chapter one. Factor one, however, was found to lack this fragmentation and will be further discussed in chapter six.

The construct of organisational valuation concerning 'good administration' resulted in six factors: (1) Efficiency, (2) Equity, (3) Economy, (4) Dilemma, (5) Effectiveness, and (6) Hierarchy.

What this means is that for the three constructs, which I discussed in the operationalization section in this chapter, Factor Analysis has partly validated the empirical presence. This is, of course, only partially true, as some modifications to the models were necessary in order for them to become significant. This aside, the loading on the different factors as I have presented them above, is indicative of the economification of the public sector.

This is especially noticeable in the constructs of organisational responsibility and organisational valuation concerning 'good administration'. Within these constructs the factors assimilate contents that are coherent with the four E's of public administration. This was expected, and indeed why the variables were

constructed the way they were. The undertaken Factor Analysis in this chapter, however, validates these conjectures and formalises the presence of the four E's in the constructs.

The associations of variables as in the undertaken Factor Analysis furthermore lays a basis for analysing how dilemmatic positions come to face actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA. If the factors had not been associated with the four E's, but had revealed other forms of patterns, the discussion would have to revolve around this. As they are presented now, they help in establishing the potential presence of dilemma concerning the conjoined E's within public administration.

5.4.2 Preparation for further statistical analysis

Although the undertaken Factor Analysis in this chapter has been used to categorise and validate the constructs from an empirical perspective, it has furthermore been employed as a preparation for statistical analysis. I mentioned this in the methods section above, when discussing Factor Analysis as means of data reduction.

In this respect, data reduction has been employed in order to test the hypotheses constructed in this chapter. The three constructs have been modified so that they entail different underlying dimensions – factors – on which further testing can be engaged. This is the aim of the following chapter.

6 Statistical analysis

In chapter four I argued that actors engaged in public administration within the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (SSIA) were facing mixed messages. I argued this from the backdrop of empirical findings from stories among senior actors as well as conducted observations. Essentially, I argued that as actors engaged in the techniques of business processes and The Calculation as means of exerting control, a dilemma between the conjoined sets of E's was accentuated. The main issue seemed to be that the continuous use of business processes for directing the handling of citizens' application together with a use of The Calculation for resource allocation and analysis concerning under- and overemployment resulted in these mixed messages.

I furthermore argued that there existed perceptions regarding primarily 'poor management' within the agency. These revolved around certain duties and activities that actors engaged in public administration were assumed to conduct. Claiming that one could not perform due reductions of available resources was, by the senior actors, perceived as instances of 'poor management'. By extension, the idea that certain activities and tasks can be deemed to be 'poor management' means that there exist instances that are good: what I refer to as 'good administration'.

As the basis for the findings discussed in chapter four primarily draws on a rather small set of actors, chapter five was dedicated to the exploration of how widely spread these perceptions actually were within the SSIA. This exploration was initiated by the formulation of six hypotheses and three constructs. The hypotheses are presented in table 6.1 below. In summary, hypotheses one and two concern the presence of dilemma in techniques for exertion of control as well as in perceptions regarding formal responsibility and authority. Hypotheses three through six concern actors' valuation of different activities within public administration.

Table 6.1 Six hypotheses summarised

H1	There is no significant difference in use of business processes and The Calculation when engaged in public administration.
H2	There is no significant difference between perceived responsibility and authority when compared across efficiency/economy versus effectiveness/equity.
H3	Actors within lower age spans do not value activities inherent in public administration differently as compared to actors within higher age spans.
H4	Actors with higher levels of education do not value activities inherent in public administration differently as compared to actors with lower levels of education.
H5	Actors with a long tenure do not value activities inherent in public administration differently as compared to actors with short tenure.
H6	Actors employed as unit level administrators do not value activities inherent in public administration differently as compared to actors employed as area level administrators.

The main aim in this chapter is to present the undertaken tests of these six hypotheses. I will furthermore discuss the implications of the results and how they lead me to progress the exploration of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions.

The undertaken Factor Analysis (chapter five) resulted in modifications of the three constructs. I have discussed these at length previously and will not go into detail again. I will however discuss some implications following on the modifications and how this affects the testing of the hypotheses. The outcome of the Factor Analysis as presented in chapter five serves as a starting point for testing the hypotheses. But first I will make a presentation of the methods approach for the analysis in this chapter.

6.1 Methods approach

There are essentially two things that I am going to bring up in this section. Firstly, I will discuss how the Factor Analysis conducted in chapter five was used for data reduction purposes (in addition to the tests of the constructs). Underlying dimensions identified in recipients' responses are calculated into new analysable variables. Secondly, I will discuss how these variables have been used in the subsequent testing of the hypotheses.

6.1.1 Data reduction from Factor Analysis

Factor Analysis was undertaken for two reasons. Firstly, it was undertaken in order to explore underlying dimensions in recipients' responses. This was pre-

sented in chapter five. Secondly, it was undertaken with an aim of data reduction. This is what is presented in this chapter.

The method of data reduction used in this chapter is that of summated scales (cf. Hair et al., 1998, p. 129), or more precisely weighted summated scales. Summated scales are undertaken by adding all variables with practical significant loadings within a factor. The summated scale can then either be used as it is or weighted with the number of input variables. In this case I have chosen to weight the summated scales in order to increase descriptive comparability. An advantage of this method is that the variables representing a specific factor can be easily interpreted. A downside of using the summated scales method concerns loss of information. Since only those items loading with practical significance on a specific factor are included, all contributing information coming from other items are removed.

6.1.2 Paired samples t-tests and ANOVA

The six formulated hypotheses, summarised above, require a testing of differences between different variables' mean scores. I tested these mean score differences by making use of (1) paired samples tests and (2) ANOVA tests. The postulated null-hypotheses all state that there exist no difference between the groups.

Paired samples t-test is an alternative to the more common t-test. A t-test assesses the difference in mean scores between two samples and their standard error (Hair et al., 1998, p. 331) and results in a ratio between the values: the t-statistics. By assessing if the t-statistic is large enough, it can be deemed whether the null-hypothesis should be rejected. Paired samples t-test has similarities to the common t-tests, but enables an analysis between two samples from the same group simultaneously: something that the common t-test fails to do.

Hypotheses one and two are tested through use of paired samples t-tests, where differences in means scores are searched at unit and area level respectively. In these two hypotheses I study the dilemma in terms of (1) organisational control and (2) organisational responsibility.

The ANOVA tests are used when several variables are tested simultaneously. ANOVA is a parametric test that requires the data to assume at least an interval scale level of measurement. In this study, recipients have been asked to respond on statements by grading the manner in which they agree with a statement: ranging from not agreeing at all (1) to fully agreeing (5). From my per-

spective, I understand the material in this respect to assume an interval scale characteristic. Rather than calculating and evaluating the t-statistics – as is done in the paired samples t-test – a F-statistic is calculated. By assessing whether the F-value is small enough, the null-hypothesis can be rejected (Hair et al., 1998, p. 332).

The ANOVA tests were used in order to explore hypotheses three through six, which means having independent variables consistent of several groups. An ordinary t-test may be able to test for significant differences in variance between two groups accurately, but when the independent variable contains more than two groups the t-test becomes problematic as it risks inflating type 1 errors (Hair et al., 1998, p. 332).

6.2 Testing hypotheses

In this section I will present the undertaken analysis in which I explore hypotheses one through six. But before this, I will present the output as a result from the data reduction process. They are presented in the order of the three constructs that have been subject for analysis: (1) organisational control, (2) organisational responsibility, and (3) organisational valuation concerning 'good administration'. A shorter discussion of the variables' values will be presented in connection to each analysis.

6.2.1 The weighted summated scales

By identifying underlying dimensions in recipients' responses, I was able to summate scales. I weighted all variables found within the identified factors in chapter five. The weighted summated scales for the factors are presented in table 6.2.

Within the construct of organisational control, I established that recipients' responses could be grouped under three factors: (1) The Calculation, (2) Business processes, and (3) Unit level control. With this discussion I made in chapter five in mind, the first two factors can be said to represent direct forms of control, focused on handling citizens' applications. The third factor, however, represents another level of hierarchy, and only implicitly affects administration of citizens' applications.

Table 6.2 Weighted summated scales for factors

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Dev
Organisational control					
The Calculation	273	1.0	5.0	3.603	1.112
Business process	273	1.0	5.0	3.538	.932
Unit level control	273	1.0	5.0	2.408	1.125
Organisational responsibility					
Authority	273	1.0	4.4	2.626	.773
Economy	273	1.0	5.0	2.745	1.318
Equity	273	1.5	5.0	4.647	.569
Organisational value					
Efficiency	273	1.2	5.0	4.176	.587
Equity	273	1.0	5.0	4.686	.454
Economy	273	1.0	5.0	3.881	.739
Dilemma	258	1.0	5.0	2.879	.834
Effectiveness	273	1.0	5.0	3.535	1.011
Hierarchy	273	1.0	5.0	3.465	1.081
Valid N (listwise)	258				

Within the construct of organisational responsibility, three factors were identified: (1) Authority, (2) Economy, and (3) Equity. Factors two and three refer to instances concerning actors' perception of formal responsibilities within the agency. But whereas the separation into two factors concerning perceived responsibility is noticeable, the same thing is not evident for the factor of Authority.

I argued in chapter five that Authority here could be understood as the transformative capacities that recipients perceived themselves of having: A receipt for responsibility. Responsibility, on the other hand, is understood as others' expectations for conducting certain activities. The association of responsibility into two separate factors is consistent with the overall assumption that there exists a dilemma within public administration. This dilemma is associated with the economification (Lundquist, 1997, 1998, 1999) of the public sector and the conjoined sets of E's as discussed in chapter one.

The third, and final, construct explored here concerned organisational valuation concerning 'good administration'. 17 items concerning statements were found across six factors. As can be seen in table 6.2, there are differences in the weighted mean scores within all three areas. In the next section I will elaborate on this and conduct tests for the hypotheses previously discussed.

6.2.2 Results

As I have presented in this and the previous chapter, six hypotheses concerning (1) mixed messages and (2) 'good administration' have been constructed. In this chapter I will explore differences in mean scores between the identified factors as well as test the hypotheses specified above. I will make some general inferences regarding some of the results, but the majority of the implications derived from the tests will be discussed in the next section.

Hypothesis one and two

Hypothesis one concerns recipients' use of the two different techniques for exerting control in public administration within the agency. I argued that these techniques constituted an accentuation of the dilemma concerning the conjoined E's. My expectation was that actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA would use these techniques in an equal manner. More specifically, I hypothesised that there was no significant difference between mean scores in use of the two techniques.

Hypothesis two concerned actors' perceptions regarding formal responsibility and authority. I argued that the exploration into actors' perceptions regarding these issues provides greater insights into the potential dilemmatic position they face. The squeezed position in which actors engaged in public administration within the agency have been positioned, may become clearer through this analysis. In regards to this, I argued that due to the proliferation of efficiency and economy, responsibilities and authorities was expected to be skewed in favour of this specific set of E's.

As I undertook Factor Analysis in the previous chapter, I found that the constructs that I had operationalized differed slightly from what I had expected. Rather than finding two factors within organisational control and four factors within organisational responsibility, as expected, I found three extracted factors within each construct. I have touched upon this previously in this as well as in the previous chapter, and I will not engage in any descriptive analysis of the factors. The extraction of different factors from what I expected, however, required some adjustments before the hypotheses were tested.

Within organisational control, the ambiguity of the third extracted factor – Unit level control – was largely due to the disassociation with the two techniques. I discussed this in chapter five, where I argued that the factor of Unit level control was dominated by the context, not the technique, in which control was being exerted. For this reason I have chosen to exclude this factor when testing the hypothesis.

Within organisational responsibility, the first extracted factor concerned variables associated with perceived authority. What was surprising in this extraction was that the association with conjoined E's – an instance noticeable within the two extracted factors concerning responsibility – did not occur. This means that whereas I expected to test for potential divergence between sets of efficiency/economy on the one hand and effectiveness/equity on the other, this was unattainable in respect of authorities. For this purpose, variables associated with Authority were excluded when I tested hypothesis two.

Testing hypotheses one and two was done by using a paired samples t-test for the four weighted summated scales associated with the constructs of organisational control and responsibility. The test was furthermore undertaken for unit and area level administrators respectively in order to explore differences in regards to hierarchical functionality: 217 recipients responded as being positioned as unit level administrators and 53 as being area level administrators. Two recipients did not respond to their positions and was subsequently removed from this analysis. In tables 6.3, I present the statistics for the two groups. The results from the paired samples t-test are presented in table 6.4.

Table 6.3 Paired samples statistics for unit and area level administrators

		Unit level			
		Mean	N	Std. Dev	Std. Error Mean
Control	The Calculation	3.6002	217	1.1301	.0767
	Business process	3.5588	217	.9038	.0614
Responsibility	Economy	2.3241	217	1.0575	.0718
	Equity	4.6406	217	.5442	.0369
		Area level			
		Mean	N	Std. Dev	Std. Error Mean
Control	The Calculation	3.5755	53	1.05792	.14532
	Business process	3.4670	53	1.03779	.14255
Responsibility	Economy	4.4088	53	.88347	.12135
	Equity	4.6698	53	.67185	.09229

In table 6.3, I present descriptive statistics from four factors. Scrutinising, firstly, the mean scores concerning organisational control, it becomes noticeable that there are no big discrepancies between unit and area level administrators. At first glance, the scores seem to be fairly equal, suggesting that the techniques are equally used in control exertion within the agency.

The first test (presented as 'Control' in table 6.4) reveals that there is no statistically significant difference regarding use of the two techniques. These results are valid on unit (p=.620) as well as area levels (p=.471). The second test

(presented as 'Responsibility' in table 6.4) reveals that there are statistically significant differences in actors' perceptions regarding formal responsibility. This holds true on unit (p=.000) as well as area levels (p=.010).

In regards to the two postulated hypotheses (one and two) the undertaken tests means (1) a corroboration of hypothesis one and (2) a rejection of hypothesis two. More clearly, the tests reveal that there is basis for dilemma due to the continuous and simultaneous use of The Calculation and business processes within agency. They furthermore reveal that actors perceive themselves as having different responsibilities as they engage in public administration.

Two things are especially important to bring forth in this latter respect. Firstly, although I conjectured that there would be a difference between perceived responsibilities in relation to different E's, the findings from the tests pivot this conjecture. It is not the case that actors engaged in public administration within the agency perceive themselves as more responsible for instances concerning economy. Rather, recipients' responses and the undertaken test suggest the opposite: actors see themselves as more responsible for instances concerning equity.

In addition, it is an interesting finding that instances concerning responsibility for economy are so different between the two groups. Unit level administrators seem to acknowledge their responsibility in accordance with economy with a very low degree (mean score of 2.3) whereas area level administrators respond with much higher agreement (mean score of 4.4). But even so, the significant differences between the two mean scores for both unit and area level administrators suggest that actors engaged in public administration acknowledge responsibility via equity relatively higher than via cost-efficiency.

Taken together, I argue that the corroboration of hypothesis one and rejection of hypothesis two serve as a basis for inferring that actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA face dilemmas. I will discuss this more in the next section.

Table 6.4 Paired samples test for unit level administrators

		Unit level							
		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	The Calculation – Business processes	.04147	1.22993	.08349	-.12309	.20604	.497	216	.620
Responsibility	Economy – Equity	-2.31644	1.12135	.07612	-2.46647	-2.16640	-30.430	216	.000
		Area level administrators							
		Paired Differences							
					95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
		Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	Lower	Upper	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Control	The Calculation – Business processes	.10849	1.08808	.14946	-.19142	.40840	.726	52	.471
Responsibility	Economy – Equity	-.26101	.71276	.09790	-.45747	-.06455	-2.666	52	.010

Hypotheses three through six

The remaining four hypotheses revolve around valuations concerning 'good administration' (I've discussed this in chapter five). In the Factor Analysis I identified six different factors that responded against the underlying dimensions of recipients' responses. Out of these six extracted factors, I find five to be representative of activities that can be understood as 'good administration'. Factor four (Dilemma), however, is slightly different in retrospect. This extracted factor was not primarily focused on statements concerning different activities as such, but rather on premises in which actors perceived a dilemma between different activities. I will return to this as I discuss these findings further on. However, due to the different approach inherent in the statements (which is validated in the identification of the variables within one factor) in factor four as compared to the other extracted factors, this factor is removed from the below tests.

Hypothesis three contains my conjecture that recipients' age can be used to find differences in how 'good administration' is valuated. The median age of the 273 recipients was 53 years of age with a range between 30 and 65 years of age. Recipients were identified as belonging to one out of four groups: less than 40 years, 41-50 years, 51-60 years, and more than 60 years of age. The null-hypothesis states that there are no differences in organisational valuations between different age groups within the organisation. I present the results from the test[27] (table 6.5), which corroborates the hypothesis. This essentially means that age cannot be used as a factor for fragmenting valuations concerning 'good administration'.

In hypothesis four I conjectured that education could be a factor that affected recipients' valuations concerning 'good administration'. Education was operationalized in terms of 6 different groups according to their highest level of education: (1) Primary school, (2) Upper secondary school, (3) University without degree, (4) Foundation degree, (5) Bachelor's degree, and (6) Master's degree. Results from the test (table 6.6) reveal no difference in valuation between the six groups. Hypothesis four is thereby corroborated, meaning that I can find no association between different levels of education and organisational valuation concerning 'good administration'.

[27] All tests undertaken here are tested at a 95 % level of confidence.

Table 6.5 ANOVA table for recipients' age

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Efficiency	Between Groups	.917	3	.306	.886	.449
	Within Groups	92.883	269	.345		
	Total	93.800	272			
Equity	Between Groups	.360	3	.120	.580	.629
	Within Groups	55.643	269	.207		
	Total	56.003	272			
Economy	Between Groups	.566	3	.189	.343	.794
	Within Groups	147.815	269	.549		
	Total	148.381	272			
Effectiveness	Between Groups	4.959	3	1.653	1.629	.183
	Within Groups	272.961	269	1.015		
	Total	277.919	272			
Hierarchy	Between Groups	3.125	3	1.042	.890	.447
	Within Groups	314.794	269	1.170		
	Total	317.919	272			

Table 6.6 ANOVA table for recipients' educational levels

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Efficiency	Between Groups	1.071	5	.214	.616	.688
	Within Groups	92.587	266	.348		
	Total	93.659	271			
Equity	Between Groups	.533	5	.107	.512	.767
	Within Groups	55.371	266	.208		
	Total	55.904	271			
Economy	Between Groups	5.326	5	1.065	1.992	.080
	Within Groups	142.276	266	.535		
	Total	147.602	271			
Effectiveness	Between Groups	3.754	5	.751	.740	.594
	Within Groups	270.010	266	1.015		
	Total	273.764	271			
Hierarchy	Between Groups	7.807	5	1.561	1.341	.247
	Within Groups	309.825	266	1.165		
	Total	317.632	271			

Hypothesis five concerns tenure's effect on organisational value, meaning that I conjectured that actors having long tenure would respond with different valuations concerning 'good administration' as compared to actors with short tenure. Tenure was operationalized by calculating the number of years recipients had within the organisation at the time of the survey. Three groups were identified

(see section 5.2.2 for a discussion about this): tenure lasting (1) <12 years, (2) 13-25 years, and (3) >26 years. The test (presented in table 6.7) shows no difference between the three groups identified by tenure. This means that hypothesis five is corroborated.

Table 6.7 ANOVA table for recipients' time within the organisation

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Efficiency	Between Groups	.818	2	.409	1.187	.307
	Within Groups	92.983	270	.344		
	Total	93.800	272			
Equity	Between Groups	.874	2	.437	2.141	.119
	Within Groups	55.129	270	.204		
	Total	56.003	272			
Economy	Between Groups	1.628	2	.814	1.498	.225
	Within Groups	146.753	270	.544		
	Total	148.381	272			
Effectiveness	Between Groups	2.171	2	1.085	1.063	.347
	Within Groups	275.748	270	1.021		
	Total	277.919	272			
Hierarchy	Between Groups	2.676	2	1.338	1.146	.319
	Within Groups	315.244	270	1.168		
	Total	317.919	272			

Hypothesis six concerned the conjecture that the functional position of the actor connects to organisational values. I conjectured that the current organisational function – unit or area levels – provide basis for differences regarding valuations of 'good administration'. The undertaken test (presented in table 6.8) indicated that this conjecture is fallacious, and no difference between the two organisational functions could be found. This means that hypothesis six is corroborated.

Table 6.8 ANOVA table for unit and area level administrators

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Efficiency	Between Groups	.601	1	.601	1.741	.188
	Within Groups	92.531	268	.345		
	Total	93.132	269			
Equity	Between Groups	.071	1	.071	.339	.561
	Within Groups	55.825	268	.208		
	Total	55.896	269			
Economy	Between Groups	.001	1	.001	.002	.964
	Within Groups	147.706	268	.551		
	Total	147.707	269			
Effectiveness	Between Groups	2.958	1	2.958	2.918	.089
	Within Groups	271.636	268	1.014		
	Total	274.594	269			
Hierarchy	Between Groups	.030	1	.030	.025	.874
	Within Groups	315.289	268	1.176		
	Total	315.319	269			

In summary, then, the above tests have resulted in the corroboration of five hypotheses (H1, H3, H4, H5, H6) and the rejection of one (H2). In the following section I will discuss the implications of these tests and how it furthermore stresses an importance for further understanding.

6.3 Discussion

The aim of this chapter has been to test the six hypotheses formulated in chapter five. These hypotheses have concerned the ideas that (1) there exist mixed messages emanating from techniques for control exertion and (2) activities concerning 'good administration' can be identified within the agency. These ideas stem from an idea that actors engaged in public administration face dilemmas as they undertake activities within the public sector, which I discussed in chapter one. In summary, I argue that as the public sector has been subjected to an economification, there has furthermore been a shift towards conjoined sets of E's. This, in short, means that instances of efficiency in large have come to be associated with instances of economy whereas issues of effectiveness are associated with equity. The conjoining into these two sets poses a dilemma that actors engaged within public administration need to make sense of.

The tests undertaken in this sixth chapter is an investigation of the hypotheses constructed in chapter five. I have discussed them in-depth above and will therefore not linger on how and why they have been constructed. Rather, I will discuss the implications of the tests resulting in five corroborations and one rejection. This means discussions regarding actors' facing the dilemma when exerting control and how they valuate activities inherent in public administration, what I here refer to has 'good administration'. The implications from the undertaken tests in this chapter furthermore require a discussion about actors' rejection of dilemma(s) and how this requires further inquiry into the process of making sense.

6.3.1 Facing dilemma when enacting techniques

In the first two hypotheses I argued that the potentiality of dilemma resided in the fact that actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA needed to use both business processes as well as The Calculation for purposes of control exertion. Given the characteristic of the different techniques, I argued that as actors enacted them both equally there would be a basis for dilemma being present.

This argument stems from the fact that the two techniques resonate against a backdrop in which the economification of the public sector has come to proliferate the conjoined set of efficiency and economy. According to my previous reasoning, business processes serve as a mechanism for control based on the construction of rules for increased effectiveness and equity. The Calculation, on the other hand, is a technique implemented within the SSIA primarily entailing a focus on identifying instances of under- and overemployment within the agency.

The dilemma as such, then, here concerns actors' navigation between adhering to the current legislation and the search for instances of increasing efficiency by reducing resources. Whereas business processes focused on aligning administrators handling of citizens' applications with current legislation, the construction of The Calculation shifted the focus towards increasing efficiency and instances of economy by scrutinising under- and overemployment. As allocated resources continuously became reduced, the proliferation of efficiency and economy through the construction of The Calculation within the SSIA was accentuated.

The corroboration of hypothesis one confirms that actors do engage these techniques equally as they engage in public administration within the SSIA.

This means that I – from a conceptual perspective – argue that actors face the dilemma head on as they engage the business processes and The Calculation within the agency. In other words, as actors engage techniques drawing on instances inherent in the conjoined sets of E's, the dilemma is accentuated.

In addition to the dilemmatic position inherent in techniques for control exertion, I argued that actors within the SSIA faced dilemmas concerning ambiguous responsibilities. This ambiguity, I argued, was also associated with the proliferation of the efficiency and economy of public administration. In other words, instances of responsibilities within public administration should be able to be associated with the conjoined sets of E's.

This was found to be the case as recipients' responses concerning perceived responsibilities were analysed through Factor Analysis, where association of different instances concerning (1) economy and (2) equity were confirmed. I furthermore anticipated that as further analysis was undertaken, this would to confirm my conjecture about the economification of the public sector. More precisely, I argued that as the proliferation of efficiency and economy had been accentuated within the agency, actors' perceptions of responsibilities would be focused on instances of this.

As these instances were tested, the discrepancy between perceived responsibilities was confirmed. That is, hypothesis two wherein I postulated that there would be no differences in perception related to efficiency/economy and effectiveness/equity was rejected. What was surprising, however, was to find that instances associated with equity outweighed those of economy. That is, actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA primarily perceived themselves as being responsible for instances concerning equity and not economy. Although this finding was statistically significant across unit as well as area levels, it should be noted that the discrepancy was most noticeable among unit level administrators.

Interpreting the findings emanating from testing hypotheses one and two thus mean that actors enact different – dilemmatic – techniques for control exertion equally. These techniques are associated with the conjoined sets of E's, thus implicating actors enacting manifestations inherent in them. That is, by enacting the two techniques, instances of efficiency and economy on the one hand and effectiveness and equity on the other become infused in public administration. The discrepancy found among actors' perception of responsibility is indicative of dissolution concerning the potentially dilemmatic position posited through the two techniques. As actors engaged in public administration fail

to perceive formal responsibility for instances of economy, rather focusing on instances of equity, the friction between the positions is somewhat reduced.

There is, however, something mindboggling about the fact that recipients perceive themselves to be more responsible for equity as compared to economy. As I presented in chapter four, senior actors retold stories about actors engaged in public administration searching for shortcuts in order to conduct operations within the frames of the allocated resources. As financial resources became scarce, actors searched for shortcuts in administration in order to ensure that they met the required targets. These shortcuts were argued to entail reduction of verifications when handling citizens' applications: verifications that essentially were in place in order to safeguard that citizens' applications were handled correctly.

The mindboggling part is connected to the activities undertaken, aiming at identifying shortcuts in administration against what I have presented here about the failure to acknowledge responsibility for instances of economy. Why would actors engaged in public administration succumb to a search for shortcuts, essentially aiming for reduction of activities that increase costs and the time needed for handling citizens' applications, if their primary responsibilities are directed at equity? The tests undertaken in this chapter, however, are insufficient to provide a basis for making any inferences about this issue. I will return to this issue in section 6.3.4 below.

6.3.2 Valuations of 'good administration'

The four hypotheses concerning activities inherent in public administration were postulated as a way of scrutinizing recipients' responses so that valuations concerning 'good administration' would be observable. I argued that the four background variables of (1) age, (2) education, (3) tenure, and (4) organisational functionality would prove to describe how such activities were valuated by different actors within the agency.

As has been made evident from tests in this chapter, all four hypotheses concerning these valuations were corroborated. This means that neither one of the factors that I argued would reveal differences in organisational values did so. In other words, the corroboration of the stated hypotheses means that my initial conjectures about actors engaged in public administration' differences in values were rejected.

The fact that all four hypotheses were corroborated is indicative of the existence of quite stabile valuations concerning activities marking 'good admin-

istration'. By this I mean that I have found no information from which differences in actors' valuations can be observable. What can be inferred, however, is that the stated valuations that came from the above tests can be argued to be inherent among actors engaged in public administration.

Scrutinising the mean scores concerning valuations of 'good administration' – as presented in table 6.2 – it becomes evident that instances associated with Equity (4.686) are highly valuated within the agency, whereas instances of Effectiveness (3.535) and Hierarchy (3.465) are agreed upon in a smaller degree. The same discrepancy is found between activities associated with Efficiency (4.176) and Economy (3.881). This is indicative of a public administration that is not dominated by one conjoined set of E's but rather the combination of the four E's (as conceptually discussed in chapter one) with an additional instance of hierarchy. This in turn implies that I cannot confirm that public administration – within the SSIA – have been greatly affected by the conceptually argued proliferation of efficiency and economy. What can be said is that all five valuations concerning 'good administration' – Efficiency, Equity, Economy, Effectiveness, and Hierarchy – are perceived to be important when engaged in public administration within the SSIA.

6.3.3 Actors' rejection of dilemma

When exploring actors' valuations of 'good administration', a sixth (well, a fourth to be exact) factor was extracted that was excluded from tests in relation to the posited hypotheses. This factor contains variables that associate with a polarisation of E's within public administration, essentially directing attention to instances wherein certain activities or opinions stand in stark contrast with each other. In other words, this factor contains instances wherein actors came to judge whether there was a dilemma in 'good administration' when engaged in public administration.

Scrutinising recipients' responses – presented in table 6.2 above – however, reveals that the statements of polarising instances of efficiency and economy on the one hand and effectiveness and equity on the other were readily rejected. This supports the discussion I had above, about activities inherent in public administration being associated to different E's. I there argued that it could not be held that 'good administration' was dominated by any of the two conjoined E's, but rather that different activities were needed.

In regards of this, two things may be inferred. Firstly, as actors engage in public administration within the SSIA, they do so with an array of activities. When faced with statements about a number of these activities, exploring recipients' perception of its necessity, all were affirmed. In essence this means that all activities inherent in public administration can be understood to be important. I have argued that these activities, referred to as 'good administration', are associated with the conjoined sets of E's. Secondly, recipients' responses are indicative of these activities as being non-dilemmatic. That is, in addition to finding that all activities are understood to be important, they are not perceived as polarised.

The stories and observation (presented in chapter four) indicated the presence of dilemma, primarily understood to be constructed from a perspective of the conjoined sets of E's. When scrutinised (chapter five and six), these instances were indicated to be evident throughout the agency in the form of techniques for exerting control and perceptions of responsibility. However, the results of 'good administration' being non-dilemmatic seem to indicate actors' rejection of the conjoined sets of E's as polarised. That is, they rejected the idea that activities drawing on different E's pose a dilemmatic position.

This means that whereas I have found indications of there being dilemma prevalent within public administration in the agency, actors seem to understand this in a conceptually different manner to what I do. The implication of the value stability – discussed above – furthermore suggests that actors engaged in public administration readily adopts, or internalise, the need for different – conceptually, although perhaps not empirically, dilemmatic – E's when engaged in public administration.

6.3.4 Making sense of 'good administration'?

Trying to sum up the discussion in this chapter, three things can be understood as the main findings from this chapter. Firstly, I have engaged in an exploration of actors' use of techniques for control exertion within the SSIA. I have found that techniques such as business processes and The Calculation are enacted equally among actors engaged in public administration. I have furthermore argued that these techniques can be conceptually associated with the conjoined sets of E's, instigating a dilemma. Business processes are constructed so that rules and regulations become an important part of actors' control. As such, this technique is associated with effectiveness and equity. The Calculation, on the other hand, is constructed primarily from the perspective of identifying under-

and overemployment within the organisation. This associates the technique primarily with efficiency and economy.

Secondly, I have engaged in an exploration about actors' perceptions of responsibility. In this respect, I found a discrepancy between responsibilities associating with economy on the one hand and equity on the other. Contrary to my conjecture, actors perceived themselves to be more responsible for instances for equity than of economy, especially on a unit level.

Thirdly, I have engaged in an exploration concerning valuations of activities inherent in public administration. I refer to such activities as 'good administration' above. Although the findings are indicative of a preference for instances concerning equity, economy and efficiency are regarded as highly important. Furthermore, when posited as polarised activities – constructing the dilemma – actors rejected such an assertion. This suggests that for actors engaged in public administration, activities deemed as 'good administration' are associated with different E's without dilemma being perceived as present.

I raised a question during the discussion above regarding actors' perceptions concerning responsibility. According to the findings, they perceived themselves as being primarily responsible for instances associated with equity. Especially actors employed as unit level administrators responded in this respect. The question concerned why actors at these levels would engage in searching for shortcuts – a thing that was progressed among senior actors during interviews, presented in chapter four – whilst not perceiving to be responsible for it.

One plausible explanation for this may lie in the fact that dealing within the frames provided by the allocated resources is so embedded in the ways of doing things within public administration that it is not questioned. It may be the case that there exist taken-for-granted assumptions concerning these instances, wherein actors structure themselves as being obliged to abide with the restricted resources although not being formally responsible for these instances. One simply does not spend money that one does not have.

One explanation to this question may be connected to the exploration of activities inherent in public administration. According to the query I undertook in this and the previous chapter, actors' deemed activities associated with equity as well as efficiency and economy as important. Engaging in public administration means accepting that these activities are an inherent part of 'good administration'. This means that although the formal responsibilities for instances of economy is downplayed, actors engagement in 'good administration' support staying within the financial boundaries.

The activities indicating 'good administration' can furthermore be understood to be practices within public administration generally and the SSIA specifically. This means that the findings presented above concerning coherence in regards of activities – understood from the corroboration of hypotheses three through six – can be understood to be an effect of practices being aligned with dominating social systems (as I have discussed in chapters two and three). This alignment, or rather the presence of social systems, can be asserted to the agency as well as the surrounding society.

In chapter two, I argued that as actors enact taken-for-granted assumptions, they do so by aligning practice with certain understandings concerning meaning, sanction, and legitimation inherent in dominant social systems. These practices become situated in a certain context, manifesting actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. In chapter three I qualified this idea in the context of public administration, arguing that the economification of the public sector had given lenience to the progression of a challenging social system to emerge. In short, I argued that contemporary public administration could be understood as dominated by the social systems of Management and Civil Service.

I furthermore argued that these two social systems could be partially associated with the conjoined sets of E's. According to this reasoning, the social system of Management is understood to provide a basis for the proliferation of efficiency and economy. The social system of Civil Service, however, is more associated with instances of effectiveness and equity. By extension, I argued that manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions could be indicative of the social systems they draw on.

Findings in this chapter suggests that actors engaged in public administration draw on meanings, sanctions, and powers inherent in the social systems of both Management and Civil Service. The findings in relation to 'good administration' reveal that actors perceive instances of efficiency and economy as well as effectiveness and equity to be important activities.

But the question posited early on in this dissertation remains partly unanswered: how do actors engaged in public administration make sense of the dilemma(s) they face? In this chapter I have presented findings that are indicative of how actors engaged in public administration rejects the dilemma as present, and instead aligns practices with the social systems of Management as well as Civil Service. The question, however, remains: how do they make sense of this? In the next chapter, I will present the final empirical analysis concerning actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA.

7 Making sense through dialogue

The previous three empirical chapter have entailed analysis concerning stories and observations from within the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (SSIA), exploration of how these can be conceptualised in dilemma that actors engaged in public administration faces, and statistical testing of hypotheses. So far I have concluded that actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA make use of techniques for control exertion that are associated with the conjoined sets of E's as discussed in chapter one. Whereas the use of business processes primarily directs attention towards instances of effectiveness and equity, The Calculation is associated with efficiency and economy.

As such, there seems to some basis for a dilemma between the conjoined sets of E's to be present within the agency. The findings concerning primarily 'good administration', however, indicated that actors on unit and area levels rejected that activities inherent in public administration were polarised. It may well be a dilemma, but actors seem to reject the conjecture that certain activities are polarised or mutually exclusive.

I argued in the previous chapter, that this rejection together with the seemingly coherent approach concerning activities marking 'good administration' could be an indication of actors drawing on the social systems of Management and Civil Service simultaneously. The aim of this chapter is to explore this notion further. More specifically, I focus on how actors make sense of these two social systems when engaged in 'good administration'. More specifically, I explore how actors engage in dialogue concerning their roles within the SSIA.

This chapter contains three further sections. Firstly, methods for understanding taken-for-granted assumptions are discussed. In this section I present and discuss the choice of focus groups as a method for understanding manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. Secondly, empirical analysis is undertaken and presented. Thirdly, the empirical analysis is interpreted and implications discussed.

7.1 Methods approach

I have stated above that the aim of this chapter is to explore how actors engage in dialogues about their roles within the SSIA. From the perspective I take here, dialogue can be understood as manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. By exploring dialogue, then, it becomes possible to interpret how taken-for-granted assumptions are enacted in order to make sense of their situations.

In order to make this part of the exploration possible, I have made use of focus groups as a method. I will elaborate on this specific choice below, but in short actors within the SSIA were gathered – in their roles as unit or area level administrators – to discuss things that concerned their roles within the agency. By interpreting what they talked about, it became possible to make assertions about their taken-for-granted assumptions.

I begin by presenting a short discussion of what focus groups are and more importantly what it is not. After this discussion I continue by discussing how participants for the focus groups were selected and their positions within the organisation. I end this methods section by discussing how the focus groups was recorded, treated, and analysed in this specific study.

7.1.1 Focus groups and dialogue

The use of focus groups has historically been used within commercial marketing research. Within this context the focus groups has provided primarily companies with important insights concerning consumers' preferences. According to Silverman (2011, p. 209) commercial marketing research using focus groups searches for findings that are "directly related to the business goal of the client". This is far from how focus groups are used in general within the social sciences.

Merton and Kendall (1946) introduced the idea of the focused interview to the social sciences. According to them, the focused interview was developed to "meet certain problems growing out of communications research and propaganda analysis" (Merton & Kendall, 1946, p. 542). The focused interview was set out as an alternative for the more structured ways of conducting research within the social sciences where the interviewer takes a cautious position in order to let the interview bring out deep meanings from the participants' responses. Although Merton and Kendall used the term focused interview, it is general-

ly accepted that they are the initiators of using focus groups within the social sciences, as we understand it today.

Central to making use of focus groups is the group itself. Participation should be based on the focus of the research question at hand. What makes the focus group distinct from other forms of groups (e.g. the use of 'The Nominal Group Technique' proposed by Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990; Stewart, Shamdasani, & Rook, 2007) is described by Morgan (1996, p. 130): it is "a research technique that collects data through group interaction on a topic determined by the researcher".

The importance of group interaction is a matter that several researchers have highlighted (cf. Barbour, 2001 [1999]; Kitzinger & Barbour, 2001 [1999], p. 4; Wilkinson, 2006 [1997], p. 177; Wibeck, 2010, p. 19). This means that the dialogue that participants engage in during the focus group is what is interesting for researchers.

Understanding dialogue begins with appreciating that actors exist in a world (re)produced by other actors' words and practices (cf. Giddens, 1984). This means that everything that we know today is, at least partly, an outcome of what other people has told us (either directly in face-to-face interactions or indirectly e.g. through written texts). History matter, and the manner in which actors engage to represent their reality is an outcome of that historicity as well as their current conditions within society. From this perspective, dialogue is a form of fixture that connects actors with other actors within and across generations.

This means that I understand dialogue to be both "historically and culturally situated" (Markóva, Linell, Grossen, & Salazar Orvig, 2007, p. 24). As such, actors' engagement in dialogues is central in the maintaining of their social existence. It enables actors not only to represent how they understand their current situations, but furthermore help them to imagine something else (Markóva et al., 2007, p. 25).

Dialogue furthermore requires interaction. Markóva et al. (2007, p. 24) state that "a 'dialogue' is a symbolic interaction between two or several individuals who are mutually co-present". This should not be (blindly) understood as a requirement of a physical presence of (at least) two actors. Rather, the interaction can be with ideas that transcend time and space, e.g. written texts. Such ideas can either be other ideas altogether, or the products of other ideas i.e. what we commonly understand as our own ideas.

Essentially, dialogue is something that occurs as we interact with others' ideas. It can even be said that dialogue is a context wherein ideas interact with

other ideas (Markóva et al., 2007, p. 9). The implication is that dialogue becomes present all the time. This means that dialogue functions as a bridge for observing manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. Such manifestations reveal how actors make sense of the situations. The use of focus groups functions as an instigative function in which this form of dialogue discussed here can be observed.

In the next section I will describe the more hands-on choices that I have made in order to make such facilitation possible within the context of SSIA.

7.1.2 Making the focus groups happen

As I have elaborated above, conducting focus groups aims at the facilitation of social interaction between actors through dialogue. In this section I will present the choices I made in order to make the social interaction focus on issues that are of special interest for this study: the exploration of how taken-for-granted assumptions are enacted by actors engaged in public administration. I will discuss the process of facilitating the focus groups from two distinct phases: (1) preparation and (2) execution.

The preparation phase began with selecting the participants. Whereas the research strategy deployed for sending the survey was to contact all actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA, I found this approach improper for the focus groups approach. This required me to ponder about the manner in which different actors within the SSIA engaged in activities that would potentially highlight the presence of dilemma. The choice fell upon actors within the Local Insurance Centre (LIC)[28], engaged in activities concerning the National Health Insurance. The immediate proximity to citizens made this part of the agency most exposed to the intersection between efficiency/economy and effectiveness/equity.

The Swedish National Health Insurance can in many respects be considered to be the backbone in the Swedish welfare state. It was the need to provide citizens with financial reimbursements in case of sickness that mainly drove the development of the Swedish Social Insurance during the 19th and 20th century.

[28] The Local Insurance Centre (LIC) was one of the three departments within the Customer Meeting Organisation (CMO). The other two was National Insurance Centre (NIC) and Telephone Customer Services & Self Services (TCS & SS).

It was furthermore in many respects the malfunction of the National Health Insurance that evoked the call for reforms during the early half of this first decade of the 21st century. Getting an opportunity to discuss issues surrounding the reforms with actors deeply involved in these issues was therefore desired.

The LIC was organised so that they were to be found in offices all over Sweden. On a national level, the LIC was subdivided into four separate divisions: north, south, east, and west. Striving for geographical inclusion, I contacted each of the four divisions with a query for assembling between five and ten unit or area level administrators for conducting a focus group. The selection of the actors engaged in public administration was therefore left to the organisation. In total, I met 25 actors in four separate groups during February and March 2013. Table 7.1 contains a compilation of these participants.

Table 7.1 Compilation of participants in focus groups

	Place for focus group	Unit level	Area level	Total
LIC North	Stockholm	3	2	5
LIC East	Stockholm	0	8	8
LIC West	Gothenburg	7	0	7
LIC South	Växjö	4	1	5
Total		14	11	25

Before I met with participants, I compiled a number of topics that I wanted them to discuss and reflect upon. These topics were linked to the analytical framework (see table 3.1) presented in chapter three. In summary, the topics covered five areas, with additions subsequent questions in the case of non-responsive dialogues, summaries below. This meant that I made use of the theorised meanings, sanctions, and powers inherent in the social systems in order to construct topics of interest for participants' enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions.

These topics covered areas of what it meant to be a 'manager'[29] within the SSIA and how they perceived this to relate to the situation of increasing efficiency and reducing costs within the organisation. I furthermore engaged them in discussing whom it was that they represented when engaged in public admin-

[29] In Swedish, the word "chef" was used in this context. A word that is less assoicated with management as such, and formally used for individuals in charge of units.

istration. A number of follow-up questions were furthermore constructed in order to reduce the risk of having a dialogue that haltered. These questions were structured so that they associated with the topics and furthermore challenged participants to engage in dialogue.

After identifying the topics, I wrote short overtures with the specific aim of tapping into the discourse used by the participants. This means that I aligned my wordings and expressions with those I had observed during previous fieldwork within the organisation.

During the focus groups I took a role of being a facilitator rather than participant in the discussion. The overtures were used to introduce the participants to the topics and I only intervened in the discussion as new topics were introduced. This normally happened as I perceived that the dialogue had come to a halt or when time issued me to do so (with limited time available one sometimes have to force even a focus group). Each focus group lasted for about 1.5 hours.

Before each session was started, each participant was given a document where the aim and purpose of the study was clarified. I presented the study and its connection with my previous studies – those presented in chapter four through six – of the agency. Each participant was given an opportunity to ask questions about the study and the manner in which the material was to be handled afterwards. Each participant was furthermore asked to sign a document of consent, which they all did.

7.1.3 Mode of analysis

Conducting focus groups is, really, only the beginning of a quest. In order to more comprehensibly understand the social interaction that goes on between participants within the group, systematic analysis was undertaken. The analytical phase that I have used in this chapter can be subdivided into three stages: (1) recording and transcription, (2) coding, and (3) choosing excerpts.

All four meetings with the focus groups were recorded with the help of a digital video camera. This meant that a camera was placed on a tripod at a location that made it possible to capture all participants as they were seated around a table. In order to fully capture what happened in the focus group, an additional digital Dictaphone was placed on the table in addition to the camera. This means that I was using belt and braces not to miss out on what was going on between the participants during the session.

It could be argued that the presence of these recording tools inhibited participants to act as they would during a 'normal' day. To this I would agree, but then again any means by which we as researchers intervene for the sake of gaining empirical material is, by definition, engagement in manufacturing data (cf. Silverman, 2011). Bringing in tools for recording participants' dialogue does not mean that said form of interaction stop to exist; it only means that it may be (take care to note that we do not know) different from how they interact in other contexts.

The recordings were transcribed, using ELAN, a programme for complex annotations in multimedia files (Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics; Wittenburg, Brugman, Russel, Klassman, & Sloetjes, 2006; Sloetjes & Wittenburg, 2008). Words and utterances were annotated and thereafter transcribed verbatim.

The transcripts from the four focus groups were coded in accordance to the analytical framework presented in chapter three (see table 3.1). A coding was undertaken where the categories of meanings, sanctions, and powers were marked in the transcripts, and thus in the interactions between participants. More hands-on, the coding phase was undertaken by making use of highlighters in three different colours. Taken together, the coding required an instance of identifying key indicators belonging to (1) structures and (2) the social systems of either Management or Civil Service. In the following section I will give some examples of how the coding was undertaken. I will remind you that the following is not an extensive presentation, but examples of used indicators for coding.

Structures of significance are understood as containing discursive and symbolic modes of taken-for-granted assumptions: i.e. meanings. In chapter three I argued that Management entailed meanings characterised by a managerialist discourse and a symbol reflecting the Manager. This meant that I coded words such as efficiency, process, optimization, customer etc. as connecting to the managerialist discourse. Even though the symbol of the Manager is an outcome in relation to the enacted discourse, I coded words such as leadership, production responsibility, adaptability, partner etc. as connected to it.

Civil Service, on the other hand, contains characteristics of a welfarist discourse and symbols reflecting the Civil Servant. This meant coding words such as citizen, legislation, regulation, documentation etc. as connected to the welfarist discourse. The Civil Servant was identified through words such as carrier of the welfare state, administrative responsibility, administrative officer etc.

Structures of legitimation are understood as tacit- or formalised rules: i.e. sanctions. As such, they are difficult to identify, as it requires firstly to interpret

the enacted discourse and secondly to connect the interpretation to the implied form of sanction. Within Management tacit rules were identified by discursive use implying a perspective of individualism. Examples found in the material were e.g. participants discussing customers' personal responsibility in society or when arguing for the need of flexibility in order to meet customers' needs. Formalised rules connecting to Management were identified through e.g. participants' references to attending goals or use of output controls.

Tacit rules within Civil Service were identified through interpretations implying perspectives of collectivism. This was noted in participants' reference to the society's responsibility for taking care of people. Formalised rules were identified when participants made references to the importance of following constitution or legislation, making extensive rules mandatory for organisational control purposes.

Structures of domination are understood to be both allocative and authoritative: i.e. powers. Essentially, it refers to the transformative capacities that actors have over other actors or materials. Allocative power is understood as how actors can construct other actors, and thereafter make use of them. Powers have primarily been identified when participants discuss relations with those who handle citizens' applications or organisational hierarchy. References to e.g. flat structures and co-workers were deemed as connecting to Management whereas e.g. rigid structures and administrators connected to Civil Service.

As a last phase, excerpts were chosen whereas I deemed that they reflected the dialogue in which participants engaged in. The underlying though have been to portray the process of making sense at an actor level and represents the social interaction found within the four distinct groups. Even though the analytical approach here is not referred to as Grounded Theory, I will say that after going through over 300 pages of transcripts, a certain level of theoretical saturation was obtained, suggesting that more excerpts would not serve to strengthen the presentation of the empirical analysis. This means that the chosen excerpts presented in this chapter serves the purpose of illustrating an empirical basis for actors' use of taken-for-granted assumptions as well as providing substance for a good story.

A number of assertions and inferences are made from the presented empirical analysis. These are largely the outcome of my theoretical interpretation of participants' dialogues. All presented concepts below that are not explicitly referred to as used by participants, are an outcome of theoretical abstractions. This means that the concepts have not been presented in advance – or during – and were consequently not used during the dialogues. In the parts wherein I summarise each of the three different empirical analyses, I have furthermore

constructed a map wherein relations between participants' concepts (first order concepts) and my (second order concepts) concepts can be understood. This increases the transparency of the interpretations undertaken in this chapter.

Anonymity for participants has been achieved by randomly exchanging their surnames. This means that neither sex nor nationality can be deduced from the excerpts. After having discussed the method undertaken in this part of the study, I am now ready to proceed with the empirical analysis.

7.2 Empirical analysis

This section represents the main part of this chapter. Herein, I will present the conducted empirical analysis. In order to maintain the systematic approach, I have structured the chapter in accordance to meanings, sanctions, and powers inherent in social systems. It should, however, be noted that this separation is purely analytical. By this I mean that empirically, actors tend to draw on multiple structures simultaneously in order to make sense of the situation. But even though several structures may be enacted, I will focus on the one I interpret as the dominant one in each example.

In resemblance with the presentation in chapter four, the texts between citations are my interpretations and understandings. The excerpts are presented with a heading indicating which group it was expressed within and wherein the transcript the excerpt was extracted: e.g. West, p. 2 indicates the focus group with participants from LIC West, where the excerpt was taken from the second page of the transcript. Each subsection ends with a summarising discussion, wherein I pinpoint the main empirical findings in relation to the previously discussed social systems of Management and Civil Service.

7.2.1 Meaning

In chapter two and three I have elaborated quite extensively regarding my understandings of enacted meanings. In brief, meanings refer to the manners in which actors speak and interact with the surrounding society. This speech – the dialogue – creates a platform for understanding actors' different dispositions. As actors engage in dialogue, they enact different discourses and constructs symbols that carry innate meaning for a specific social system. Within the social sys-

tems of Management and Civil Service I referred to managerialist and welfarist discourses and their construction of the Manager and Civil Servant respectively.

In the below section I will present and analyse the manner in which actors engaged in public administration within the SSIA enacts such discourses and symbols through dialogues.

One of the first topics that I challenged participants with was what it meant to be a manager[30] within the SSIA. In all four groups the discussion rather quickly became focused on the roles that they took in certain aspects within the organisation. This is especially interesting since the roles that the participants describe can be understood as symbols they continuously draw on.

A unit level administrator from West discussed the role of being a manager within the organisation. According to the arguments s/he put forth, it was mainly an operational role without any budgetary responsibility. However, it was added, the role contained the responsibility of making sure that activities within the unit were conducted in such way that it fits with the demands related to allocated resources. The role furthermore related to having to achieve targets, reallocate resources, and control that it was being used properly. Being an actor engaged in public administration within the SSIA meant to lead people, to assume the properties symbolically associated with the Manager.

West, p. 8

Viktor: Jag tycker att det är väldigt operativ roll. Det är en roll där vi inte har något budgetansvar än än att vi ska rådda verksamheten med… med de resurser som... (1.0 sek) som finns och eh det är eh leda och fördela förstås. Mycket uppföljning (Tom: mm). Alltså det är mål som som följs upp ju ganska mycket på detaljnivå så…	Viktor: I think that it's a very operative role. It's a role where we don't have any budget responsibility other than to run the unit with… with the resources that… (1.0 sec) that there is and uh that is uh to lead and allocate of course. A lot of monitoring (Tom: mm). I mean these are goals that that are followed up on a rather detailed levels so…

Symbolically, the individual maintaining such activities becomes very proactive. Being in charge and assuming the role of a leader is embedded in these properties. But the role was furthermore filled with more administrative tasks such as monitoring and administrating that required defined targets to be fulfilled.

[30] I here use 'manager' as a generic term for managing/coordinating activities within a unit. During the sessions, held in Swedish, I used the term 'chef' which connotes administrative responsibilities within an organisation.

Being a proactive Manager can mean many things. In the context of being an actor engaged in public administration within the SSIA I found that proactivity was assumed to equate gaining power over some of the means necessary for achieving defined ends. I will come back to this issue when discussing sanctions, but inherent in the role of being a public administrator within the LIC was the importance of taking control.

One example of this was discussed within the South session (see excerpt below). The only area level administrator in this focus group highlighted the importance of creating instances of productivity conditions.

South, p. 25

Diana: Jag tänker just det där också att skapa produktionsförutsättningar har vi ju inte pratat så mycket om tidigare men (Gunilla: nä) det är ju jätteviktigt att vi gör det (Gunilla: mm; Ansgar: ja; Ivar: mm). Eh så att man tillser då att, okej det finns resurser så att man kan leverera till kund så som det är sagt (Disa: mm; Ansgar: mm; Disa: mm).	Diana: I think too that also this to create conditions for production we haven't spoken so much about that previously but (Gunilla: nah) it is really important that we do that (Gunilla: mm; Ansgar: yes; Ivar: mm). Uh so that one ensures that, okay there are resources to deliver to the customer the way that it was said (Disa: mm; Ansgar: mm; Disa: mm).

In the excerpt, it becomes clear that the comment was followed by affirmations from the other participants, suggesting that there was coherence concerning this issue. In this context, productivity conditions were argued to be an activity of ensuring the availability of resources.

Taking control over resources was, however, not primarily done for the sake of conducting good work or offering employees decent working conditions. Instead it was argued that resources were needed to establish that instances concerning "delivery to the customer" were at satisfactory levels. The proactive Manager, then, acknowledges the recipient, the customer, as the primary counterpart in the conducted work. The obligation of serving customers thereby creates pressure for the creation of good production conditions within the unit.

The excerpt furthermore exemplifies the marked importance and presence of the managerialist discourse within the organisation. The actor's choice of words such as 'conditions for production, 'delivery', and 'customer', meant a enactment of meanings when discussing internal issues relating to administrating citizens' case applications.

It also show, which I have touched upon above, that there existed an acceptance of the enacted – managerialist – discourse during this dialogue. By this I mean that other participants acknowledge the viability of the chosen words by

making affirmative humming sounds or by responding with "yes" and "no" in relation to the presented context. The fact that other participants respond to the discussant by affirmation, suggests that the managerialist discourse is embedded at unit and area levels within the agency. At least as far as when they discuss internal perspectives.

The portrayed acquisition of control over the allocated resources, and the means by which goals were acquired, suggests a continuous strive for more influence related to the role as actors engaged in public administration. But with great power comes great responsibility – to paraphrase Voltaire (and indeed, the more contemporary cartoon character, Spiderman) – and such instances of responsibilities create boundaries between actors. By this I mean that an actor delegated a responsibility within a certain context, tends to be alone at the top: It is a lonely task to carry a responsibility.

This loneliness, the individuality of being a Manager, became evident time after time as participants engaged in dialogue. The symbol of the proactive and responsible Manager, engaged in activities that aim at providing the unit with resources for productivity, was continuously portrayed as being a lonely one. To assume the role of the Manager means to accept that whereas you are able to observe everyone, they in turn observes, and scrutinizes, you and the actions you take.

South, p. 27

Diana: En viktig del av chefsskapet är ju det där att våga stå i det här rannsakningsljuset (Disa: mm). Det blå iskalla (Ansgar: mm ja; Disa: mm; Gunilla: mm). Alltså för det gör man ju ganska ofta (Disa: mm) och verkligen skärskådar sig. "Duger jag till detta" (Disa: mm; Ansgar: mm; Disa: mm). För annars så på något vis så är man inte riktigt det… man är inte… man är inte beredd och vidta åtgärder (Ivar: nä) på olika sätt (Disa: mm).

Diana: One important part of management is this thing, to dare to stand in this scrutinising light (Disa: mm). That blue icey cold (Ansgar: mm yes; Disa: mm; Gunilla: mm). Because one does that pretty often (Disa: mm) and really scrutinise oneself. "Will I measure up for this?" (Disa: mm; Ansgar: mm; Disa: mm). Because otherwise in some sense you really aren't… you're not… you're not prepared to take measures (Ivar: nah) in different ways (Disa: mm)

In this excerpt, the area level administrator explained the role as to "stand in this scrutinising light". The choice of words suggests an acceptance of being exposed. This interpretation is reinforced when s/he continued by exemplifying the "scrutinising light" as "icy blue" and furthermore that this was frequently reoccurring.

The discursive use is quite powerful. After all, who wants to be the one standing in that icy blue light day in and day out? It says something about the

stamina and devotion one has to have when assuming the role of public administration. If you do not cope with the ever on-going scrutiny concerning the actions you take, you are not cut out to be in charge. Standing alone in this positions thus suggest that the person is infused with characteristics of capability: capable of handling the continuous scrutiny and capable enough to do it alone.

The dialogue here portrays the public administrator as being strong: if not in body then at least in mind. Having the nerves for being exposed to continuous scrutiny supports the symbolic construction of the Manager. Such strength follows from an imaginative solitude embodied in the simile of the icy cold blue scrutinising light.

Even though the symbolic importance inherent in the Manager is quite strong in the excerpts hereby presented, it should be noted that this is primarily when topics concerned an internal perspective. I noticed that as topics changed from being about internal issues to that concerning external – perhaps societal – issues so did the enactment of symbol change.

A unit level administrator within the East group reflected on this during an instance when the discussion focused on the differences in roles over time. The dialogue concerned the topic of how much intervention an actor engaged in public administration should make in order to control the handling of citizens' applications. Some of the participants argued that whereas the 1990's had been characterised by heavy intervention, it was now about using more implicit control methods.

East, p. 13

Agnes: Min upplevelse är att eh alltså vi är inte i försäkringen på samma sätt. Alltså i detalj. Utan vi är mer (Viktor: mm) kundens (Frej: ja; Erika: mm) eh representant så att säga (Erika: Precis; Frej: ja ja precis).	Agnes: My experience is that uh so we're not in the insurance in the same way. I mean in detail. We're more (Viktor: mm) the customer's (Frej: yes; Erika: mm) uh representative so to speak (Erika: Exactly; Frej: yes yes exactly).

Herein, the participant rearranged the centrality of the constructed role towards being a representative for the customer. S/he was not involved in the nitty-gritty details concerning the use of the insurance, i.e. how citizens' applications were handled, but rather carried a function of taking the perspective of the customer.

Even though the use of the word "customer" inherently draws on a managerialist discourse, the symbol construction is here slightly altered towards that of the Civil Servant. Taking a customer perspective is in this respect embodied with a slightly different meaning than what was illustrated previously when it was said that the delivery to the customer had to be ensured. Deliveries to cus-

tomers primarily take an internal perspective, and in so doing relates to the symbol of the Manager. But taking the perspective of a customer suggests a concern for the meeting point between the individual and the agency. Such a meeting needs to be administrated so that it runs as smoothly, from the customer perspective that is, as possible.

Having a concern for the recipients of the agency's decisions was a theme that was evident in other focus groups. Within the East group, an area level administrator brought up the experience s/he had with physicians, claiming that they was "the insured's defence attorneys" (East, p. 42 – not presented in any longer excerpt). The context for this statement was that physicians had as their primary objective to secure citizens' income under such occasions that they were too sick to work. In such a context, employees within the SSIA came to be constructed as the opponents of both citizens and physicians. The participants of the East group rejected such a stance.

East, p. 43

Knut: de axlar deras ansvar för försörjning (Felicia: ja). Och jag tror inte att vi är så jätteolika där med läkarna vi som jobbar på kassan. Vi (Lorentz: nej) vi är väldigt måna om våra (Henrik: ja) kunders försörjning (Felicia: ja) och kan slå knut på oss liksom att det ska funka (Felicia: ja).	Knut: they shoulder their responsibilities for livelyhood (Felicia: yes). And I don't think that we are that very different from the doctors, we who work at the agency. We (Lorentz: no) we care very much about our (Henrik: yes) customers' livelyhood (Felicia: yes) and can, like, kink ourselves to make it work (Felicia: yes).

It was accepted that physicians had a genuine concern for citizens' financial wellbeing. But adding to this notion, the participants argued that this was the case within the SSIA too. Rather than accepting being the 'evil' part in this relation, the participants made use of anecdotal evidence in order to reconstruct the symbol with which they became associated.

By rejecting this symbol of being in place only to question the correctness and viability of citizens' applications – by extension questioning citizens' rights to be covered by the Social Insurance – the participants constructed a symbol entailing a caretaking actor, in place to safeguard citizens' rights: the Civil Servant. The notion that they could move above and beyond their function to get things to work surfaced again, later in the same session.

East, p. 53

Lorentz: Det kan mycket väl hända (Knut: mm; Felicia: mm) och kan… kommer att hända i framtiden. Men det handlar oftast inte om så här (Hjalmar: *hostar*) vägning, liksom chefen sa så här och processen sa så här (Anton: nä; Hilda: nä) utan de har säkert hamnat i en akutsituation (Felicia: mm; Henrik: ja). Där människors försörjning är helt beroende av våra beslut (Felicia: ja). Så vi måste fatta beslutet. Nu! Inte efter fyra steg. Nu behöver vi fatta beslutet. Det har hänt. Det kommer och hända. Det är inget… konstigt i sig.

Lorentz: It can very well happen (Knut: mm; Felicia: mm) and may… will happen in the future. But it's usually not about like (Hjalmar: *coughs*) weighting, like the manager said like this and the process said like this (Anton: nah; Hilda: nah) rather they have surely fallen into an emergency (Felicia: mm; Henrik: yes). Where peoples' livelyhood is entirely dependent on our decisions (Felicia: yes). So we must make the decision. Now! Not after four steps. We need to make the decision now. It has happened. It will happen. There's nothing… strange in that in and of itself.

This excerpt was preceded by a discussion of whether actors could demand from employees to disregard the business process in order to pay reimbursements to citizens. According to these participants, there existed no such deliberate balancing between evaluating potential pros and cons of such a choice. Rather, in cases of acute situations, where citizens face being without financial reimbursement someone has to act. Fast! And that someone needs to be the public administrator responsible for the unit. In this example, the actors drew on meanings from different social systems simultaneously.

The symbol of the proactive and resourceful Manager was constructed. S/he took care of business by issuing orders that citizens' applications needed to be finalised. A decision had to be made. This argument is well based within a context of increasing efficiency, which turns associations toward Management. The underpinning rationalisations, however, can also be traced back to the citizen, in dire need of receiving the reimbursements s/he was entitled to. From this perspective, the interpretation that increasing throughput cannot so easily be associated with only Management. Instead, I find that the argument was well based within the symbolism inherent in Civil Service, entailing an actor that cares for the general welfare of citizens.

From this perspective the dilemma arguably emerging from the disregard of business processes, essentially the dilemma between efficiency and economy on the one hand and effectiveness and equity on the other, was made sense of by a simultaneous enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions emanating from Management as well as Civil Service. The construction of symbols through discursive modes within structures of significance was evident in dialogue between other sessions and participants too.

West, p. 30

Frej: […] för det handlar ju också om så här… effektivitet. Till exempel minskad väntetid för kunden det är är (Viktor: mm) ju både bra för (Viktor: mm) ja alla våra medborgare. Och den kunden och så och (Agnes: mm) just det verkligen tänka på "vad är mitt uppdrag" och "vad ska jag göra" (Viktor: mm) och inte ligga och vänta på saker i onödan (Viktor: nä) utan ha det här drivet (Agnes: mm). Och så tänker jag att också att det är liksom lite… politiska uppdrag kan ju vara att vi återkopplar. Alltså när vi ser att försäkringen slår fel (Agnes: mm; Erika: mm).

Frej: […] because it is also about, like … efficiency. For example reduced waiting time for the customer that is is (Viktor: mm) like both good for (Viktor: mm) well all our citizens. And that customer and such and (Agnes: mm) just that [to] really think about "what is my mission" and "what should I do" (Viktor: mm) and not lie down and wait for things for no reason (Viktor: nah) but to have that drive (Agnes: mm). And then I also think that it's like kind of… political missions may well be that we reconnect. That's when we see that the insurance misses its target (Agnes: mm; Erika: mm).

During the session with the West group, the unit level administrator argued that the need for increased efficiency essentially meant that procedures involving customers became improved. Or rather, customers were to gain from the agency's work of increasing efficiency. As s/he went on arguing the case, it became clear that there existed a mixture of discursive use. That is, participants engaged in dialogue, in which a managerial as well as a welfarist discourse could be noted.

The participant makes use of clear markers for the managerialist discourse. There are words such as "efficiency", "customer", and "drive", all associated with the managerialist discourse. But, and perhaps this is what is especially important, the participant also makes use of words such as "citizen", "mission" and "insurance". These are words that primarily associate with Civil Service. In an excerpt representing less than 30 seconds of dialogue, the participant here accomplishes to make use of both discourses, indicating something important: the separation of perspectives.

When scrutinising the differing perspectives in this excerpt it is noticeable that there exist an internal as well as an external perspective. The internal perspective, concerning organising and control, was portrayed through the enactment of a managerialist discourse. The external perspective, however, was portrayed through an enactment of a welfarist discourse.

The enactment and seeming separation of perspectives, was made possible through the interdependent enactment of the two discourses. This furthermore supports my previous assertion, that actors enact different perspectives concern-

ing different things. These perspectives furthermore seem to entail different discourses, which by extension suggests different taken-for-granted assumptions.

Within the enacted internal perspective, the managerialist discourse makes sense due to its obvious connection to instances of organising and control. This furthermore enables the actors to adopt generic understandings concerning the activities undertaken within the agency. The enactment of the external perspective, in addition as it were, furthermore constructs the actor engaged in public administration as a servant of the people. Within the external perspective it makes sense for actors to adopt a welfarist discourse. The alternating use of discourses supports my assertion that there is, indeed, interdependence between the perspectives is further supported.

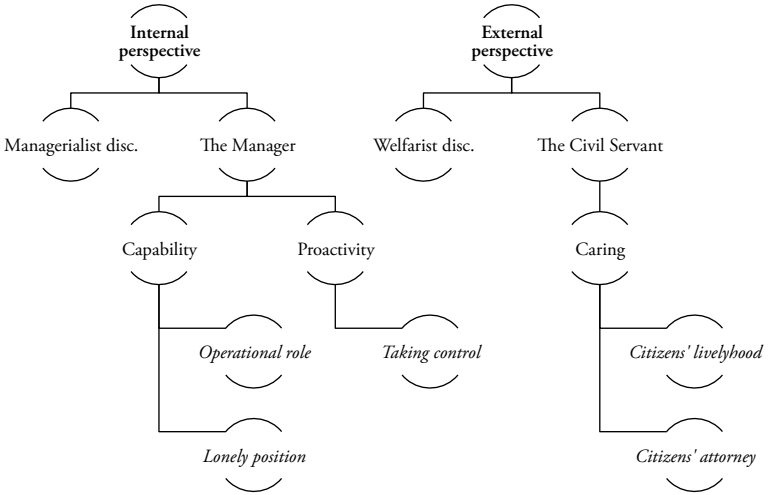
The switching from one discourse to another, constructs a bridge of sorts that potentially remedy the otherwise eminent gap between the perspectives.

Summary

In this section I will summarise the main arguments put forth in the above analysis. I will do this in two steps. Firstly, I will portray the interrelationship between participants' concepts (first order concepts) and my progressed abstractions and interpretations (second order concepts). This is done through schematising the relations (see figure 7.1 below) from the manner that I have discussed them above. Secondly, I will present (see table 7.2) how the main concept drawn from this section fits with the framework presented in chapter three.

In the below schematic I have presented the relationship between used concepts in this section. Concepts that are presented in italics represent such first order concepts as used by participants within the dialogues. This means that they represent the manner in which participant themselves construct meanings in their dialogues. From thereon I have linked the second order concepts (my interpretations) from the manner that I find that they represent what I have concluded. The different discourses within the two perspectives have been discussed above, why I will not linger on this in this summary.

Figure 7.1 Schematic relations of first- and second order concepts in meaning



The separation into two distinct perspectives – the internal and external – was noticeable as participants discussed different aspects of being a public administrator within the agency.

Participants discussed instances of being an operational and lonely role wherein one needed to take control of things. I asserted this to be instances of (1) capability and (2) proactivity. Together this was symbolically transformed in the Manager as a representative of the internal perspective. As such, I interpreted the internal perspective to about rationalising instances of organising and control exertion.

Participants furthermore discussed instances of (1) being responsible for citizens' livelihood and (2) acting as citizens' attorneys. I asserted that this was essentially about caring, an inherent part of the symbolic construction. Taken together, I argue, these came to construct the Civil Servant as representing the external perspective. The external perspective thereby primarily came to concern a caring for the relation outside of the agency.

Connecting back to the framework in chapter three, the notions of discourse and symbols are extracted from the above analysis. These have been summarised in table 7.2 below.

Table 7.2 Meanings inherent in participants' dialogues

	Internal perspective	External perspective
Meaning	Managerialist discourse The Manager	Welfarist discourse The Civil Servant

What primarily makes this distinct from the conceptual framework in chapter three (see table 3.1) is the internal- and external perspectives that have emerged. That is participants primarily make a distinction between enacted perspectives.

In the next section I will make analysis in regards of the sanctions that actors draw on when engaged in dialogues concerning public administration.

7.2.2 Sanction

Sanctions are understood as processes by actors when creating legitimacy. They form certain kinds of common understandings that stem in tacit rules underpinning the meanings as well as powers that actors draw on. In chapter three I discussed how the social system of Management could be understood as characterised through individualism and an inherent focus on goals. The social system of Civil Service, on the other hand, could be understood as characterised by collectivism and an inherent focus on process. In this section I will discuss the identified tacit rules within participants' dialogues.

In the previous section I argued that the symbolic construction of (1) the Manager and (2) the Civil Servant was separated and enacted within two different perspectives: the internal and external perspectives. I will maintain this separation in this section as an analytical scaffold. These perspectives serve as bases for understanding the enactment of multiple tacit- and formalised rules among actors.

The symbolic construction of the Manager, as a proactive and strong leader, came to surface time and again during the sessions. This symbol can be understood as quite important in the dialogues, as it manifests a reflective process that participants undertook in order to understand their positions as public administrator. In order to understand this further, I asked participants to discuss what they could or could not do as public administrators. An area level administrator within the North group replied, after thinking about the question for some time, that they basically could do anything as long as it led to something positive. S/he stated that:

North, p. 22

Erland: Ja, egentligen får vi ju… vi får ju använda hur mycket kö.. ja alltså hu… a… me… me… det mesta får vi ju göra bara det leder till något gott (Sigurd: mm). Det tycker jag faktiskt [ohörbart]. Både fantasi och kreativitet och fundera på hur vi ska få våra medarbetare att växa och (Sigurd: ja)… för det har vi ju lite olika lösningar på (Jan: mm)

Erland: Yes, actually we can… we can use as much… yes how mu… a… mo… mo… we're allowed to do most things if only it leads to something good (Sigurd: mm). I really think that [inaudible]. Both fantasy and creativity and to think about how to get our co-workers to grow and (Sigurd: yes)… because we do have slightly different solutions for that (Jan: mm)

Characteristics such actors' imagination or creativity was central ideas emerging from the following dialogue. There is a suggestion inherent in this dialogue, surrounding the relation between means and ends. In this specific context, actors' need for making use of all available means in order to achieve ends can be justified. Such a stance marks a distance from the rule following 'servant', rather supporting the construction of what I have previously discussed as the Manager. The interesting thing, according to such a stance, is not which means are enacted, but rather that goals – ends – are achieved.

Discussions regarding the readiness to choose – freely – among different means in order to achieve ends were topics that emerged within all four focus groups. Different situations require different solutions, as the participant in the excerpt above states, which indicated that actors within agency requested more lenience, or more manoeuvrability. An area level administrator within the East group argued that it was, indeed, imperative to have a "mandate" in order to be able to fulfil the delegated tasks.

East, p. 24

Felicia: men om jag tittar på mitt chefst… uppdrag igen […] att få oss att räcka till för alla de vi är tänkta för. Det ligger faktiskt i grunduppdraget. Men då behöver jag också ha ett mandat att hitta de anpassningar som vi behöver kunna göra på vägen i det därför det går inte att göra allting exakt likadant.

Felicia: but if I look at my manag… mission again […] to make us suffice for everyone we're meant for. It actually lies in the basic mission. But then I also need to have a mandate to find the adjustments that we need to make as we go along because it's not possibe to do everything the same way.

"Mandate" was here understood as a concept instigated by the participants within the focus groups. This notion of a "mandate" entailed a desire to be given lenience and opportunities that enabled them to change or affect the environment in which they existed. That is, to have mandate meant to be able to control for different factors in a way that made other actors within their respec-

tive units perform in a specific manner. To have a mandate, in this respect, was indicative of actors' perception of responsibilities within the agency.

Mandate as a theoretical concept can furthermore be extended so that it is understood as power, or rather as delegated power. As this is primarily delegated from higher levels within the management hierarchy, mandate suggests a presentation of empowerment of actors. Mandate furthermore meant, according to the perspective in this second excerpt, an opportunity to find adaptations concerning the exertion of control.

As participants advocate the need for adaptability, they furthermore imply two things. Firstly, that the environment in which they undertake administration is subject to rapid changes. Secondly, that fixed rules are insufficient when manoeuvring within this rapidly changing environment. In order to come to terms with both of these assertions, adaptability is promoted. It is suggested that due to the dynamics inherent in the changing environment, standardisation thwarts attempts of executing public administration.

I understand the two notions of "mandate" and "adaptability" that are enacted by participants, as reflecting an inherent desire for discretion. Discretion is here understood to be about finding a balance between sometimes occurring bureaucratic rules inherent in governmental agencies, and the need to find flexible manners in which public administration can be undertaken.

Discretion becomes associated with the tacit rule of individualism and formalised rule of focusing on goals, as inherent in Management. Focus is here turned away from rules – the process – as I argue characterise Civil Service. Whereas the Civil Servant follows rules under a conviction that it will lead to a defined end, participants argued that means are best left to operative parts of the agency.

The delegation of discretion as discussed above was evident as participants within the West group discussed sanctions from senior actors:

West, p. 52

Paul: Svante sa […] en gång att "uraktlåtenhet att agera ligger chefer mer till men än felval av medel" (Viktor: ja; Agnes: mm). Vilket jag tycker är grymt bra! (Agnes: mm mm). För då har jag fått stöd i de gånger där jag väljer att göra så här (Karl: ja mm). Det kanske är fel. Men jag tror på den här situationen (Agnes: mm). Istället för att sitta kvar i båten och bara se den sjunka (Agnes: mm; Viktor: mm; Erika: mm).

Paul: Svante said […] one time that "failure to act is more detrimental for managers than wrong selection of resources" (Viktor: yes; Agnes: mm). Which I think is just wicked! (Agnes: mm mm). Because then I've gotten support for those times when I choose to do like this (Karl: yes mm). It might be wrong. But I believe in this situation (Agnes: mm). Instead of sitting still in the boat and just watch it go under (Agnes: mm; Viktor: mm; Erika: mm).

Herein participants quoted a speech by the senior actor responsible for the LIC – Svante – where he apparently stated that the choice not to act is worse off than acting badly. By making this statement, the senior actor quite substantially engaged the idea that actors engaged in public administration need to claim instances of discretion through action. The statement furthermore reinforces the construction of the Manager as a symbol characterised by proactivity and resourcefulness. It gives actors an incentive to seek new ways of achieving ends. And such new ways may imply that exerted control from above can be rejected.

Taking action is always the better option, since failure to do so means to "remain in the boat and just watch it sink". This specific quote was mentioned within the South group too, with essentially the same interpretation.

South, p. 34

Diana: Jag tycker att det är så skönt det där att jag får då hellre lov och (Ansgar: ja) agera än att bara sitta "oj, jag vet inte vad ska göra" (Ansgar: mm). Utan det är faktiskt så att brist på handling är nog det värsta. Plus om vi går in och detaljstyr medarbetare (Anna: ja; Ansgar: ja mm de…).

Diana: I think that it's a relief to hear that, that I am allowed to rather (Ansgar: yes) act than to just sit "oops, I don't know what to do" (Ansgar: mm). But it's actually the case that lack of action is probably the worst. Plus if we move in and control co-workers in detail (Anna: yes; Ansgar: yes mm tha…).

The quote carried a function of sanctioning action above passivity: giving power to actors' discretion. It is noticeable how the other participants come in and reinforces the statements by affirmation. This agreement can be understood as support directed towards the statement made by the senior actor as well as towards the participant voicing it. The discretion advocated through this statement may endorse actors to take action. But there is an evident risk that such action may break with conventions inherent in the agency. This latter issue was discussed within the East group as well:

East, p. 25

Felicia: ibland kan det vara så att vi är mer lydiga chefer än vad vi är modiga chefer. Och jag attraheras mer utav att kunna plocka fram det modiga chefsskapet därför att det är inte när allting går på räls och allting fungerar enligt regelboken som det är svårt att vara chef. […] Det är ju egentligen när vi inte har förutsättningar eller när det händer något oförutsett eller det finns en situation som inte är beskriven i regelboken. Det är då det är en utmaning att vara chef!

Felicia: sometimes it can be that we are obedient managers rather than brave managers. And I'm more attracted by being able to pick up the brave management because it's not when everything goes smoothly and everything goes according to the rulebook that it's hard to be a manager. […] It's really when we don't have the means or when something unexpected happens or there's a situation that's not described in the rulebook. That's when it's a challenge to be manager!

The area level administrator in this excerpt argued that one could either assume a role of being "brave manager", or an "obedient manager". S/he argued that actors engaged in public administration may perhaps confess more to the notion of being an obedient manager, one that follows predefined rules and procedures at all times. By stating that the difficulty occurs when there is an asymmetry between reality and the "rulebook", the obedient manager is labelled with negative connotations. The alternative was to adopt bravery. The brave manager has the capability of coping under instances of great uncertainty and ambiguity. To be a brave manager means to accept the challenge of existing outside of ones comfort zone. The brave manager furthermore takes action and seeks for alternatives and opportunities of adaption so that flexibility might be implemented in the organisation.

South, p. 27

Henrik: alltså där är ju en stor skillnad i ledarskapet i även i försäkringskassan (Felicia: Ja det är det; Hjalmar: Ja; Anton.: Ja(.hh); Felicia: Ja(.hh)). Om man har det här som är… väldigt styrt så är det ju lättare (Felicia: mm).
Anton: Jag tänker också på det som Felicia säger. Jag tycker ändå att eh alltså vi är ju rätt modiga chefer i just för att vi… vi kanske inte alltid håller oss precis till eh… som styrningen kommer uppifrån därför att vi tar ju rätt mycket egna initiativ också.

Henrik: that is, there's a big difference in leadership in, in the SSIA too (Felicia: yes there is; Hjalmar: Yes; Anton: Yes(.hh); Felicia: Yes(.hh)). If it's all… very controlled, then it's easier (Felicia: mm).
Anton: I think of what Felicia says, too. I still think that uh that we're pretty brave managers in precisely because we… we may not always keep exactly to uh… while the control comes from above because we do take a lot of initiative on our own too.

The elaboration of what it means to be a brave manager was further elaborated within the South group. Being brave meant taking initiative and keeping a sense of scepticism towards exerted control coming from other parts of the or-

ganisation. Being obedient on the other hand meant following the indications given from other parts of the organisation.

Within this context – that of obedience – control was perceived as a banister on which the – obedient – public administrator could hold on when their environment came to change. Bravery and discretion, together, support the progressed idea of individualism inherent in Management. The brave Manager is alone at the top and partly separated from the organisational hierarchy.

It should be noted here that I in no manner subscribes to the idea that some managers *are* per say brave or obedient. The discursive use of the words "brave" and "obedient", however, has a function of helping actors to make sense of the organisation. Being brave carries an innate meaning of being active, able to change the situation in which they are situated. Being obedient on the other hand indicates a passivity and acceptability. The underpinnings of bravery and obedience emerged within other groups as well.

South, p. 38

Anna: Vi hade ju ett utbyte med ett LFC i väst (Diana: mm). Och där upplevde ju vi att deras OC eh var ju ganska olydig i våra ögon. För de gjorde ju liter mer sitt… alltså körde lite mer sitt race. Eh… och de uppfi… visade ganska eller vad jag förstår finare resultat och så så att han får nog inte så mycket (Diana: nänä; Ansgar: nä). Och det är rätt fokusområden och så vidare men… då hade vi den diskussionen ska vi våga vara lite mer olydiga som chefer eh… och det tror jag på delvis.

Anna: We had an exchange with a LIC in the west (Diana: mm). And we experienced that their AM[31] uh was quite disobedient from our perspective. Because they did a bit more their… they ran their race a bit. Uh… and they invent… showed pretty, from what I understand, better results and so so he probably doesn't get so much (Diana: nah nah; Ansgar: nah). And it's the right areas of focus and so on but… then we had that discussion, should we dare to be a bit more disobedient as managers uh… and I believe in that to some extent.

Within the South group, one of the participants brought up an anecdote of how obedience had been brought to their attention. In this anecdote, it was told that a public administrator from another part of the agency showed a tendency of ignoring the defined business processes. It was argued that the business processes – i.e. the rules and procedures – essentially became a hindrance in the attempt of increasing efficiency.

[31] OC is the abbreviation of the Swedish word "områdeschef" which translates into Area Manager.

By making use of this anecdote it seemed as if the participants reaffirmed an already existing idea about bravery within public administration. This idea concerned the general acceptance of being a brave manager, as long as this bravery ended up in a fulfilment of delegated tasks. In other words, it was ok to assume a role of being brave as long as good results came out of it.

From the above excerpt it is noticeable that such a conclusion was not entirely uncontroversial. Even though there were continuous affirmations from the other participants, the retelling of the anecdote was done carefully and hesitantly. The fact that the participant herein ends the anecdote with a somewhat hesitating exclamation, that s/he believes, suggests that s/he is not entirely sure that the anecdote will be met with acceptance from the others.

The anecdote, however, received affirmations from the other participants, revealing a consensus primarily concerning the importance for public administrators to be able to deliver good results. Another indication drawn from this excerpt concerns the association between bravery and discretion, as discussed above. Bravery, perhaps, was needed in order for public administrators to demand instances of discretion. Or in other words, the brave make sure that they have enough manoeuvrability – discretion – when engaging within the agency. Obedience, however, is indicative of accepting the instances of discretion received through the hierarchy. Being brave, however, is more risky than being obedient. Assuming discretion within public administration comes with a price. This price is the deliverance of good results: results that are approved by more senior actors within the organisation.

The symbolic constructions of bravery and obedience are interesting from at least two perspectives. Firstly, through actors' reasoning about bravery and obedience I interpret the constructs as primarily residing within an internal perspective discussed above. This means that bravery and obedience were constructs used when discussing instances of organising and the exertion of control within the agency. Due to the association between the internal perspective and the symbolic construction of the Manager, by extension, the constructs of bravery and obedience become associated with Management. This means that I separate the constructs of bravery and obedience from Civil Service. The reason for this separation lies in the observation of the Civil Servant as primarily being constructed as actors enacted an external perspective (see the discussion in the section concerning enacted meanings).

Secondly, I interpret the constructs of bravery and obedience as an example of how actors draw on tacit rules in order to make sense of the Manager. Let it serve as a reminder that sanctions form the rationalisation of the discursively

constructed symbols (meanings). That is, it is within the enactments of sanctions that we find the underpinning for why different symbolic constructions help actors to make sense of their situations.

Keeping the internal perspective in focus, it seems to entail an idea of the Manager as being either brave or obedient. From the above excerpts I conclude that bravery builds on an assumption that responsibility and discretion should be given to actors engaged in public administration. And with this responsibility comes an inherent demand of continuous accountability. This means that the responsible actors, with discretionary powers, are held accountable under circumstances where s/he fails to meet the expected requirements. It connects to the neoliberal tendencies that I have discussed as inherent in the social system of Management. I define this to be instances concerning tacit rules of Autonomy.

Being obedient, however, draws on other assumptions. From the excerpts, obedience is understood as exerting controls that align with the established ways of doing things. This entails an acceptance of exerted control towards as well as from the public administrator. An actor under the guise of being obedient becomes an intricate part of a bigger whole, a component in the organisational apparatus. I define this as instances concerning tacit rules of Conformity. Conformity implies the acceptance of being controlled, wherein actors demand discretion in a much lesser degree as compared to when governed by Autonomy.

The interpretation that I have made here makes it possible for individual actors to draw on different tacit rules – different taken-for-granted assumptions – while maintaining the symbol of the Manager active within the agency. The tacit rules in the form of Autonomy and Conformity both restrict and enable actors' perception of what public administration may entail. There is a continuous enactment of these assumptions as different situations arise. The following excerpt highlights how actors simultaneously draw on Autonomy as well as Conformity when discussing instances of public administration.

West, p. 48

Viktor: […] egentligen så är det ju områdeschefen som är också försäkringsansvarig (Agnes: mm) på… och kanske också vi i delegation till'et. Så är det faktiskt. Men sen betyder inte det att jag kan sitta och fatta regelvidriga beslut och att ni ska skita i alltihop och göra som ni tycker. Så så ka… men det är viktigt för ibland så kommer det ju ärenden s… som som blir väldigt tokiga om man skulle gå enligt punkt och pricka efter det här. Och då måste det ju bli ett annat och… då måste man kunna frångå ensan.

Viktor: […] actually it's the area level administrator who is also responsible for insurance (Agnes: mm) at… and perhaps also we through delegation [to it]. That's it actually. But that doesn't mean that I can sit and make unregulated decisions and that you should care less and do as you please. That's that's no… but it's important because sometimes there are cases th… that that becomes very strange of one were to go by the books. And then there must be another and… then one must be able to deviate from the given process.

The unit level administrator in the excerpt reflected upon the delegated responsibility. As s/he perceived it, actors engaged in public administration within the agency had an extensive responsibility for making sure that citizens' applications were handled in an appropriate manner. This means acknowledging the need for compliance with rules and procedures, as these are based on legislation. The supremacy of legislation demands the presences an obedient Manager, drawing on sanctions in the form of Conformity.

On the other hand, following rules and procedures for every application is, arguably, unsustainable from a public administrative perspective. According to the above excerpt, there were instances that required going outside of current rules in order to achieve discretion and adaptability. From this perspective they have an obligation to be brave, thus drawing on sanctions in the form of Autonomy.

When I discussed actors' use of meanings above, I presented excerpts that revealed how actors' enactment of an external perspective were driven by taking customers' general welfare as their main departure. So far in this section I have focused on how actors enact tacit rules from an internal perspective. But actors enact tacit rules while taking an external perspective too.

This became noticeable when participants discussed the problem of having to reject citizens' applications. From a general point of view, every participant seemed eager to validate citizens' need for financial reimbursement. But at the same time, they where constantly aware of the unmistakable reality that public resources were limited, meaning that not all applications could, or even should, be approved. Within the East group the topic arose as participants discussed whom it was they actually represented.

East, p. 44

Henrik: Nämen jag tycker att det är jätteviktigt att att… ett eh… försvara… eh… ja vår kunds eller medborgares eller vad du vills… int… intressen. Alltså att man ska… verkligen få det man har rätt till men eh samtidigt så tycker jag att… det… att man är väldigt slarvig med hur man ser på sjukskrivning som en behandling (Hjalmar: mm).	Henrik: No but I think that it's really important to to… a uh… defend… uh… well our customer's or citizen's or what you want… int… interests. That is, that one should… really get that which one is entitled but uh at the same time I think that… it… that people are very careless in how they look at sick leave as a treatment (Hjalmar: mm).

Several things happen in this excerpt. The hesitations and stammering made by the participant suggest that s/he began talking on a topic that could potentially be problematic. It was a topic that did not have any clear-cut answers. The participant carefully chose the wordings and balanced between different stances. S/he furthermore argued for the need to create systems that defend the rights and welfare for citizens.

The alternation between the words "customer" and "citizen" suggests that the label in itself is of less importance. That is, whether actors refer to individuals within society as citizens or customers is not the primary consideration here. What is of importance, however, is that these individuals receive the reimbursements they are entitled to. As this had been stated, s/he took a new breath or air and fundamentally challenged the premise under which e.g. sick leave was used as means for treatment. This last part suggests that s/he took a critical standpoint towards a lax position on citizens' collection of social insurance.

This part of the dialogue was returned to later during the session. Another participant connected back to the statements, but rather than affirming the double-sided standpoint that the above excerpt exemplifies, s/he took a more technical perspective. S/he reflected upon the other participants' statement concerning the lax position in citizens' collection of social insurance. Rather than challenging the position taken by the other participant, s/he qualified the argument by taking a stance wherein s/he protected the interests of less resourceful citizens.

If the agency were to approve all applications from citizens, the agency would inevitably come into a situation in which resources quickly vanished. Rather than doing this, the agency and thus actors engaged in public administration have a social responsibility of safeguarding the Social Insurance. Such a safeguard is primarily constructed against those citizens that try to take advantage of the system. Rather than granting all applications, the agency carries a responsibility for making sure that the Social Insurance is used in a manner that ensures coverage for those who actually are entitled compensation.

East, p. 50

Felicia: det handlar ju också om att värna sjukförsäkringen och vårt uppdrag. Det är inte så märkvärdigt i det. Men vi ska ju få den och räcka till för de som behöver den. Och de som har rätt till den. Enligt då de läkare som har sjukskrivit. Och då är det klart (1.17 sek) då hamnar vi i de här dilemman ibland att vi måste konstatera att "nä". "Vi ser inte i vår utredning att du är tillräckligt sjuk för att omfattas utav utav den här försörjnings-varianten"…

Felicia: it's also about protecting the health insurance and our mission. It's nothing fancy about that. But we are supposed to get it to be last for those who need it. And those who are entitled to it. According to those physicians who have prescribed sick leave. And then it's clear (1.17 sec) then we end up in these dilemmas sometimes that we have to establish that "no". "We can't see in our investigation that you are sufficiently ill to be covered by by this livelihoodvariant"…

Actors engaged in public administration were in this construct constructed as a form of Civil Servant that carried responsibilities for administrating the Social Insurance. To be able to meet such a responsibility, actors rely on legislation as it provide directions on what is considered valid applications. If the legislation denies citizens coverage through the Social Insurance then the agency have to adhere to this. That is, legislation was here used as a subject of rationalization when having to decline citizens' financial reimbursement.

At the same time as rejections were rationalized in this manner, it was argued that those citizens that were entitled reimbursement should receive it. This means that since there is a restricted amount of resources available for reimbursing citizens, restrictions concerning citizens' applications have to be exercised.

What connect the two above excerpts, are that the participants' choice of words. Both participants chose the word "right" when discussing citizens' applications. As is evident from the second of these two excerpts, "right" is to be understood as applications' alignment with current legislation. That is, citizens are entitled reimbursement, have a "right", when their argumentation or characteristic within the application coheres with the current legislation.

By this stance, the participants positioned themselves as being primarily representatives of the Government. But as I have argued previously, actors engaged in public administration also perceived themselves of having a role concerning the protection of citizens. This latter part was exemplified within the West group.

West, p. 8

Agnes: […] framförallt att förstå varför de är där och eh… jobba med den biten att få lojalitet… också (Viktor: mm)… inte i förhållande till… verksamheten (Frej: mm) utan i förhållande till kunderna så att säga.	Agnes: […] above all to understand why they are there and uh… to work with that bit and get loyalty… too (Viktor: mm)… not in relation to… the operation (Frej: mm) but in relation to the customers so to speak.

In this excerpt, one of the unit level administrators exclaimed that an important part of being a public administrator was to infuse a sense of loyalty among administrators. Loyalty is discursively strong, indicating a virtue that needs to be implemented in the agency. According to the perspective represented by this unit level administrator, such a virtue needs to entail a direction primarily towards citizens and not necessarily towards the organisation. The question that arises then is how administrators can have loyalty in relation to citizens and at the same time claim that if citizens' applications fail to meet legislative requirements, financial reimbursements are lost.

The answer to this may lie in the reasoning made in the previous excerpt. Therein, the area level administrator argued that since resources are limited, rejections had to be made in order to better serve those who really needed the support. That is, current legislation was used as an item for rationalisation in relation to contexts of rejections with the aim of caring for citizens.

The double sidedness, presented in the previous excerpts, highlights the complex environment in which actors engaged in public administration continuously exist. Just as I argued that the internal perspective entailed a balancing of two different tacit rules – Autonomy and Conformity – I argue that the external perspective that actors enact entails an additional two.

Firstly, there is a tacit rule directing attention to the transcendence of legislation. Citizens should receive financial reimbursement in such cases as their applications align to the requirement made in legislation. Using the word "right" about citizens' access to the Social Insurance implies a fundamental sanction drawn from the authority inherent in the legislation. I define this as instances of Legality.

Secondly, there is an indication that the agency as well as individual actors carries a responsibility for taking care for citizens. This rule entails a belief that the State has a responsibility for making sure that its citizens are granted protection and assistance under instances where life takes unfortunate turns. I have previously discussed this rule as underpinning the constructed symbol of the Civil Servant. I define this as instances of Welfare.

The separation between these two sanctions, Legality and Welfare, are primarily done on an analytical level. Together they come to underpin the sym-

bol of the Civil Servant as actors enact an external perspective and form a basis that actors use in order to make sense of their situation.

Legality is enacted in order to align actors' reasoning with the current political climate in Sweden. With the liberal/conservative parties assuming power within the Government in 2006, citizens' rights of having access to the Social Insurance has been severely tightened. In the wake of these changes it is not surprising to find that actors within the agency make use of sanctions concerning Legality in order to legitimise actions that make it harder for citizens to receive financial reimbursement from the Government.

But intertwined with sanctions of Legality, it is noticeable that Welfare supports actors' rationalisations. Participants mention that in some cases, where it is deemed that a citizen is not entitled to any social insurance, the agency carries a responsibility to present alternatives to the citizen. Such alternatives may include handing the citizen over to other agencies such as the Employment Office (Sw: Arbetsförmedlingen) or, as a last resort, the Social Services. That is, rather than making use of Legality, participants enacted Welfare in order to rationalise a responsibility that goes well beyond the SSIA.

This action of taking an active responsibility for the citizens became evident within the East group, where one of the area level administrators reflected upon the changes regarding the administration of the Social Insurance.

East, p. 39

Agata: Vi försöker fånga upp det här och ta… omhänderta det på helt annat sätt än vad vi gjorde tidigare (Henrik: mm). Så att vårt tidigare förhållningssätt det förtjänar ju all… all kritik både internt och externt tycker jag. Där vi… bara hänvisar till att "det här är juridiskt på ett… (1.36 s) det fattas på på på juridiskt korrekta grunder va. Var vänlig överklaga om du inte är nöjd". […] Agata: det är något helt annat än vad vi pysslade med för två år sedan (Lorentz: Helt annat ja; Hjalmar: Mmm). Henrik: Man verkligen fångar upp det nu.	Agata: We try to catch this and take… dispose of it in an entirely different way than what we've done previously (Henrik: mm). So our previous approach it deserves every… every critique both internally and externally I think. Where we… only refer to "this is legal on a… (1.36 sec) it's made on on on a legally correct basis right. Kindly appeal if you're not pleased". […] Agata: it's something entirely different than what we were doing two years ago (Lorentz: Entirely different yes; Hjalmar: mm). Henrik: We really get hold of it now.

In this excerpt the area level administrator expressed a discontent concerning the manner in which administration was undertaken "before". From this perspective the previous agency, presumably dating back to the national merge in 2005 up to 2009, the rationalisation for rejecting citizens' application was sanc-

tioned through instances of Legality. If citizens disagreed with the outcome of the decisions that the agency had made, they were met with the full force of the legislation. By this I mean that legislation was used in order to (1) rationalise their actions and (2) to create a distance between the agency and citizen. But allowing for sanction in the form of Welfare to take place within the external perspective, actors can make sense of their situation by relying on the totality of the social safety net. This means that event though citizens' applications may need to be rejected, actors carry a responsibility of making sure that the affected citizens receives help from other instances within the welfare state.

Bridging sanctions?

So far I have argued that actors engaged in public administration enact an internal and external perspective in which different sanctions can be drawn upon in order to support the constructed symbols. I have furthermore argued that as actors separate these perspectives, it enables them to make sense of different situations when engaged in public administration.

This, however, does not mean that participants within the focus group sessions failed to recognize the interdependence of the perspectives. Within the North group this interdependence emerged as participants discussed equity.

North, p. 12

Gunder: men de… sen är ju frågan vad är lika, men de (Sigurd:Ja ja; Erland: Ja)…
Frideborg: Men jag kan ju tänka att alltså rättstillämpningen bör ju vara densamma (Sigurd: mm). Men sen hur man väljer att organisera det och… alltså det finns ju tycker jag saker som inte är riktigt lika viktigt att alla gör likadant.

Gunder: but they… then the question what is equal, but they (Sigurd: Yes yes; Erland: Yes)…
Frideborg: But I can imagine that it's the application of law that should be the same (Sigurd: mm). But then how one chooses to organise it and… I mean there are I think things that are not as important that everyone do the same way.

During this dialogue the participants enacted Legality in order to define the characteristics of equity. But the issue of equity have been a sensitive issue among actors engaged in public administration due to the implementation of both business processes and The Calculation within the organisation (I will not repeat these stories here as I have discussed them in-depth in chapter four).

The participant in this excerpt argued that even though current legislation should be adhered to, actors engaged in public administration should be given enough discretion in order to achieve the goals. This means that the actor here draws Autonomy (internal perspective) as well as Legality (external perspective)

simultaneously. Conformity is thereby downplayed, as it is not necessary to make sense of the interdependence between the two perspectives.

It was even argued that being obedient could lead to instances of injustice from an external perspective. This was observable within the East group:

East, p. 27

Anton: det är ju också ett kontrakt som vi… som kollegor har tillsammans att faktiskt säga att "nämen det är inte okej med bara den här produktionsstyrningen". För att vi måste också se till just de här mänskliga värdena ((hh)) och se hur vi faktiskt kan stödja människor som som… har ett stort utanförskap, att komma in på arbetsmarknaden.

Anton: it's also a contract that we… as colleagues have together to actually say that "well it's not okay with just only this production control". Because we also have to see to exactly the human values ((hh)) and see how we can actually support people who who… suffer from a great exclusion, to enter the labour market.

In this excerpt an area level administrator claimed that not revolting against highly detailed business processes – the participant refers to it as 'production control' – essentially endangers more fundamental human values within the organisation. Conformity is rejected through the simultaneous enactment of Autonomy and Welfare. Welfare was exemplified through the participants' argumentation that human values needed to be adhered. That is, if administrators handling citizens' applications are incapable of understanding that there is an actual individual behind each application, the administration risks transforming into an emotionless machine. Recognising that the agency has a responsibility to help citizens away from social exclusion, the participant here drew on Conformity but with a negative twist. This means that the participant implicitly draws on Autonomy as this is hinted as a possible solution for avoiding an otherwise certain outcome.

North, p. 11

Frideborg: […] där har man ju helt frångått att vi pratar handläggningstider utan nu pratar vi bara väntetid för kund. (Erland: mm; Gunder: mm). Och det är ju lite tilltalande faktiskt för att det är ju inte liksom (Erland: mm; Gunder: Det är ju rätt) vi som har en handläggningstid utan vi har ju en kund någonstans som väntar på ett beslut!

Frideborg: […] it has been absolutely abandonded that we talk processing times, but now we're only talking waiting time for customer. (Erland: mm; Gunder: mm). And that's a bit appealing actually because it's not like (Erland: mm; Gunder: That's right) we who have a processing time but we've got a customer somewhere who awaits a decision!

The bridge between the internal and external perspectives was furthermore found in the discursive use within the focus groups. Within the excerpt from

the North group above, I noticed this as a unit level administrator brought up the relevance of changing the word "administration time" to "waiting time for customer". These words both refer to the amount of time it takes for the agency to administrate citizens' case applications.

From the above excerpt it can be understood that the wordings "administration time" carried connotations of rigidness and bureaucracy. It related solely to an internal perspective where administrating citizens' applications are a matter of 'business as usual'. But the change into "waiting time for the customer" apparently opened up the interpretative scheme that the actor enacted, introducing a bridge between the internal and external perspective.

Administrating citizens' applications is not only a matter of maintaining activities within the organisation, it is about understanding and relating to the need and desires of the citizens behind the applications. The transformation of words is furthermore an example of how the managerialist discourse has come to be implemented in the daily activities within the agency. What is interesting in the excerpt above is how this managerialist discourse supports actors' perceptions of what is important.

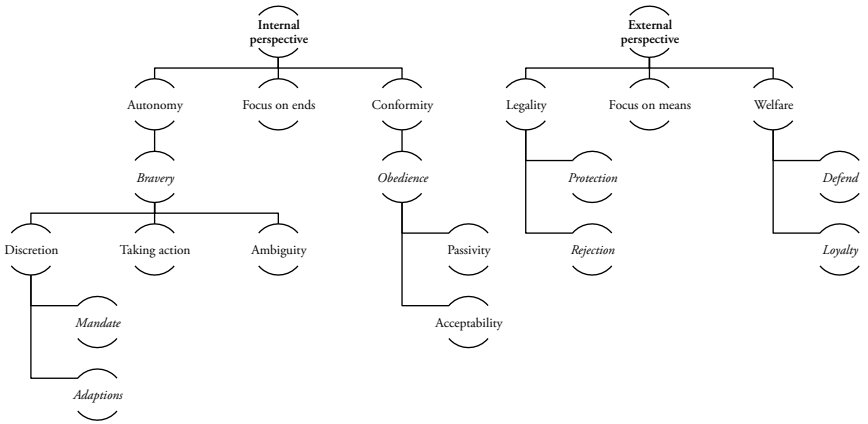
By using the managerialist discourse, the actors temporarily bridge the internal perspective of organising with the external perspective of relating to the recipients of their decisions. During this temporary bridging there is an increased opportunity for making sense on an actor level. Bridging the perspectives by enacting different sanctions enables actors to relate both to increased demands of efficiency and economy as well as aligning practice with maintained demands regarding effectiveness and equity.

Summary

It is time to summarise this part of the empirical analysis. I will do in the same manner which I summarised meanings above. Firstly, I will delineate the relations between the concepts used by participants (first order concepts) as well as concepts used by me (second order concepts). When this has been established (see figure 7.2 below), I will discuss how these concepts fit with the framework progressed in chapter three. Participants' concepts are presented in italics in order to separate them from the assertions and interpretations I have made.

I will begin by summarising the enactment of sanctions within what I have defined to be the internal perspective. Some of the relations are intertwined, why first- and second order concepts seem to be on mixed levels according to the schematic. I will thereafter summarise sanctions within the external perspective.

Figure 7.1 Schematic relations of first- and second order concepts in sanction



Within the internal perspective many of the concepts referred to the manner in which the participants could demand a mandate and be adaptable to their environment. I interpreted this as a need for discretion when engaged in activities associated with the internal perspective: i.e. referring to instances of organising or exerting control. Another important first order concept was that of bravery, indicating actors that took action and coped with uncertainty and ambiguity in their roles as Managers. The need for mandate and adaptability – i.e. discretion – was assumed as inherent in bravery. Together they form – from my perspective – sanctions of Autonomy.

The alternative, to some extent challenging, sanction noted within the internal perspective was that of Conformity. Conformity was primarily enacted as participants discussed instances of being obedient within the agency, implying instances of passivity and acceptability. This meant that for actors engaged in public administration, sanctions relating to issues concerning organising and exerting control were formed through Autonomy and Conformity.

Within the external perspective, participants engaged in discussing instances of protecting the Social Insurance and functioning as a safeguard that ensured that resources were sufficiently used. This meant that some applications made by citizens – by necessity – needed rejection. Together such stances formed a sanction here defined as Legality. The alternative to this stance was instances wherein the participants argued for the need to infuse administrators handling citizens' applications with a loyalty directed primarily to recipients

and not the agency. This meant taking a stance that meant functioning as citizens "attorney", essentially defending their rights in every situation.

I furthermore argued that the internal perspective was associated with a focus on ends whereas the external perspective focused on means. The main findings are connected to the theoretical framework in table 7.3 below. Together, these sanction are understood to be processes of creating legitimation for certain actions and behaviours.

Table 7.3 Sanctions inherent in participants' dialogues

	Internal perspective	External perspective
	Autonomy	Legality
Sanction	Conformity	Welfare
	Focus on ends	Focus on means

As I have argued in chapters two and three, sanctions strengthen meanings and powers. In this section I have argued that the rules inherent within the internal perspective underpin the symbolic construction of the Manager, whereas rules within the external perspective underpin the Civil Servant. There are, however, overlaps referring to the social systems, implying an internalisation of systems on an actor level. I will return to this discussion further on.

In the next section I will discuss how participants drew on powers when engaged in dialogue. These powers relate to the manner in which actors engaged in public administration construct other actors in their vicinity.

7.2.3 Power

Power refers to the manner in which resources are enacted. I have previously discussed the conceptual differences between (1) allocative and (2) authoritative resources. Allocative resources refer to power over material objects whereas authoritative resources refer to power over other actors. In the context of the SSIA, these powers are understood as (1) the construction of other actors as resources or subordinates and (2) loyalty towards individuals holding a function or towards the function itself.

In chapter three, I argued that the social system of Management was understood as entailing a focus on the individual holding a position and perceiving other actors as resources to be put to use. Within the social system of Civil Service, on the other hand, I argued that the organisational hierarchy was in focus and other actors were perceived as subordinates within that hierarchy.

This was explored by scrutinising the manner in which actors referred to other actors in their immediate vicinity. From a theoretical perspective, I argued that powers within the social system of Management would entail a construction of resources and a loyalty towards the person holding a function within the agency. Within Civil Service, however, there would be a construction of subordinates and loyalty towards the function within the agency. This loyalty is thus directed towards the hierarchy and independent of actors employed within the agency. Throughout the dialogue within the focus groups, three words indicating connections to organisational structure and other actors were repeatedly enacted: (1) colleague, (2) co-worker, and (3) administrators[32]. The following section is structured around participants' use of these words.

The word "colleague" in itself derives from Latin's *collega*[33] translating as partner in office. This means that colleague as a term is rather inclusive, and can mean everyone that you work with in an organisation. Participants within the four groups made use of this term time over another, but with a slightly different denotation. In their use of the word "colleague", the reference point was exclusively directed towards other actors that were charged with similar tasks as themselves. This meant that for actors within the agency, a colleague was understood as another actor similarly engaged in public administration. Such a stance demarcated the public administrator from the administrator, constructing a distance between them.

North, p. 29

Frideborg: Det kan ju tänkas att… att en del av… av chefskollegorna kommer att uppleva det som jobbigare än andra likväl som medarbetarna upplever det jobbigare än annat att.. att plötsligt få det här mandatet och…	Frideborg: It may well be that… that some of the… the manager colleagues will experience it as harder than others just as co-workers experience it harder than other things to… to suddenly receive this mandate and…

In this first excerpt, the participant from made such a demarcation as mentioned above. It was done as the participant separated between colleagues on the

[32] The Swedish word used during the sessions was "handläggare" which can be translated either as officer or administrator. In the context of what these individuals actually are doing, I find that the word administrator is most representative.

[33] Incidentally the Swedish word is spelled 'kollega', which is very close to the Latin origin.

one hand and co-workers on the other. In terms of position within the organisation, actors that are what I here define as administrators were constructed as co-workers. This means that there was a power present in the form of a hierarchical relationship as participants engaged in the use of co-workers when defining other actors. This was furthermore established during a dialogue within the East group.

West, p. 32

Paul: […] för de… ja… ja… jag kan som enskild medarbetare som som har den här rollen som är då enhetschef. Ehm jag måste mogna i det här också. Jag måste eh känna att jag kan ta mandat eh och det är hela tiden den här utvecklingen vi måste jobba på (OI: mm) för att… komma vidare. För vi vill ju att våra medarbetare ska ta plats. Vara delaktiga. Att tycka, tänka, bidra med sina kunskaper.

Paul: […] because the… I… I… I can as an individual co-worker who who have this role, as unit level administrator. Uhm I have to mature in this as well. I must uh know that I can take this mandate uh and it's all the time this development that we need to work on (UI: mm) to… move forward. Because we want our co-workers to take place. Be involved. To express, think, contribute with their knowledge.

In this excerpt the discussion revolved around the tasks of being a public administrator wherein the mentioned separation was noticeable. The participant made use of the word "co-worker" in order to refer to actors within the organisation. In the beginning of the excerpt, the word was used as a reference to the positions s/he held. Towards the end of the excerpt, the word was used in reference to administrators handling citizens' applications. In both cases, there was an indication of hierarchical direction implicitly associated with the word.

This was most evident in the second use of the word, when used in reference to administrators handling citizens' applications. From this perspective, the participant was constructed as higher up within the hierarchy. By exclaiming "we want our co-workers to take up space" it was indicated that these administrators did not stand on equal ground with the participant in terms of influence or responsibilities within the agency. By extension, then, the use of the word "co-worker" in the beginning of the excerpt constructed the participant as being unequal to others, higher up within the agency's hierarchy.

The two different manners in which participants made use of the word co-worker thereby suggest a power relation inherent in the act. Under instances where equity between actors is stressed, the term colleague seems to be preferable. From this perspective it becomes clear that the participant above refers both to the relation to higher managerial levels (first example) and administrators handling citizens' applications (second example) and thus clearly demarcates the term from the use of colleague.

Both colleague and co-worker, although marking different hierarchical subjects, refer to relations between actors within the organisation. Especially the use of the term co-worker marked an importance of how a relational perspective was enacted. The relational perspective made recipients, i.e. administrators handling citizens' applications, more present, elevating them as important in the implementation of an efficient and equal social insurance.

In effect this furthermore indicated that actors engaged in public administration elevated their own significance within the organisation. By enacting a relational perspective towards subordinated actors, a key aspect of making use of personnel thus is to function as a transmitter on lower levels. This issue is clearly represented in the next excerpt from a unit level administrator within the South group.

South, p. 24

Gunilla: […] och det känns som en jätteviktig egenskap att lyssna på medarbetarna. Att vara noga att lyssna in vad är deras uppfattning. Att vara beredd och liksom ta till sig det och (Diana: mm) och sen föra det vidare. Alltså det ser nog jag som en av huvudpunkterna i min roll att vara den här länken mellan (Diana: mm) ledningsgruppen och medarbetarna.

Gunilla: […] and it feels like a really important trait to listen to co-workers. To be careful and listen to their perceptions. To be prepared and like assimilate it and (Diana: mm) and then pass it on. I think that's what I see as one of the main points of my role, to be this link between (Diana: mm) the management group and the co-workers.

By the manner in which the participant discussed the intersection between those who exerted control (the public administrators) and those subjected to that control (actors handling citizens' applications), I understand it to be about relations. The participant stressed the fact that s/he needed to listen to the co-workers' arguments and opinions in order to, thereafter, transmit these to higher levels within the agency.

The reverse is also true. Being a public administrator means to assume a role of being a link between senior actors and co-workers within the agency. Enacting a relational perspective thus means caring for the employees subordinated to the role of public administration, which the actor embodies. In turn, this indicates that the relational perspective enacted by actors primarily directs attention towards hierarchical positions. The main focus when constructing employees as co-workers is not the tasks they are engaged in but rather the place in the hierarchy they possess.

The enactment of the relational perspective through the construction of co-workers becomes different when participants make use of administrator in reference to the same individuals. Under these instances the tasks, or rather the

function, they undertake, take presidency over the person. Relationships become substituted, where functionalities and positions, as contrasted to the persons, come into focus.

As such there is a distance inherent in the meaning of administrator: a distance that is not apparent within participants' references to co-workers. By separating relation from function, actors may rationalise interventions into the tasks of employees. This latter part was obvious as one of the unit level administrators within the South group elaborated on the control of handling citizens' applications.

South, p. 65

Gunilla: […] nu är det ju… om om man går tillbaka till det exemplet som du tar där. Skulle det vara så att en handläggare faktiskt sitter på fö… för många ärenden och inte hinner med. Då plockar man ju faktiskt dem och ger dem till en annan handläggare för att kund inte ska bli… lidande på att vänta på ett beslut i vissa fall (Ivar: mm).

Gunilla: […] now it's like… if if one goes back to the example that you make there. Should it be the case that an administrator actually sits on too… too many case applications and doesn't have the time. Then one actually picks them and gives them to another administrator so that customer isn't going to… suffer by waiting for a decision in some cases (Ivar: mm).

This excerpt proves as an example wherein the relations with administrators handling citizens' applications have been reconstructed into primarily being about functions. In this example, the participant rearranged the referred administrator as something that can be controlled and used for different purposes.

An issue that was raised in the excerpt above, concerned instances wherein administrators may become overwhelmed by work. Such instance may end up in delays in decisions making, essentially affecting citizens. Under such instances the public administrator in charge needs to step up and, through intervention, reallocate the amount of applications within the unit.

What is especially interesting is that hierarchy is still present, as is the case when relating to co-workers, but with a slightly different twist. Two distinct approaches thereby emerge from participants' dialogue: a relational on the one hand and a functional approach on the other hand. Both of these approaches seem to be constructed with a hierarchy present. But whereas the relational approach constructs a present employee, the functional approach constructs a depersonalised employee.

The construction of administrators handling citizens' applications from a functional approach was furthermore found different as compared to the construction of co-workers. This became evident as participants took on themselves to play the parts of citizens during the focus groups.

East, p. 32

Agata: Vi får ju frågor titt som tätt "hur är det egentligen" och eh eh "hur är det här egentligen, ja jag har själv haft försäkringskassan men det… handläggare… jag är jättenöjd med den kontakten".

Agata: We receive questions very often "how is it really" and uh uh "how is it here really, well I've had the SSIA myself but that… administrator… I'm really pleased with that contact".

In this excerpt, an area level administrator referred to how citizens may interact with the agency, thus presenting a perception of how the agency is understood from the outside. By bringing in the citizen as a participant in the dialogue during the session several things happens. Firstly, the participant in the excerpt above reinforced the argument. Authenticity was drawn from the story of external parties telling their stories, so to speak. S/he furthermore revealed the view s/he thinks citizens has when interacting with the agency.

This view clearly involves a construction of the administrator rather than the co-worker. Such a perception aligns with a long tradition within Swedish public sector to refer to actors handling citizens' applications as administrator. The references of administrator – as in the excerpt above – was found to be a recurrent theme within dialogues within the focus groups. Under such instances that a participant brought in citizens within in the dialogue, these citizens seemed all to refer to the administrator rather than anything else.

In itself there is nothing surprising in this observations. It would be more surprising to find that these – invited – citizens referred to administrators handling their applications as e.g. co-workers. But the example helps to pinpoint the approach that actors engaged in public administration have when constructing other actors in their vicinity. From the context discussed here, the invitation of external parties into the dialogue supports the functional approach rather than the relational approach.

Participant's use of on the one hand co-worker and on the other administrator could be argued to be a variety in choice of words rather than an enactment of different approaches (I must admit, this was my original interpretation). But as I scrutinised the use of the two terms, I found that almost all of the participants alternated between using the two terms. Furthermore, I found examples of the two terms being alternately used when describing inherently different instances. Most significantly the separation between the terms was noticeable as a unit level administrator within the North group exclaimed the following:

North, p. 58

Sigurd: […] vi har ju specialister och jag har en eh kundspecialist som… som enkom ser till att vi har rätt kunskapsnivå på på på de anställda… och samtidigt alltså vi har ju… de rutinerade handläggarna får ju gå in och och och… handleda… eh… medarbetarna som… jamen… inte riktigt snappat arbetsmomenten.

Sigurd: […] we have like specialists and I have a uh customer specialist that… that specifically ensures that we have the correct level of knowledge in in in the employees… and at the same time we have like… the experienced administrators get to go in and and and… supervise… uh… co-workers who… well… haven't really picked up on the operations.

In this excerpt the participant referred to (1) specialists, (2) seasoned administrators, as well as (3) co-workers. Specialist is here a reference to a specific group of employees, and I will not explore this specific group in this dissertation. The interjection, however, referring to issues of ensuring equity in handling citizens' applications, negates my first assumption that the two terms were simply an alternation of words. If there indeed were no difference between the two terms, why then would the participant in the excerpt above make the distinction the way s/he did?

Another example of this separation was found within the South group.

South, p. 46

Ansgar: Vi hade något annat ärende som… inträffade precis några dagar innan men det blev inte så… (.hh) medialt uppmärksammat med det var aktuellt inom vårat område (Diana: okej) med en eh jurist som gick och skrev på facebook och om ett speciellt ärende och namngav en handläggare så handläggaren fanns inte inom vårat område utan i norra Sverige i och för sig. Men eh eftersom en del av mina medarbetare då är med just i facebook och reagerade på det här namn… namnet som den här juristen hade så [det] var lite skärrande liksom […]

Ansgar: We had some other case that… occurred just a couple of days before but that did not become so… (.hh) noticed by the media but it happened around that time in our area (Diana: okay) that an uh solicitor went and wrote on facebook and about a specific case and named an administrator so the administrator was not in our area but in the north of Sweden but anyways. But uh because some of my co-workers then are on facebook and reacted to this name… the name that this solicitor had so [it] was a little scary like […]

In this excerpt, a unit level administrator shifted from referring to an administrator to making references to "my co-workers". Even though the participant in this excerpt referred to a specific person being publically exposed, the use of administrator removed relation and highlighted the function. In so doing, there was an instigation of distance towards the exposed person in this example. The approach then changed, as some of the co-workers within the unit became anxious. Here the participants relayed a sense of having an emotional connection

with the actors, which made an enactment of a relational approach more needed.

The separation – indeed alternation – between a relational and functional approach can to some extent be connected to the social systems of Management and Civil Service. In the framework presented in chapter three (see table 3.1) I argued that authoritative power is understood as loyalty. In that context, loyalty was understood to be the faith that actors put in either the person holding a position within the organisation or faith in the position itself. In other words, there was a distinction between persons and hierarchy.

I argued that Management was associated with powers referring to the dominance of persons. Loyalty from this perspective was understood to be associated with the specific actors holding position as a public administrator within the agency. As an alternative, the social system of Civil Service was constructed so that the hierarchy came in focus.

By extension, then, there is a connection between the identified approaches in the above section. I have argued that the enactment of the relational approach entailed an essential care for the people employed within the unit. Participants revealed an acknowledgement for the persons employed within the unit. These persons are more than just decisions making machines. By pivoting this construction, it becomes possible to understand the manner in which they perceive themselves.

As actors' enacts a relational approach it reveals that people matter. That is, the person holding certain positions within the organisation is highly important. The dependence on the person is imperative here. It is important who the person having the position is. This means that the relational approach carries understandings of inherent personal loyalty.

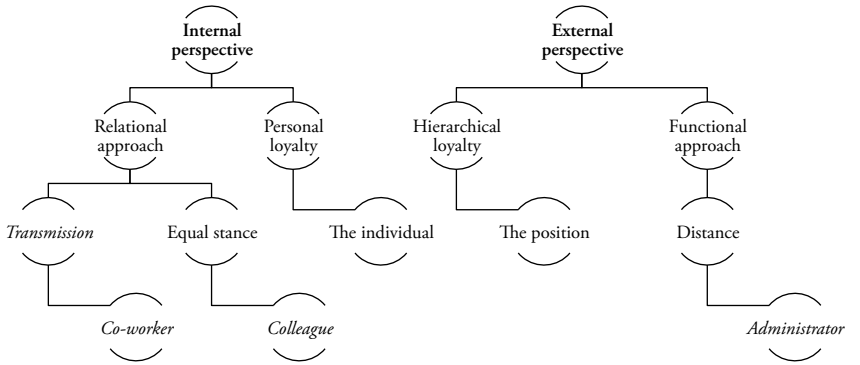
As the participants, however, made use of the word administrator to define employees, they enacted a functional approach. As I discussed above, the administrator primarily entailed a belief in the function of the actor handling citizens' applications. This aligned with the idea that the position transcends the person as described within Civil Service. This means that I understand the functional approach to carry an understanding of hierarchical loyalty.

Summary

In the above section I have engaged in an exploration concerning the manner in which participants enacted powers when constructing other actors in their vicinity. I will here summarise (see figure 7.3 below) the concepts as used by par-

ticipants (first order concepts) and my interpretation of them (second order concepts).

Figure 7.3 Schematic relations of first- and second order concepts in power



Powers are understood as the transformative capacities that actors enact in order to enable meanings and sanctions. A separation is maintained between allocative and authoritative allocation. In the above analysis I have made use of this separation in the manner of how actors construction of other actors as resources or subordinates on the one hand (allocative powers) and the loyalties infused in these constructions (authoritative powers).

Keeping with the separation of perspectives, I argued that the internal perspective was associated with participants' enactment of a relational approach. This was evident through referring to other actors as colleagues or co-workers. Colleagues carried indications of positioning the other actor (or themselves) on equal levels whereas co-worker clearly indicated different hierarchical levels. The co-worker was constructed as being a transmitter between levels, retaining good relations with other actors. The internal perspective was furthermore associated with the prominence of personal loyalty, highlighting a preference for the individual holding a position.

The external perspective, on the other hand, was associated with a functional approach, wherein other actors primarily were constructed as administrators. This construction enabled actors to create a distance to the actual meeting between government and citizens, a buffer of sorts. It furthermore enabled actors to understand these other actors – the administrators – to be mechanisms or tools that could be controlled and used within the agency. The external func-

tion was furthermore associated with a hierarchical loyalty, highlighting a preferences for the position other actors held, rather than person actually occupying it.

In table 7.4 below I have summarised the main concepts extracted from the above analysis and show how they fit with the framework progressed in chapter three.

Table 7.4 Powers inherent in participants' dialogues

	Internal perspective	**External perspective**
Power	Personal loyalty	Hierarchical loyalty
	Relational approach	Functional approach

I this section I have argued that participants engage in an enactment of powers in two distinct manners: through different approaches and loyalties. The relational approach associated with the internal perspective and as such to the symbolic construction of the Manager (discussed in section 7.2.1).

I furthermore argued that there were inherent constructions of personal loyalty within the internal perspective, by which I mean that the individual holding a position was in focus. The functional approach associated with the external perspective and thus – by extension – relates to the symbolic construction of the Civil Servant (discussed in section 7.2.1). The functional approach highlights the importance of hierarchical structure and task undertaken within the organisation.

With this I have ended the empirical analysis in this chapter. What remain now is a synthesis and elaboration of the analysis into a coherent understanding concerning the enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions concerning public administration within the SSIA. This is what I will present in the next section.

7.3 Discussion

In this chapter I have engaged in an exploration of actors' enactment of dialogue concerning their situations as public administrators within the SSIA. I argued in the introduction above that the aim herein was to explore how actors' engaged in public administration draws on the social systems of Management and Civil Service recursively. The argument is that it is done simultaneously in order for these actors to make sense of their situations.

This is theoretically based in the idea that actors' taken-for-granted assumptions present actors with opportunities of social stability as they make sense of the context wherein they exist. I have discussed this extensively in chapters two and three. In chapter three I presented a framework for understanding manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. I have made use of this framework in this chapter as a backdrop for approaching the empirics. More hands-on this meant a separation between instance of actors drawing on meanings, sanctions, and powers as they engaged in dialogue within the different groups.

A drawback of this approach was that as rather complex interactions were made simple through categorisation, some things were perhaps 'lost in translation'. I am aware of this, but argue that the empirical analysis that I have undertaken in this chapter provides valuable insights concerning how actors' taken-for-granted assumptions come to be manifested as they discuss their situations within the agency.

Something may have been lost in the complexity of the dialogue undertaken within the different groups, but something – new – has been gained. It is these things that I will focus on in this concluding discussion. More specifically, I will focus on three important outcomes in relation to the above empirical analysis: (1) compartmentalised perspectives, (2) interdependent perspectives, and (3) constructing actors.

7.3.1 Compartmentalised perspectives

As I engaged in scrutinising the dialogue between participants in the four focus groups, it became evident that two distinctly different perspectives were enacted. These perspective rather proficiently helped participants to separate between otherwise dilemmatic positions when engaged in public administration. In this section I will discuss how actors' compartmentalisation of perspectives enabled this. I will furthermore argue that although the perspectives are compartmentalised, thus isolated from each other, they are inherently interdependent. This means that the different perspectives are used in order to support and validate alternating positions important within public administration.

The perspectives are discursively constructed as participants drew on instances of meaning and sanctions inherent in their dialogues. These perspectives can be understood from the orientation of the work undertaken within the context of public administration: internally or externally. The separation between

these two perspectives came to be highlighted as different discourses and symbols were enacted.

The internal perspective

The internal perspective that participants constructed mainly concerned issues concerning organising and exerting control. This perspective was primarily manifested through a managerialist discourse and the construction of the Manager as symbol.

As I discussed it above, the Manager is symbolically infused with a virtue of proactivity. As participants discussed and constructed issues concerning managing the SSIA, leadership and productivity was continuously brought up as important characteristics. Such characteristics were important to meet the demands and needs of the imagined recipient: the customer. These were apparently quite important as they helped the actor draw on meanings inherent in the Manager when justifying undertaken actions. Such activities e.g. entailed the responsibility for creating an environment within the agency in which productivity opportunities came to be central.

The Manager was furthermore infused with a virtue of strength. According to participants' dialogue, the Manager needed to be strong enough so that s/he can maintain a calm façade towards the continuous scrutiny s/he is exposed to. The situation of being subjected to continuous scrutiny furthermore presented me with an understanding concerning the tacit rules presenting actors with instances of sanction. According to participants' dialogues, the Manager could be understood as relating to two different tacit rules presenting sanctions for different approaches within public administration. I referred to these approaches as instances of Autonomy and Conformity.

Participants enacted Autonomy when engaged in discussions revolving instances of being brave within the agency. Bravery in this context entailed notions of breaking with the established ways in which administration was supposedly undertaken. It meant sticking their necks out in order to create instances of flexibility, and adaptability. Bravery furthermore entailed instances of demanding discretion when engaging in public administration. Discretion was here constructed as leniency or manoeuvrability, enabling actors to achieve the ends that they had been charged to achieve.

Taken together, instances of bravery and discretion – as inherent constructions within Autonomy – turned actors' focus toward the ends inherent in public administration. From this perspective, it was secondary how ends were

achieved. Following rules and procedures thus became subordinated to the feat of delivering good results.

As a substitute to bravery, obedience was brought up. In this context an obedient manager was on that accepted that rules and procedures were in place for a reason. As participants brought obedience into the dialogue, they enacted sanctions of Conformity. Actors drew upon conformity in order to rationalise a rigid structure of rule following, and thereby distance themselves from the responsibility associated with their actions.

As separated from Autonomy, sanctions drawn from Conformity support activities undertaken in order to follow designed rules and procedures. This implies that the processes e.g. for handling citizens' applications are quite important, and ends are presumed to follow from the rigidity of which rules are adhered to. In other words, the sanction drawn upon from Conformity, supports how things are undertaken, rather than the manner in which goals where achieved.

The external perspective

The external perspective constructed by participants in the focus groups entailed instances concerning the welfare state and taking care of citizens. Within this perspective, focus was put on relations with actors located outside the agency. This meant a downplaying of instances concerning organising and exertion of control in favour of other activities.

This came to be manifested through participants' use of a welfarist discourse, wherein words such as "citizen" and "mission" were indicative. Symbolically, the Civil Servant emerged as dominating the external perspective. As participants engaged in the construction of this symbol, it became highly associated with a general care for citizens. The welfare system, in this specific setting focusing on the Swedish Social Insurance, is essentially in place in order to present citizens with a basic protection against unforeseen events such as sickness.

The symbol of the Civil Servant can furthermore be understood as extended as to cover the Government. From this perspective, the Civil Servant is infused with a moral obligation to serve the citizens within the state. This moral obligation concerns helping people – citizens or customers – with receiving their financial reimbursement so that they could carry on to live with dignity. If the SSIA are for some reason unable to help individual citizens, then the Civil Servant is obliged to make sure that other instances within the welfare state provide some form of support.

I furthermore came to the conclusion that actors drew on two different forms of sanctions within the external perspective: Legality and Welfare. These

were distinctly different from the sanctions identified within the internal perspective.

Legality was found in participants' argumentation concerning use of the legislation. Drawing on Legality, it was argued that legislations were in place both to enable and constrain citizens' rights concerning financial reimbursement. According to these arguments, the scarcity of resources demanded a protection of the social welfare system. The participants spoke of "citizens' right" and the need of protecting these rights from defrauders (that is my choice of word however!).

Welfare, however, constituted the underpinning of the State's responsibility to take care of its citizens' wellbeing. This supports actors' enactment of the Civil Servant, as citizens are cared for even under instances where they do not have the essential right for financial reimbursement. In those cases actors rationalise their decisions by putting faith into other instances within the welfare state.

Compartmentalisation

The enacted perspectives above have a character of being compartmentalised. There is a growing field of research within institutional theory that have put focus on the manner in which compartmentalisation is undertaken by actors. In large, they continue to draw on the seminal work of Meyer and Rowan (1977) in which they progress the idea of decoupling actions from structures in organisations.

These ideas have been raised in different context. It has been suggested that actors have an ability to exist in different traditions simultaneously, although these traditions contain seemingly different elements (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 268), institutional logics (see also Alford & Friedland, 1985; Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999; Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008), or institutional rationales (Lounsbury, 2007, 2008) and thus are bearers of multiple institutionalised identities (Delmestri, 2006, p. 1518). It has furthermore been found that actors engage different discourses depending on context, indicating the existence of institutional multiplicity (Zilber, 2011, p. 1553). This form of handling multiple institutions have been described as switching (DiMaggio, 1997) or ambidexterity (Jarzabkowski, Smets, Bednarek, Burke, & Spee, 2013).

My use of the concept 'compartmentalisation' here connects with these latter uses in that it allows for the actors to simultaneously handle seemingly different taken-for-granted assumptions within a given context. I argue that as

actors enact internal perspectives in order to validate instances of organising and exerting control on the one hand and an external perspective concerning instances of e.g. welfare, they are kept apart through compartmentalisation. By this I mean that perspectives are kept separate from each other, leading to an enactment of different taken-for-granted assumptions.

Although I argue that the perspectives are compartmentalised, I have also hinted that they are interdependent. That is, they are sometimes enacted in a manner that enforces the alternative, rather than the one enacted. This may seem contradictive, but reveals some of the complexity inherent as actors make sense of public administration. In the following section I will elaborate on how the interdependence comes into play as actors draw primarily on meanings and sanctions.

7.3.2 Interdependent perspectives

In chapter three I formulated different manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. This was done in relation to the social systems of Management and Civil Service. From the manner in which I modelled these social systems, they were constructed as entailing distinctly different assumptions.

From the empirical analysis undertaken in this chapter, the main separation seems not to reside in the difference between social systems as such but on the perspectives taken on an actor level. The social systems were, however, enacted interdependently within the perspectives as participants engaged in dialogue.

Within the internal perspective, actors enacted two forms of sanction: Autonomy and Conformity. Autonomy entailed a demanding of discretion, enabling adaptability, and bravery. Autonomy was furthermore associated with the Manager, infused with virtues such as proactivity and strength, implying an individual standing alone at the top. These meanings and sanctions are clearly related to the manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions within the social system of Management.

Conformity, on the other hand, was associated with obedience and rule following. Ends could never justify the free choice of means. Rather, Conformity tends to associate with process and a belief in the collective and the construction of the caretaking Civil Servant. As such, Conformity in many regards came to relate to the manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions within the social system of Civil Service.

A similar pattern emerges when scrutinising the manner in which the participants enacted the external perspective. Within the external perspective I identified the two forms of sanctions: Legality and Welfare. Enacting Legality, participants drew upon sanctions that associate primarily with instances of individualism. Citizens' rights are continuously assessed and actors' postures of "protecting" the welfare system resonate against a backdrop of keeping the states' obligations at a minimum. Welfare, on the other hand, draws upon a belief in the collective, wherein the building and maintaining of a welfare state is upheld as desirable. Herein, protection is primarily directed towards the citizens as compared to the system within Legality. Together, then, Legality associates with Management whereas Welfare comes to associate with Civil Service.

Whereas the perspectives are kept separated through the construction of symbols, there exist instances wherein the two perspectives are used interdependently. Essentially there is a bridging – bringing together – of the perspectives as actors enact several tacit rules recursively. I argued that as actors' enact Legality in order to reinforce Autonomy, the internal and external perspectives temporarily merge in order to make sense of their situations. A similar example was found when Welfare and Autonomy were enacted in order to reject the sanctions inherent in Conformity.

The mixing of social systems within respective perspective, and the interdependence coming out as different sanctions are put to use, suggests that taken-for-granted assumptions associated with on the one hand Management and on the other hand Civil Service are intertwined on an actor level. It becomes obvious that assumptions theoretically associated with different social systems are made use of side by side in order to make sense of their engagement in public administration. It may even be the case that making sense of public administration within a contemporary public sector requires the recurrent enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions inherent in Management as well as Civil Service.

In the next section I will continue by discussing how the participants' constructed actors as resources. This was done as actors enacted instances of power inherent in social systems dominating public administration.

7.3.3 Constructing actors

I have argued on several occasions that actors draw on instances of power as means of transformative capacity. Within the empirical context discussed in this

chapter this was primarily understood as being either allocative or authoritative powers. The latter was referred to as loyalty – personal and hierarchical – that actors enacted in their discussion regarding other actors within the organisation. Allocative resources referred to the enactment of other actors as kind of resources or subordinates. I will begin with the latter part, as this partly illuminates the first.

As participants engaged in dialogue within the focus groups, they recursively referred to other actors in their direct vicinity as (1) colleagues, (2) co-workers and (3) administrators. In participants' use of these terms, there was underpinning implications of the relations the actor perceived to have with others. In the analysis above, I argued that two distinct sets of approaches were implied through participants' enactment of the three words: a relational and a functional approach.

The first of these two approaches, the relational, was evident in participants' use of the word "colleague". The context in which this term was used indicated a perception of being on equal terms in relation to influence and responsibilities within the agency. A colleague is someone that the participants wanted to have some form of relation with, preferably – I infer – a good one.

The use of the term "co-worker" also became associated with the relational approach, although in this use a hint of hierarchical positioning was evident. By this I mean that as participants discussed other actors as co-workers, it was implicit that these actors were subordinated someone else within the agency. This means that although colleague as well as co-worker can be deemed to have a relational approach, there is a hierarchical difference in how they are used.

I furthermore argued that as the term "co-worker" was used by participants, thus enacting a relational approach, the main focus was on the individual actor rather than the tasks or the function that actor undertook. By this I mean that as participants enacted a relational approach, the people was predominantly present.

The use of the word "administrator", however, indicated a different sense altogether. Although there still remained a presence of hierarchical relations between the different actors, the characteristic was different from what I deemed the relational approach to portray. I wrote in the empirical analysis that it was a hierarchical approach but with a twist.

As participants constructed other actors as "administrators", these constructed actors too some extent came to be synonymous with the tasks or the function the held within the agency. In a way, I argue, the actor came to be depersonalised, which is a distinctly different approach as compared with the construction of the "colleague" or the "co-worker". I furthermore argue that this is

representative of an alternative approach that is enacted as actors draw on powers to make sense. In this context – the construction of the "administrator" handling citizens' applications – there is a functional approach present.

When actors enact a functional approach in the construction of other actors, the depersonalisation makes it somewhat easier to understand other actors as tools or parts that can be controlled. This means a highlighting of the function – hence the label – rather than the relation which actors engaged in public administration wants to enact with others.

The relational and functional approaches that actors enact can furthermore be discussed in the context of loyalty. I have discussed above that loyalty in the respect of the two dominating social systems could be understood to concern loyalty towards (1) the person or (2) the hierarchy. In short, loyalty towards a person highlights the importance of having the right person on the right place, whereas loyalty towards the hierarchy assumed that rules and procedures are in place, which in itself assures the continuity of the organisation.

From this assertion, I argue that the enactment of a relational approach when constructing others is associated with personal loyalty. This in turn, indicates an association with powers inherent in the social system of Management, as I have discussed in length in chapter three. The enactment of a functional approach, however, highlights the importance of the hierarchy inherent with rules and procedure, this associating it with loyalty towards that hierarchy. As such, the enactment of a functional approach thus associates with powers inherent in the social system of Civil Service.

Connecting back to the two perspectives I have argued are enacted by actors within the agency, the enactment of relational and functional approaches can be associated with them both. Or rather, the enactment of a functional approach when constructing other actors fits with the internal as well as the external perspectives. By this I mean that from an internal perspective, actors engaged in public administration may construct those who handle citizens' applications as a subordinated function within the hierarchy. But, they can furthermore within the internal perspective construct these other actors through an enactment of a relational approach, in which the actors become personified. From an external perspective, however, the enactment of relational approach is highly unlikely. It is more conceivable that actors are constructed through the enactment of a functional approach when discussing external relations.

The implication of this is that although there are indications that the internal perspective is dominated by actors' drawing on meanings and sanction inherent in Management, powers are drawn from Management as well as Civil

service. Within the external perspective, however, the dominance of actors' drawing on powers within Civil Service seems stable.

In the following section I will make some concluding remarks concerning the findings in this chapter.

7.3.4 Now what?

The findings that I have discussed in this final section, all refer to the manner in which actors within the SSIA have engaged in dialogue with each other concerning their roles. Primarily this has revolved around their functions within the SSIA but also about the situations concerning public administration.

All participants were at the time of the study positioned as either unit or area level administrators within the SSIA. More specifically they were employed within the LIC, the department mainly responsible for administrating citizens' applications Health Insurance.

As framed in chapter three, the social systems of Management and Civil Service are understood to entail different manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. The framework progressed in chapter three (see table 3.1) have been used substantially in the empirical analysis presented in this chapter. I have explored how actors engage in dialogue, and thus manifest taken-for-granted assumptions, surrounding their situations within the SSIA. The main findings in this chapter concern (1) meaning through two perspectives, (2) sanctions through four tacit rules, and (3) powers from two distinct approaches and loyalties. The findings are summarised in table 7.2 (below), which thus constitutes an elaboration of the framework progressed in chapters three.

Table 7.5 Elaboration concerning manifestations taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration

	Internal perspective	External perspective
Meaning	Managerialist discourse	Welfarist discourse
	The Manager	The Civil Servant
Sanction	Autonomy	Legality
	Conformity	Welfare
	Focus on ends	Focus on means
Power	Personal loyalty	Hierarchical loyalty
	Relational approach	Functional approach

The enactment of the internal and external perspectives has been discussed extensively above. I argued that the discursive use and the construction of symbols

inherent in participants' dialogue enabled a separation between these perspectives. The enactment of the internal perspective was characterised by a managerialist discourse and a construction of the Manager as symbolic representative. The enactment of the external perspective was characterised by a welfarist discourse and the construction of the Civil Servant. The enactment of the two different perspectives, with its different discourse and symbols, carries inherent meanings for different contexts.

As actors enacted the two perspectives, I argued that they did so by enacting different sanctions. Within the internal perspective these sanctions were Autonomy and Conformity. Autonomy entailed notions of demanding discretion and bravery and I argued that it, as such, became associated with individualism. Conformity, on the other hand, entailed notions of adhering to rules and obedience. I argued that this was more associated with collectivism. Within the external perspective the sanctions of Legality and Welfare dominated. Legality entailed notions of allowing for the legislation to constrain and enable citizens' rights. Welfare entailed notions of caring for the citizens' ability to have a decent form of living.

Lastly, I explored the manner in which the participants' drew on powers in order to construct other actors within their immediate vicinity. I found that this could be characterised through two different approaches: a relational and a functional. Within the relational approach other actors were given brought into focus, made present. Within the functional approach, on the other hand, actors were reduced to the tasks or functions they had within the organisation. As such they became depersonalised. I furthermore argued that these two approaches could be understood from different loyalties. The relational approach provided a basis for personal loyalty, wherein the individual holding a function was elevated. The functional approach, however, supported a hierarchical loyalty wherein focus was put on the organisational hierarchy.

Together, the findings in this chapter are indicative of seemingly non-reflective embracement of managerialist discourse as well as a welfarist discourse. This suggests that actors engaged in public administration have come to internalise and continuously draw on the social systems of Management and Civil Service recursively in order to make sense of their situations as engaged in public administration.

In the next chapter, I will discuss these findings in relation to the findings presented in chapters four through six. I will then relate these findings to the posited research question and purpose from chapter one.

8 Conclusions

In the introductory chapter I posited a research question, asking how actors engaged in public administration make sense of the dilemma(s) they come to face. The dilemmas that I referred to were the dilemmas of balancing between different types of E's: more specifically the E's of efficiency, effectiveness, economy, and equity. In this concluding chapter I will discuss the empirical analyses in relation to the theoretical approach I have taken, which in turn enables me to respond to the question. This, in turn, brings me to a fulfilment of the stated purpose: to explore actors' taken-for-granted assumptions when faced with dilemmas within public administration.

The problem, which I presented in chapter one, concerns the economification (Lundquist, 1997, 1998, 1999) of the public sector. Inherent in this economification lies firstly the conjoining of E's and secondly a proliferation concerning one of these sets. More concretely, instances of efficiency and economy have come to be conjoined on the on hand and instances of effectiveness and equity have been conjoined on the other. More so, through the economification of the public sector it has become more clear that instances of increasing efficiency is understood in terms of reducing costs: i.e. economy. Such reforms has furthermore been implemented in such a manner that contexts revolving instances of efficiency and economy have come to proliferated within public administration; meaning that they are highlighted and perceived as more important as compared to the alternative set of E's.

This proliferation of efficiency and economy has furthermore called for new ways of understanding and making sense of contemporary public administration. The imposition of managerial techniques, imported from the private for-profit sector, has come to contrast the manner in which things were previously undertaken within public administration. But rather than this leading to entirely new ways of understanding public administration, I argued that the presence of previous understandings still remained, affecting actors' perception of their current situations. From this perspective, I argued, actors may not only

balance different sets of E's, but may furthermore balance between different contexts wherein these E's make sense.

The central theoretical approach I have employed in this dissertation concerns actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. These assumptions are understood to be memory traces that result in behavioural alignment into what I refer to as path-dependent and situated practices. As actors engage in daily lives, their taken-for-granted assumptions become manifested – and thus observable – through situated practices: recurrent activities that are enacted without prior deliberation.

In addition to actors' taken-for-granted assumptions, I have argued that all contemporary societies are consisting of social systems, essentially governing how social interactions are enacted. More so, I argued that societies consist of several – multiple – social systems, each containing different assumptions of how social interaction is to be undertaken, all depending on the context wherein they become enacted. From an analytical perspective, social systems can be separated into three structures of significance, legitimation, and domination: what I refer to as meanings, sanctions, and powers.

I argued that two such social systems dominated contemporary public administration: the social systems of Management and Civil Service. I discussed the social systems in relation of how manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions could be positioned within them. This discussion – presented in chapter three – ended in a progressed framework (see table 3.1). The modelling of manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions from the backdrop of multiple social systems is itself an important contribution within this dissertation.

Empirically, I have engaged multiple methods when exploring manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions: presented in chapters four through seven. As these chapters represent almost 150 pages, I will here recapitulate the major conclusions drawn from the empirical analyses. This is presented in the next section. I will thereafter discuss contributions and implications that can be drawn from these analyses against the theoretical backdrop engaged in this dissertation.

8.1 Conclusions from the empirical analyses

The choice of presenting my empirical material in the manner that I have chosen follows the temporal progression of the dissertation. I began with open-

ended interviews and continued with participatory observations during 2009 within the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (SSIA). The self-administrated surveys followed in late 2010 and, finally, focus groups during early 2013. In addition to this, numerous formal and informal meetings with different General-Directors[34], senior actors, as well as with actors engaged in public administration in different locations in Sweden have been undertaken.

All in all, the four empirical chapters (chapters four through seven) depict a central government agency in change and actors handling the demands pressed upon them. I will discuss this in three sections: (1) exploring the dilemma, (2) acknowledging the dilemma, and (3) making sense of dilemma through dialogue.

8.1.1 Exploring the dilemma

In chapter four I engaged in an exploration revolving the presence of dilemma within the SSIA. This dilemma was understood to be prominent as actors engaged in public administration undertook activities inherent in their roles within the agency. In this section I make a short recap concerning the major findings presented in this chapter. The fuller discussion was presented in section 4.5.

The findings in chapter four related to interviews with senior actors as well as observations made during my time within the agency. These pointed toward a conceptual dilemma being present as actors engaged in public administration. More specifically, there were instances of mixed messages prevalent within the reconstructed organisation.

These mixed messages were instigated as questions regarding the 'what' and 'how' of administrating the Swedish Social Insurance became separated within the agency through the construction of (1) an Insurance Division and (2) a Product Division (what I have referred to as the 2005 organisation). Later, within the 2008 organisation, the instances of 'what' and 'how' came to be joined under the heading of the IP department, but further perpetuated

[34] During the period of which this dissertation have been undertaken, two General-Directors have been in charge of the SSIA.

through the choice of exerting control through business process and what came to be referred to as The Calculation.

The mixed messages within the agency furthermore accentuated a dilemma regarding verifying citizens' applications and increasing the speed of outgoing payment. That is, there was a dilemma present between making sure that citizens had a right to be reimbursed and focusing on payments.

By extension, the instigation of exerting control through business processes on the one hand and The Calculation on the other was conceptualised – by me – as a dilemma between different conjoined E's. Business processes were instigated in order to get information about the current manner in which handling citizens' applications was undertaken. They were firmly established in legislation and progressed as a form of 'best practice', essentially in place to align behaviour with instances of effectiveness and equity. The use of The Calculation, on the other hand, as means of control exertion focused on quantifying and measuring activities undertaken as an outcome of the business processes.

The underpinning legitimacy to The Calculation as means for exerting control within the agency was the supposition of efficiency gains of 10 %. These gains were to be realised as under- and overemployment came to be noticed through the quantification and measuring of business process. There was, thereby, a dilemma instigated between the two techniques, essentially sending mixed messages towards actors engaged in public administration.

During my interviews with senior actors I furthermore found indications that certain behaviour or activities were deemed as 'poor management'. These were primarily referred to as actors engaged in public administration voiced frustration concerning the mixed messages and reduction of resources within the agency. These findings led me to conjecture that the presence of 'poor management' by necessity was constructed as an opposite of something wanted, something desired: certain behaviours or activities that was deemed as good. I referred to these as 'good administration'.

These findings led me to further explore these instances in order to establish whether actors engaged in public administration within the agency acknowledged the dilemmas that I had found during interviews and participatory observations.

8.1.2 Acknowledging the dilemma

Whereas chapter four indicates a presence of dilemma chapter five aimed at discovering the potential width of it. Even though the stories told by senior actors

indicated the presence, this revealed nothing about whether actors engaged in public administration also acknowledged it. In chapters five and six I presented constructions of six hypotheses, which was then tested.

Hypotheses one and two reflected the empirical conclusions presented in chapter four. I hypothesised that (1) there was no difference in the use of business processes and The Calculation and furthermore that (2) perceived responsibilities and authorities would reveal the proliferation of efficiency and economy. Together, these two hypotheses were constructed with the aim of pinpointing if and in that case how actors engaged in public administration acknowledged the presence of dilemmas.

Hypotheses three through six took another perspective in that they focused on actors' perceptions regarding instances of 'good administration'. I hypothesised that age, education, tenure, and function affected the manner in which actors' value activities inherent in public administration. Exploring actors' perception regarding these activities presented an opportunity to investigate whether the dilemmas could be deemed to affect the manner in which activities inherent in public administration were deemed as good or bad.

In order to investigate these instances, three constructs were presented in chapter five: organisational control, organisational responsibility, and organisational valuation regarding 'good administration'. Factor Analysis was thereafter used in order to confirm, revise, and/or reject the three constructs. The three constructs were all revised so that they achieved decent levels of internal validity. Elaborate discussions can be found in section 5.3 above.

Statistical analysis was undertaken by use of (1) paired samples t-tests and (2) ANOVA tests, presented in chapter six. Both tests were used in order to investigate whether the different constructs carried statistically significant mean score differences. Mixed messages, and thereby the existence of dilemma, were investigated through the first two hypotheses. Mean scores from the weighted summated scales were analysed for statistical significant differences.

Firstly, I found that there existed no difference in actors' use of business process and The Calculation. This suggested that the two techniques for control exertion were used equally within the agency. Secondly, I found that actors' perceptions concerning responsibilities differed. Actors engaged in public administration perceived to be more responsible for equity as compared to economy.

Concerning organisational values of 'good administration', all four hypotheses were corroborated. This meant that irrespective of age, education, tenure, or function within the organisation, valuations regarding activities inherent

in public administration – 'good administration' – were deemed as stable. The corroboration of the four hypotheses furthermore meant that my theorising of how different backgrounds affect perceptions surrounding 'good administration' was rejected.

Taken together, the undertaken tests suggested that actors engaged in public administration were exposed to a dilemma in the form of having to navigate between instances of adhering to legislation or the boundaries in the form of reduced resources. By simultaneously enacting business process as well as The Calculation the dilemma was accentuated within the agency.

The instance of dilemma was, however, rejected by actors when faced with statement regarding polarised activities inherent in public administration. Rather than acknowledging that activities were polarised, all activities posited were deemed as desired. That is, all activities were deemed as 'good administration'. In addition to this, I found that actors perceived to be more responsible for instances of equity as compared to economy. This was quite surprising, as I had previously found that actors within the agency engaged in searching for shortcuts in handling citizens' applications so that behaviour came to align with the boundaries created by allocated resources. It was surprising, because why would actors engage in changing handling of citizens' applications so that it aligned with the resources if they perceived not to be responsible for economy? I will return to this question below.

Having explored instances of dilemma within the agency, I turned attention to how actors came to enact taken-for-granted assumptions when engaging in dialogue concerning their roles within the agency.

8.1.3 Making sense of dilemma through dialogue

After having established that there indeed was a premise of dilemma within the SSIA, and furthermore that actors engaged in public administration rejected this dilemma, I wanted to explore how actors discussed such instances. More so, I engaged in an exploration concerning how actors enacted taken-for-granted assumptions through dialogues in focus groups.

When analysing dialogues among actors within the four focus groups, I found that they came to enact different perspectives concerning the engagement in public administration. On the one hand there was an enactment of an internal perspective, wherein issues concerning organising and exerting control were focused upon. Actors furthermore enacted an external perspective, wherein issues relating to the welfare state and taking care of citizens.

I furthermore argued that the two perspectives were kept separated through the enactment of different discourses and symbols. The internal perspective was found to entail a managerialist discourse and construction of the Manager. Within the external perspective, however, I found instances of a welfarist discourse and a symbolic construction of the Civil Servant. I furthermore argued that different tacit rules proved as sanctions that actors could draw upon within the two perspectives. I argued for a presence of tacit rules, which I labelled as Autonomy and Conformity, were present within the internal perspective whereas Legality and Welfare were found within the external perspective.

In short, Autonomy was understood as demands for discretion whereas Conformity was understood as the need for strict adherence to rules and procedures. Legality was understood as sanctions for restraining citizens' reimbursements from the social welfare, whereas Welfare was understood to entail the State's responsibility to take care of citizens' wellbeing.

Although the perspectives were compartmentalised through the discursive use and construction of symbols, there existed instances of interdependence between them. By this I meant that although they were separated, they were sometimes enacted in order to validate or strengthen one another. One such example was when Legality within the external perspective was enacted in order to strengthen Autonomy within the internal perspective.

Connecting the perspectives and tacit rules enacted by actors to the social systems of Management and Civil Service, I concluded that the interdependence of the perspectives was indicative of internalisation (cf. Berger & Luckman, 1967) of taken-for-granted assumptions. That is, the observations of manifestations associated with actors' taken-for-granted assumptions resonated against a backdrop of different social systems, and due to the simultaneous enactment they seemed to have equal importance.

Whereas discourse and symbols referred to meanings, tacit rules referred to sanctions enacted by actors. As a final section I analysed the manner in which actors engaged in dialogues enacted power. I did this by scrutinising the manner in which actors constructed other actors in their immediate vicinity. I argued for the presence of (1) two distinct approaches and (2) loyalties present in dialogues.

As actors constructed other actors they came to make use of a relational as well as a functional approach. The relational approach came to relate to the meanings and sanctions of the Manager within the internal perspective. Through the relational approach, the individuals were highlighted and personal loyalty was elevated. By this I mean that it became obvious that it was the indi-

vidual rather than the position that was in focus. The functional approach came to relate to meanings and sanctions within the external perspective and the constructed Civil Servant. Through the functional approach the organisation was highlighted, and a hierarchical loyalty enacted. This meant that the position rather than the individual holding it came in focus.

I will now continue discussing how the findings from the above empirical analyses can be understood from the backdrop of the posited research question: how do actors engaged in public administration make sense of the dilemma(s) they face?

8.2 Responding to the posited question

So far in this chapter, I have repeated the major findings from the four empirically focused chapters. Each chapter entails an empirical analysis revolving around the topics discussed therein. In this section the main aim is to bring together these findings into a discussion concerning manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions and how these come to be enacted in order to make sense of dilemmas within public administration. This is directly aligned with the purpose posited in chapter one: the exploration of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions when faced with dilemmas within public administration.

In order to fulfil this purpose – and indeed the posited research question – I will in this section discuss several things. Firstly, I will discuss the economification of the public sector and the proliferation of efficiency and economy from the backdrop of the empirical discussions. Secondly, I will discuss manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions within the SSIA. This discussion furthermore enables a discussion regarding the enactment of dominant social systems within public administration. Thirdly, I will discuss how these manifestations enable actors to make sense of the dilemmas that emerge through the proliferation of efficiency and economy.

8.2.1 Economification and the proliferation of certain E's

As I have discussed more in-depth in chapter one, Lundquist (1997, 1998, 1999) have argued that the public sector have been subjected to an economification. By this he means that as instances of economy have come to gain influ-

ence, democracy has been put aside. I have discussed this in connection to the four E's inherent in public administration.

The economification of the public sector in large means that instances of efficiency and economy have been proliferated: quantification, measurability, and commensurability are activities that to a large extent characterise contemporary public administration. I have furthermore argued that this is an effect of the many reforms directed towards public administration during the last 30 years. I have discussed such reforms in chapter one and will therefore not go into detail about them here.

A conjecture that I made in this context was that as instances of efficiency and economy gained dominance through different reforms, other instances of effectiveness and equity in many ways became regarded as an opposite alternative. As focus was put on quantification and measurability the separation between the conjoined sets of E's was elongated. In short, instances of efficiency and economy were more suitable for quantification, and as evaluations were primarily based on such information, actors were inclined to align their behaviour accordingly. As this happened, there was a dilemma emerging for actors engaged in public administration.

Within the SSIA, I have argued, this trend of proliferating efficiency and economy was evident. Beginning in 2005, but essentially increasing during 2007 and 2008, the use of business processes became an essential part of exerting control within the agency. Perceived as a technique for control exertion, the business processes revolved around the construction of rules and procedures, instigated in order constrain administrators handling citizens' applications. By itself, however, the business processes were really just another way of exerting behaviour control in the form that we commonly refer to as bureaucratic control. The proliferation of efficiency and economy, as such, became evident when the The Calculation was constructed and used within the agency.

The Calculation was at first instigated in order to gain information and knowledge about the processes concerned with handling citizens' applications. Times were postulated, calculated, and adjusted in order to make predictability and controllability accomplishable. But as this work was intensified, and ultimately connected to the resource allocation process, instances of efficiency and economy were put in focus more and more. The culmination, as I presented it in chapter four, concerning this proliferation was during the budgetary process for the coming year 2009.

On the one hand actors engaged in public administration within the agency were charged the tasks of exerting control that made administrators handling

citizens' applications align their behaviour with the business process. On the other hand, allocated resources affected by The Calculation did not reach the theoretical levels established within the business process. In other words, actors engaged in public administration were essentially faced with a dilemma of exerting control that made others align their behaviour to rules and procedures or to the restraints created by the diminishing resources.

Some actors engaged in public administration engaged in confrontation as they faced this dilemma. They argued that as they did not receive sufficient amounts of resources, outputs would suffer. Such forms of confrontation were deemed as 'poor management' by senior actors engaged at the time.

Evaluations of conducts within the operative parts of the organisation – the Customer Meeting Organisation (CMO) – primarily focused the amount of handled citizens' applications together with whether citizens received their reimbursements on time. The message that was being sent through the organisation at the time was one of not caring how things are done; just make sure that reimbursements reach the citizens.

In the case of the SSIA, then, the use of The Calculation as means for resource allocation and control exertion manifested the proliferation of efficiency and economy. And through this proliferation, actors engaged in public administration faced a dilemma of either adhering to rules and procedures – essentially the legislation – or the allocated resources.

However, and quite interesting concerning the posited question in this dissertation, when asked about this dilemma, there was a disagreement concerning the polarisation of tasks inherent in public administration. That is, when I explored instances of what I referred to as 'good administration', I also posited a number of questions regarding the dilemma in choosing between different activities. This finding together with the seemingly coherent agreement regarding activities deemed as 'good administration' made me draw the conclusion that actors engaged in public administration disagree with the dilemma being present in the activities they undertake.

One important conclusion from this is that even though there are evidence concerning the presence of a conceptual dilemma associated with the conjoined E's and the techniques for control exertion, actors seem not to acknowledge it. What is understood to be a dilemma from a theoretical and conceptual perspective seems to be disentangled when faced empirically. I will return to this shortly. But before that I will discuss actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration.

8.2.2 Actors' taken-for-granted assumptions

Actors' taken-for-granted assumptions are central in this dissertation (if nothing else, the subtitle is indicative of this). I spent a large part of chapter two elaborating how I understand such assumptions to be constructed among actors. One of the key elements progressed in that chapter was that they are transformed from individual memory traces to patterns of situated practice. I refer to these practices as behavioural alignments with social systems.

In order for me to explore how actors manifest such practices, there was need for a careful modelling. This was where Giddens (1984) Structuration Theory came in. By drawing on (1) structures and (2) the notion of society being affected by multiple social systems, I argued that public administration could be understood as underpinned by two dominant social systems.

In chapter three I qualified this assertion and progressed a framework concerning manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions as inherent in public administration. These manifestations were categorised according to meanings, sanctions, and powers on the one hand and in relation to the social systems of Management and Civil Service on the other hand.

When engaging actors in dialogue revolving their roles and situations as public administrators within the SSIA, it became possible to scrutinise manifestations concerning their taken-for-granted assumptions. Of course, this was a method approach of approximation, meaning that the observations I was able to make concerned actors' rationalisations and discussions, not their taken-for-granted assumptions as such. This means that my inferences surrounding actors' taken-for-granted assumptions are just that: inferences.

Actors' enactment of social systems

As I have argued in detail in chapters two and three, actors' taken-for-granted assumptions gain meanings, sanctions, and powers from the social system currently dominating the context. From a conceptual perspective, I have argued that the social systems of Management and Civil Service are such systems within contemporary public administration.

I argued that manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in this respect referred to a managerialist discourse and a construction of the Manager. I furthermore argued that the use of a welfarist discourse and a construction of the Civil Servant were present. Together these discourses and symbols caused instances of presenting actors with meanings inherent in public admin-

istration. This is an indication of the presence of the two dominant social systems discussed in chapter three.

The argument that these discourses and symbols could be understood as referring to different contexts when enacted is an important finding in this dissertation. The separation of on the one hand an internal perspective and on the other hand an external perspective enables actors to compartmentalise the constructed symbols. The construction of the Manager was evident as actors began discussing issues concerning organising and exerting control revolving instance of handling citizens' applications. The construction of the Civil Servant, on the other hand, was evident as discussions and rationalisations touched upon topics concerning upholding the welfare state and serving citizens. I will come back to the importance of the separation of perspectives in the following section.

In regards of sanctions, I found that actors enacted four distinct tacit rules, which in turn could be found to associate with the two separated perspectives: Autonomy and Conformity within the internal perspective whereas Legality and Welfare were associated with the external perspective. This was somewhat unexpected as it to some extent proves that the social systems are intertwined and not distinctly separated.

The manifestations of sanctions concerning Autonomy and Legality are conceptually found to associate with the social system of Management. Conformity and Welfare, however, are more clearly associated with the social system of Civil Service. This means that there are manifestations conceptually inherent in both social systems found to provide sanctions within the separated perspectives. In other words, manifestations drawn from sanctions inherent in Civil Service are enacted to underpin meanings associated with the Manager and vice versa.

A similar pattern can be argued to exist as actors draw on powers in relation to the above mentioned meanings and sanctions. I have presented how relational and functional approaches as well as personal and hierarchical loyalties have been identified in participants' dialogues. The relational approach together with a personal loyalty is associated with the construction of the Manager, wherein the individuals are in focus. The functional approach and hierarchical loyalty is, however, primarily associated with the construction of the Civil Servant.

The findings of actors' enactment of meanings, sanctions, and powers as reinforcing one another suggests that the internal and external perspectives are not an issue that actors reflect upon. It does not seem as if actors make a conscious separation between the two perspectives as they engage in dialogue with

other actors. Actors' enactments of perspectives are instead associated with the context in which they are engaged.

For actors positioned as public administrators within the SSIA there is no distinct separation between the social systems of Management and Civil Service. The fact that I have found that manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions conceptually situated within Management are enacted in order to provide sanction to e.g. the symbolic construction of the Civil Servant suggests that actors have internalised the social systems. By this I mean that although Management is commonly portrayed as a challenger to Civil Service, the findings suggest that they are equally endorsed on an actor level. That is, we can no longer claim the social system of Management to be new or a challenger to what we have previously understood to be representative of public administration.

The ease by which the Manager was constructed within dialogues furthermore suggests that actors' taken-for-granted assumptions have been complemented by the social system of Management. I state complemented, as it is not a matter of substitution. As I argue in the empirical analyses above, taken-for-granted assumptions inherent within Civil Service are still enacted through dialogue. This means that although the previous (supposed) dominance of Civil Service has been thwarted, there is still viability in the manifested meanings and sanctions inherent within taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration.

Path-dependency essentially states that anything new that actor perceives will be understood from the historical context from which s/he comes. That is, history matters. By acknowledging that Civil Service precedes Management temporally within public administration, the interdependence of the two becomes noticeable. To understand manifestations of Management within public administration, actors need to understand Civil Service. On the other hand, understanding Civil Service in contemporary public administration means understanding Management. For actors, however, this theoretical separation means little. For them, making sense is everything.

8.2.3 Making sense of dilemma(s)

So far in this section, I have elaborated on the presence of dilemmas as an effect of a continuous economification within the public sector, leading to the proliferation of efficiency and economy in public administration. I argued that this was evident in the implementation and use of business processes together with

The Calculation within the SSIA. In addition, I argued that the increased focus on quantifiable and measurable targets progressed the proliferation of efficiency and economy as the primary E's within the agency.

I have furthermore discussed manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration. This discussion resonated against the theoretical discussion presented in chapters two and three, wherein I argue for the presence of Management and Civil Service as dominating social systems in public administration.

In this section I will draw on these two previous discussions in order to respond to the posited question from chapter one: how do actors engaged in public administration make sense of the dilemma(s) they face? In order to close in on a feasible answer to this question, I need to discuss two areas. Firstly, understandings related to actors' rejection of dilemma despite its conceptual presence. Secondly, understandings related to the compartmentalisation of interdependent perspectives.

Making sense through rejection and acceptance

The first area that needs to be discussed concerns actors' rejection of dilemma, or rather actors' disagreement with statements about the polarisation of certain activities inherent in public administration: referred by me as 'good administration'.

As I challenged actors with statements concerning certain activities being polarised and thus inherently dilemmatic – not to say problematic – when engage in, I was met with disagreement. This meant e.g. a disagreement to the statement that an extensive obligation concerning investigation of citizens' applications was polarised with increasing put through of citizens' applications. In other words, the choice between – in this specific statement – effectiveness and efficiency was disagreed upon. Together with the fact that these two instances were considered important parts of 'good administration', there emerged a situation wherein actors seemed to suggest that all activities were import and, furthermore, understood as obtainable.

The coherence in context of which activities were deemed as 'good administration', was found to be quite stable within the agency. A number of activities were found to relate to different E's, but there was no clear evidence of whether activities associated with efficiency and economy were deemed as better in public administration. That is, 'good administration' could not be related to only one conjoined set of E's, but was rather true for all four E's.

The disagreement regarding polarisation – the rejection of dilemma – together with the relative stability in terms of public administrative activities is

indicative of an acceptability of techniques associated with the public as well as the private for-profit sector. That is, actors engaged in public administration seems to readily accept that organising and exerting control have been influenced by techniques previously found within the private for-profit sector. It furthermore indicates an acceptance of the coexistence of techniques commonly found with the public sector as well as the private for-profit sector.

This can furthermore be connected to my findings relating to a discrepancy of perceived responsibilities within the agency. As I presented in chapter six, actors engaged as public administrators within the agency perceived to be more responsible for instances relating to equity as compared to economy. I argued that this finding was somewhat surprising, as earlier findings had indicated that these actors actively searched for shortcuts in the administrative processes in order to reduce costs. They did this in order to align their units' performance with the boundaries created by the financial requirements imposed through the resource allocation process. I thus wondered why it was that public administrators would resign in the face of such demands when not perceiving to be responsible for those instances.

One plausible explanation to this may lie in the acceptance of different techniques together with the tacit rules of Conformity discussed extensively above. I argued that as actors engaged in activities associated with an internal perspective – that is, issues associating with organising and control exertion – they drew on sanctions of Autonomy and Conformity. Actors referred to these as being "brave" or "obedient", wherein bravery was associated with demanding enough discretion to meet the expectations posited within the agency.

It was furthermore implied that in order to be brave one had to present performance levels that were deemed as good by other instances within the agency. In this respect, performance was inevitably evaluated through quantified measures. In short, then, actors were able to be brave and move outside of some of the weaker boundaries when they delivered good results. From this backdrop it becomes possible to approach the search for shortcuts in order to align units' behaviour with the financial requirements although actors perceived not to be responsible for these instances. It can be understood as a means by which later demands regarding discretion gets approval.

Another important part of the internal perspective refers to the meanings inherent in the construction of the Manager: adaptability. That is, being adaptable infused the construction of the Manager within the internal perspective with substantive meaning. Aligning behaviour with instance of which they real-

ly do not perceive to be responsible thus can be reinterpreted as adaptability, giving strength to the symbols they continuously construct.

From this perspective, the rejection of dilemma is really an approach – although unconsciously enacted – by which meanings and sanctions are enacted in order to make sense of the situation wherein actors engaged in public administration exist. That is, by drawing on meanings and sanctions identified within the internal perspective instances that I have deemed to be – conceptual – instances of dilemma are made sense of.

Making sense through compartmentalising interdependent perspectives

An important finding that I presented in chapter seven referred to instances wherein actors separated between internal and external perspectives. The findings suggest an important theoretical implication that needs attention.

From a theoretical stance the implementation of private for-profit techniques in public administration – what I have referred to as the imposition of management – caused instances for actors to create new meaning as previous social systems proved insufficient. In other words, the meanings, sanctions, and powers that manifested actors' taken-for-granted assumptions prior to the reforms of the 1970's and 1980's, was from a theoretical stances insufficient. They failed to present actors with a basis for making sense of the situations wherein actors engaged in public administration existed.

Although this perhaps was the case as reforms begun – back in the day – the findings that I have presented suggest a different process for making sense. Rather than finding that actors engaged in public administration enacts e.g. the social system of Management in order to make sense of the proliferation of efficiency and economy, I found that the separation of perspectives was used for this purpose.

As actors enact the internal perspective, issues concerning organising and exerting control come in focus. Perhaps due to the dominance and power of the reforms discussed in chapter one, the social system of Management dominates this perspective. Actors engage in talk and action concerning instances of organising and control by freely adopting a discourse primarily associated with the private for-profit sector. As I have described in chapter three, the social system of Management carries a greater focus on efficiency and economy, why the internal perspective primarily focuses on these.

As actors, on the other hand, enact the external perspective, issues revolving upholding the welfare state and taking care of citizens come in focus. This perspective is dominated by the social system of Civil Service, which we commonly refer to as governing the public sector. As actors enact the external per-

spective they do so through a welfarist discourse that is distinctly different from that used within the internal perspective: the managerialist discourse. I have furthermore argued – in chapter three – that the social system of Civil Service carries greater focus on effectiveness and equity, and thus I deem the external perspective to resonate this.

Although there are indications of mixing the two social systems – primarily when it comes to enacted sanctions – actors separate and compartmentalise them to a great extent. By this I mean that issues relating to the two perspectives are kept apart, making it easier for actors to rationalise different behaviours.

Actors' enactment of an internal perspective on the one hand and an external perspective on the other hand successfully provides instances of making sense to different activities: activities that actors engaged in public administration by necessity need to undertake. The separation and compartmentalisation of the perspectives make it possible to discuss issues concerning cost reductions or increased productivity during one instance only to turn attention to the needs for taking care of citizens in others. The interchangeable construction and use of the Manager and the Civil Servant, rationalises the activities that the public administrator needs to engage in.

This means that it is partly due to actors' ability to separate and compartmentalise the two perspectives that they can make sense of their situations. The separation indicates that dilemmas are reduced on an actor level, as the issues instigating the dilemma inherently associate with different perspectives. Or rather, their importance is differently weighed within the two perspectives. Instances of efficiency and economy are important when making sense within the internal perspective, whereas effectiveness and equity are important within the external perspective.

These findings resonate well against previous research discussing different elements in tradition (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 268) and that actors are bearers of institutionalised identities (Delmestri, 2006, p. 1518). The concept of compartmentalisation that I progress in this dissertation entails the ability to separate seemingly incompatible taken-for-granted assumptions, so that the actor may make sense of its social reality. The concept is associated with previous work such as that of actors' ability to switch (DiMaggio, 1997) or enable ambidexterity (Jarzabkowski et al., 2013) in their institutional environments.

One could be tempted to make the conjecture that some actors are more likely than others to adopt one of the mentioned perspectives when making sense. This is, however, nothing that can be supported by the findings present-

ed in this dissertation. It should furthermore be noted that these findings might not have any validity among administrators handling citizens' applications. It may well be the case that among such actors, the compartmentalisation is not present. Such a finding would be indicative of a troublesome presence of dilemmatic position.

Concluding remarks

In this section I have sketched out two explanations regarding how actors engaged in public administration make sense of dilemmas they face: (1) by rejecting the conceptual premise of dilemma and (2) by compartmentalising enacted perspectives.

The rejection of dilemma was explained both by the valuation of 'good administration' as well as the discrepancy in perceived responsibilities and the occurrence of searching for shortcuts when handling citizens' applications. Rather than accepting dilemma, actors engaged in public administration accepted the premises under which they were to engage. Accepting that they sometimes needed to conform to restrictions enabled the opportunity for demanding discretion in other contexts.

I furthermore argued that actors engaged in public administration could make sense of dilemmas as they compartmentalise interdependent perspectives. The internal and external perspectives each associate differently with the social systems that I argue dominate public administration: Management and Civil Service. The conjoined sets of E's – efficiency and economy on the one hand and effectiveness and equity on the other hand – associate with the social systems, and thus with the two enacted perspectives.

The internal perspective concerns instances of organising and exerting control, wherein increasing efficiency through resource reduction are central. The external perspective, however, concerns instances of welfare and taking care of citizens, wherein effectiveness and equity are central. By separating and compartmentalising the perspectives, the potentially dilemmatic position is made sense of.

In the next section I will elaborate how these findings relate to previous research and what it is that I can say that we know now, that we did not before.

8.3 What do we know now that we did not before?

From where I stand it is important to vindicate the amount of resources used for a study of this size. Something has to be given back to the society, so to speak, which has provided me with this opportunity. The dissertation that you hold in your hand can be understood as an important instalment in that respect. The aim of this penultimate section is to discuss that which I can say to know now that I did not before. In short, what is provides to my society?

This dissertation is positioned – academically – in the research fields of public administration as well as institutional theory. The combination of these two fields together with the question of how actors make sense of dilemmas that they face when engaged in public administration provide new and important insights. In sections 8.2.3 above I argued that this process could be understood as (1) the rejection of premises for dilemma and (2) the compartmentalisation of interdependent perspectives.

The empirical case – the SSIA – provided a descriptive case of change of public administration within the public sector. More so, it provided insights into the reactions of changing organisation and practices revolving control exertion. These changes can be understood to resonate against a backdrop of more than thirty years of reforms, targeting the arguable inefficiency inherent in public administration. As such, the empirical case provides detailed stories about reactions to and alignment with such reforms.

Although not presented as one so far, the progressed and modelled framework presented in chapter three is an important contribution. By making use of institutional theory as well as Structuration Theory (Giddens, 1984), I was able to describe manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions schematically. The framework was presented in general terms in chapter two (see table 2.1) and made more explicit in chapter three (see table 3.1). This framework was thereafter slightly altered in chapter seven (see table 7.1) wherein actors' engagement in dialogue played an intricate part. This conceptual – and empirically adjusted – framework opened up for a wider understanding concerning how actors engaged in public administration manifested taken-for-granted assumptions.

As I have discussed – repeatedly – in the above empirical analyses and conclusions, Management and Civil Service should be understood as different social systems, essentially entailing different taken-for-granted assumptions concerning what constitutes e.g. 'good administration'. Through such a conceptu-

alisation, it became possible to understand how actors make sense of their situation when engaged in public administration.

What this study primarily offers is a deeper understanding concerning actors' enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions, understood as compartmentalised in two different perspectives, which provided opportunities for making sense of dilemmas. The discursively constructed symbol of the Manager and the Civil Servant, as inherent in these perspectives, manifests such taken-for-granted assumptions within public administration. Each perspective – each constructed symbol – helped actors with infusing their roles with meanings, sanctions, and powers.

8.3.1 Rejecting hybridization

Hybridization (cf. Kurunmäki, 2004; Kurunmäki & Miller, 2006, 2011) is a concept that has come to take more and more place in the academic debate during the last decade. Essentially, the concept entails an conjecture that as different practices and institutional logics have been implemented in context wherein there already exist strong practices or institutions, the two become merged into something new: a hybrid.

Most research adhering to the concept of hybridisation has been undertaken within the area of professionals such as e.g. the medical profession (Östergren & Sahlin-Andersson, 1998; Kurunmäki, 2004; Östergren, 2009), and refers to the implementation of managerial techniques – or logics – into a context wherein professional standards already dominate. As such, actors within these contexts adopt the new practices and techniques and thereafter align their behaviours accordingly: leading to the conjecture that it is about hybridisation.

The main problem concerning the concept of hybridisation, however, is the biological metaphors inherent in the construction. It suggests that the merger of two things lead – inevitably – to the emergence of something entirely different: a new species or as would be the case in the social sciences, a new practice. These practices should entail entirely different and new characteristics, which has not been observed previously. Merely adopting new manners in which we think, talk, or act that aligns with already existing practices is not, I argue, signs of hybridization.

In the above discussion, I have argued that actors engaged in public administration make sense of their situations partly by rejecting the premises of dilemma and furthermore by separating and compartmentalising different perspectives. Relating to the latter issue, I furthermore argued that the social sys-

tems of Management and Civil Service associated differently depending on the enacted perspective.

The enactment of the two perspectives – the internal and external perspectives – together with the association regarding the social systems of Management and Civil Service suggests that what I have observed here is not a hybridisation, but rather coexistence. This means that rather than making conjectures regarding the emergence of new – hybridized – social systems, I maintain the stance regarding Management and Civil Service as separated, enacted in different contexts in order to make sense of social realities.

This means that rather than accepting that the mixing of different institutions (Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006) or practices (Kurunmäki, 2004) causes instance of hybridisation, the findings aligns more with the ideas about complementary attitudes (Agevall & Jenner, 2006, 2007, 2008) or institutional ambidexterity (Jarzabkowski et al., 2013). These approaches essentially claim that actors may accept the existence of different stances without necessarily accepting that they are contradicting or oppositional, but rather coexisting.

8.3.2 Institutional theory

Theoretically, I have engaged in an exploration of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. Such taken-for-granted assumptions are theoretically associated with institutional theory: more specifically Original Institutional Economics (OIE). In this section I will elaborate on how the above findings relate to our previous understandings of institutions.

This dissertation contains studies in which the actor is kept in focus from a methods perspective. This means that I have engaged in studying the manner in which actors engaged in public administration discusses and make sense of different stances and understandings about their situations within the public sector. I have argued that this, as such, has enabled me to explore manifestations in relations to actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. Focusing on such manifestations rather than e.g. rules and routines (cf. Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Burns & Scapens, 2000) within the agency, enabled me to approach situated practices within the agency.

My conclusion that actors compartmentalise interdependent perspectives when engaged in public administration – the internal and external perspectives – can be understood to be unconscious mechanisms for handling inconsistent and dilemmatic institutions. It implies that new and emerging systems entailing

new taken-for-granted assumptions can emerge without displacing earlier understandings. That is, even though actors' understandings of how public administration is undertaken may be subjected to change, previous understandings – actors' taken-for-granted assumptions – still carry strength (cf. Burns, 2000; Dillard, Rigsby, & Goodman, 2004).

The above analysis and findings have furthermore given strength to the understanding that societies exist and progress in the intersection of multiple social systems (Giddens, 1984). Within certain seemingly coherent contexts, such as that of engaging in public administration, there seem to be different social systems of taken-for-granted assumptions presenting actors with instances of meaning, sanctions, and powers. I have chosen to define the two dominating social systems within public administration as Management and Civil Service.

The emergence of taken-for-granted assumptions has previously been argued to be reactions to unsustainable understandings concerning the activities undertaken within an organisation (cf. Burns & Baldvindsdottir, 2005). I do not challenge this assertion, but rather add that such emerging taken-for-granted assumptions may be internalised on an actor level, providing continuous occurrence of making sense. After time they stop being 'emergent' and should really be understood as institutionalised or taken-for-granted.

My conclusion concerning the compartmentalisation of interdependent perspectives can be understood to strengthen this theoretical stance. That is, actors continuously make use of multiple taken-for-granted assumptions when making sense of their social reality (cf. Burns, 2000; Delmestri, 2006; Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006; Zilber, 2011; Jarzabkowski et al., 2013).

Finally, the presence of multiple social systems may prove important for the continuing debate concerning whether actors can free themselves from the restraints posited by taken-for-granted assumptions they have. After all, if something is taken-for-granted, then our understandings about these phenomena are enacted unconsciously. Several actors have presented tentative solutions to this intricacy revolving nested systems (Bush, 1987), institutional contradictions (Seo & Creed, 2002) or deliberation (Fleetwood, 2008).

The presence of multiple systems, however, allows actors to move in and out of contexts, connecting different taken-for-granted assumptions with instances of sense as they go along. Although this, too, is an unconscious enactment, the idea of multiple taken-for-granted assumptions allows actors to enact them as they see fit. This enables actors to rationalise and make sense of their institutional environment in a manner that a single social system does not.

8.3.3 Structuration Theory

In chapter two, I argued that Giddens' (1984) Structuration Theory has previously been used in order to take more of an internal or micro-perspective when advocating studies of how e.g. practice (Roberts & Scapens, 1985; Macintosh & Scapens, 1990; Scapens & Macintosh, 1996; Barley & Tolbert, 1997) and routines (Burns & Scapens, 2000; van der Steen, 2007) have become established and taken-for-granted within organisations. I have made use of Structuration Theory in order to construct a holistic approach towards understanding actors' enactment of taken-for-granted assumptions in public administration.

Structuration Theory has been used quite substantially since it was progressed by Giddens during the late 1970's and 1980's (1976, 1979, 1984): especially within the field of management accounting (cf. Englund, Gerdin, & Burns, 2011 for an extended review of this literature). Several attempts of joining Structuration Theory with institutional theories have been undertaken (Macintosh & Daft, 1987; Macintosh & Scapens, 1990; Whittington, 1992; Scapens & Macintosh, 1996; Barley & Tolbert, 1997; Burns & Scapens, 2000; Siti-Nabiha & Scapens, 2005) all essentially arguing that such a joining enables organisational as well as actor analyses.

I have joined this discussion when arguing that the use of OIE and Structuration Theory may prove a fruitful combination (see chapter two). I argued that whereas institutional theory provided an instance of understanding taken-for-granted assumptions from an actor perspective, Structuration Theory enabled a structural and analytical approach for identifying their manifestations. This was undertaken by analytically separating meanings, sanctions, and powers as structures inherent in social systems.

The progressed framework in chapter three (see table 3.1) and the elaborated framework in chapter seven (see table 7.5) contain manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions, categorised in relation to meanings, sanction, and powers. The integration of an agency as well as a structural perspective enabled this conceptual categorisation. Although the categorisation was undertaken as a methods approach for understanding manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions, it can furthermore be understood as an important theoretical contribution.

Empirically, I have engaged in an exploration of manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. I have argued that these are to be understood as situated practices, which actors enact when aligning behaviour with social systems dominating certain contexts. Englund and Gerdin (2008) argue that we

must take care not to conflate action with structures. This means that we need to maintain a separation between that which is situated in time and space and that that is not. In other words, situated practice – manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions – need to be separated from the non-situated structures.

By making use of focus groups in order to explore actors' engagement in dialogue surrounding their roles in public administration, I argue that what are said by actors – by extension – can be interpreted as the structures on which they draw. That is, by scrutinising what is said, when it is said, and how it is said, it becomes possible to make inferences about the non-situated structures – i.e. the memory traces – actors make use of when engaging in dialogue.

Another important aspect that the use of Structuration Theory enabled was the presence of multiple social systems. By drawing on these ideas, it became possible to conceptually construct the social systems of Management and Civil Service, which are absolutely central in this dissertation. These social systems represent different manners in which actors can make sense of the social reality in which they exist. That is, by drawing on distinctly different instances of meanings, sanctions, and powers; actors are able to rationalise differences even though they both occur within a given context.

By joining institutional theory with Structuration Theory, I have progressed the idea that differing social systems can be understood as entailing distinctly different taken-for-granted assumptions. As they become manifested, actors are able to use these instances of meanings, sanctions, and powers. Furthermore, and this is in line with Structuration Theory, a society is commonly consistent of several such social systems, whereby actors – by necessity – enacts multiple social systems depending on context.

By accepting the plurality regarding social systems, and joining this with understandings of taken-for-granted assumptions within a context of public administration, I argue that valuable insights into the social reality of actors within the public sector have emerged. The progressed framework that is of a general character (see table 2.1) should prove to be useful when conducting analyses within other – essentially different – contexts as that present in this dissertation.

8.3.4 Opportunities for future research

This dissertation is nearing its end. But before that happens, and you turn the final page, I want to take the opportunity to mention a couple of possibilities

for future research. These potential topics primarily come from emerging questions as the empirical analyses presented above have been completed: questions that did not lie within the scope of this dissertation but nevertheless deserve attention.

I have focused on the exploration of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions within the public sector. More specifically, I have engaged in studying manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions from the backdrop of dominating social systems within public administration. Empirically, however, I have focused on actors employed within the SSIA, meaning that I can *ipso facto* only say that I know something about manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions within this specific organisation. More specifically, I have focused on the manner in which actors employed as public administrators – having a 'managerial' responsibility – enact taken-for-granted assumptions. This means that the findings cannot explain the process of making sense that e.g. administrators handling citizens' applications undertake. Further studies should be undertaken in this respect.

There are perfectly reasonable arguments underpinning my demarcation to the SSIA (I discussed these in section 1.5 above). But even though the SSIA is an integral part of the Swedish welfare state, it would be quite interesting to study whether actors' rejection of dilemmas and compartmentalisation of interdependent perspectives can be identified within other parts of the public sector. In other words, can the findings for making sense of dilemmas be found within other governmental instances, or are the findings here isolated to actors within the SSIA?

Another area of interesting research that this dissertation should sparkle is to study if, and in that case how, the enactment and separation of the two perspectives – the internal and external perspectives – affects practice within the organisation. The link is ever present. As I argue in chapter two, taken-for-granted assumptions are transformed into situated practices. One question that especially arises is the impact that dominant discourses have on administrators' ability to make decisions concerning citizens' case applications. Does it have any real effect on the manner in which case applications are rejected or approved based on the manner in which the two perspectives are enacted?

There are a number of additional analyses that can be made in respect to actors' taken-for-granted assumptions. In this dissertation I have focused on how actors engaged in public administration enact taken-for-granted assumptions associated within the social systems of Management and Civil Service in order to make sense of certain dilemmas. Similar analyses could in the future

studies undertake e.g. gender, cultural, and class perspectives. Such analysis could provide us with greater insights in contemporary public sectors as well as public administration.

8.4 What should we do about it?

Research undertaken within the social sciences is traditionally vague when it comes to taking normative stances. There are of course good exemptions, such as e.g. the work conducted by Lundquist (cf. 1993, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001), which have had a great impact within a Swedish context. In this final section I will respond to the question of what we should do now that we know the things I have presented above. In a way, the thoughts I progress here are just that: thoughts.

Regarding the presence of social systems dominating public administration, I have above argued that Management and Civil Service are two of these. Of course, these are social constructions, sketched out in order for us to understand what is happening within public administration today. But they have helped me in schematising how different manifestations of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions that are likely to govern the manner in which we talk and act when engaged in public administration.

But the question is what should we do about this? Some would argue that the economification and imposing managerial techniques in public administration jeopardises not only the specificities of the public sector, but essentially democracy, as we know it. These persons probably argue that we need to rid public administration of all forms of management in order to safeguard that which we think is the central parts of public administration.

I think this is a rather naïve stance, as it would reject the path-dependency that we all are subjected to. Rather than such a stance, I would argue that actors within contemporary agencies has a dire need to enact different taken-for-granted assumptions depending on context as they engage in public administration. In order to govern public administration in a manner that adheres to the four E's, taken-for-granted assumptions associated with Management and Civil Service is needed.

In relation to this, there has been a continuous exploration and scrutinising concerning the roles that actors engaged in public administration takes. This is especially true in the wake of such reforms that I have discussed in chapter one. One example of this is where Lundquist (1993) posits the question of

whether these actors are managers *or* civil servants. His answer to this question is that depending on context, the activities undertaken, and the manner of governmental agency actors may assume the roles of being either or.

Such a position is quite strange, as it rejects the idea that actors are able to uphold several roles simultaneously. The presence of multiple social systems enables actors to partake in different contexts and know what kind of behaviour is regarded as good instantly. This is not about 'playing' different parts, but about internalising essentially differing taken-for-granted assumptions that inherently makes sense to the context wherein they are enacted. Whittington (1992, p. 707) writes that:

> […] managers are not only managers, but may also be patriarchs, patriots and professionals, capable at work of drawing resources and inspiration from all of their social identities.

As actors within a society, we align behaviours and understandings with dominating social systems as long as these provide us with some form of sense. We are highly capable in regards of shifting between different social systems depending on context, but likewise to enact them simultaneously if needed. As Whittington hints in the above quote, the complexity of our social reality requires us to maintain these roles continuously, why we embody several different social systems at once.

One implication of this is that research focusing on reforms within the public generally and within public administration specifically need to stop positing questions of whether actors have become 'managers'. Although reforms directed towards public administration aim at changing the manner in which actors behave, we as researchers need to acknowledge the power of path-dependency as well as actors' capability to cope with multiple understandings.

Rather than proclaiming that actors have shifted from one role to another – from Civil Servants to Managers – we should embrace the assertion made here, that they are able to embody several roles continuously. This carries impact not only on how we come to understand the complexity of social reality, but furthermore how we construct our future research questions. It is from this theoretical backdrop – supported by the empirical analyses – which we should understand actors engaged in public administration to be both Managers and Civil Servants.

9 References

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10 Appendix – Survey

2010-11-08

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Den här enkäten syftar till att förstå hur chefer inom svensk statsförvaltningen upplever sin egen möjlighet att styra verksamheter och hur andras styrning påverkar dessa möjligheter. Enkäten börjar med ett par bakgrundsfrågor och fortsätter därefter med en rad påståenden. Markera ett alternativ till varje fråga.

1	Kön:	☐ Kvinna ☐ Man
2	Vilket år är du född?	19_____
3	Vilket år började du arbeta på Försäkringskassan?	19_____
4	Vilket år tillträdde du din nuvarande tjänst?	19_____
5	Vad har du för tjänst idag?	☐ Handläggare ☐ Enhetschef ☐ Områdeschef/Platschef ☐ Annan: _____
6	Vad hade du för tjänst före din nuvarande tjänst?	☐ Handläggare ☐ Enhetschef ☐ Områdeschef/Platschef ☐ Annan: _____
7	Inom vilken kundkanal arbetar du idag?	☐ Kundcenter ☐ Lokalt Försäkringscenter ☐ Nationellt Försäkringscenter ☐ Annan: _____
8	Vad har du för utbildning?	☐ Grundskola ☐ Gymnasieexamen ☐ Högskoleexamen ☐ Kandidatexamen ☐ Magisterexamen ☐ Annan: _____
9	Hur många direkt underställda chefer och/eller handläggare har du chefsansvar för?	_____ personer

Frågorna 10a-14f berör förutsättningarna för dig som chef att styra verksamheten. Gradera påståendena mellan 1 till 5, där 1 = instämmer inte alls och 5 = instämmer helt och hållet.

								Vet ej
10a	Jag har tillräckligt med detaljkunskaper i sakfrågor för att själv kunna handlägga ärenden.	1☐	☐	☐	☐	☐5		☐
10b	Hur handläggningen ska utföras bestäms av andra än mig.	1☐	☐	☐	☐	☐5		☐
10c	Jag arbetar med bedömning av att handläggningen sker likartat inom enheten.	1☐	☐	☐	☐	☐5		☐

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10d	Ärendeslagen som handläggs inom min enhet är svårbedömda.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10e	Informella möten med min personal är viktigt för att nå våra uppsatta mål.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10f	Jag har stora möjligheter att påverka min personals arbetsinsatser.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10g	Kalkylen är viktig för att nå våra uppsatta mål.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10h	Processkartan är viktig för att nå våra uppsatta mål.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10i	Jag kan påverka hur Kalkylerna konstrueras.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10j	Jag kan påverka hur Processkartorna konstrueras.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10k	Jag läser alltid de rekommendationer som handläggare inom min enhet ska följa.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10l	Jag har tillräckligt med detaljkunskap i sakfrågor för att kunna bedöma handläggning.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10m	Jag kan påverka hur handläggning ska utföras inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
10n	Det är Specialisten som bedömer att handläggningen sker likartat inom enheten.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□

	Som chef använder jag Kalkylerna för att: **(1 till 5, där 1 = instämmer inte alls och 5 = instämmer helt och hållet)**						*Vet ej*
11a	Tillsammans med min personal diskutera deras prestationer.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
11b	Sätta prestationsmål för personalen inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
11c	Motivera personalen inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
11d	Påverka hur handläggningen utförs inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
11e	Fördela ekonomiska resurser inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
11f	Förändra målen för verksamheten inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□

	Som chef använder jag Processkartorna för att: **(1 till 5, där 1 = instämmer inte alls och 5 = instämmer helt och hållet)**						*Vet ej*
12a	Tillsammans med min personal diskutera deras prestationer.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
12b	Sätta prestationsmål för personalen inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
12c	Motivera personalen inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
12d	Påverka hur handläggningen utförs inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
12e	Fördela ekonomiska resurser inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
12f	Förändra målen för verksamheten inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□

	Som chef använder jag följande mått: **(1 till 5, där 1 = instämmer inte alls och 5 = instämmer helt och hållet)**						*Vet ej*
13a	Faktiska kostnader relaterat till budget.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
13b	Kundnöjdheten för de ärenden som handläggs vid enheten.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□

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13c	Handläggningstid per ärende.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
13d	Handläggarnas efterlevnad till processkartan.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
13e	Antal handlagda ärenden per handläggare.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□

Som chef använder jag mätningar (som de i fråga 13a-e) för att:
(1 till 5, där 1 = instämmer inte alls och 5 = instämmer helt och hållet)

							Vet ej
14a	Tillsammans med min personal diskutera deras prestationer.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
14b	Sätta prestationsmål för personalen inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
14c	Motivera personalen inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
14d	Påverka hur handläggningen utförs inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
14e	Fördela ekonomiska resurser inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
14f	Förändra målen för verksamheten inom min enhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□

Frågorna 15a-o fokuserar på vad som påverkar ditt beslutsfattande och möjligheterna att som chef styra verksamheten. Gradera påståendena mellan 1 till 5, där 1 = instämmer inte alls och 5 = instämmer helt och hållet.

							Vet ej
15a	Jag har tillräckligt handlingsutrymme för att nå uppsatta mål.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15b	Jag är beroende av andra enheters prestationer för att nå uppsatta mål.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15c	Jag har ansvar för min enhets ekonomiska prestationer.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15d	Jag har ansvar för att ha tillräckligt med personal för att nå målen.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15e	Jag har ansvar för att min personal har rätt kompetens för arbetet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15f	Jag har ansvar för att handläggningen inom min enhet sker likartat.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15g	Jag har ansvar för att hålla enhetens kostnader inom budget.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15h	Tillsammans med närmaste chef granskar jag enhetens resultat.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15i	Min chef följer kontinuerligt att min enhet når uppsatta mål.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15j	Jag har full befogenhet att fatta beslut gällande kontorsinredning.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15k	Jag har full befogenhet att fatta beslut gällande löpande verksamhet.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15l	Jag har full befogenhet att fatta beslut kring personalens interna utbildning.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15m	Jag har full befogenhet att fatta beslut kring personalens lönesättning.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15n	Jag har full befogenhet att fatta beslut kring personalstyrkans storlek.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□
15 o	Kalkylens beräkningar avspeglar den budget som sedan tilldelas.	1□	□	□	□	□5	□

2010-11-08

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Frågorna 16a-s fokuserar på värderingar som påverkar styrning av offentlig verksamhet. Vi ber dig besvara hur väl dessa påstående stämmer överens med din egen chefsposition. Gradera påståendena mellan 1 till 5, där 1 = instämmer inte alls och 5 = instämmer helt och hållet.

			Vet ej
16a	Handläggare ska uppmanas att följa uppsatta regler för handläggning även om detta resulterar i längre handläggningstider.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16b	Beslut i komplicerade ärenden bör alltid förankras med Specialist eller en annan handläggare.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16c	Vi måste aktivt arbeta med att öka andelen handlagda ärenden per handläggare.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16d	Beslut i ärenden ska ske lika oberoende av vilken handläggare som utför handläggningen.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16e	Genom att kontinuerligt mäta prestationer på handläggar- och chefsnivå kan fler ärenden behandlas.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16f	Att aktivt arbeta med regler för hur arbete ska utföras medför att vi kan arbeta mer effektivt.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16g	En central uppgift i arbetet som chef är att tillgodose att de försäkrade får en legalt korrekt handläggning av sina ärenden.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16h	Våra interna kontroller av handläggningsprocessen måste konstrueras så att de inte motarbetar ökad produktion.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16i	Chefer bör aktivt arbeta med att hålla kostnader på en låg nivå.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16j	Det är otänkbart att vi frångår våra definierade procedurer (ex. Processkartor) vid handläggning.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16k	Chefer måste aktivt arbeta med att hålla mängden obehandlade ärenden till ett minimum.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16l	En detaljerad Processkarta motverkar hög produktivitet i form av handlagda ärenden per handläggare.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16m	Ett viktigt arbete för chefer är att hålla produktionen på en hög nivå.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16n	Det är viktigt att vi kan ge ett snabbt svar till de försäkrade.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16o	Om ett ärende överklagas av den försäkrade, ska omprövningen alltid göras av en annan handläggare än den som tidigare behandlat ärendet.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16p	Handläggare bör uppmuntras att alltid ringa upp den försäkrade i de fall den försäkrade står inför ett avslag.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16q	Genom aktiv personalplanering kan vi öka genomströmningen av ärenden.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16r	Utredningsplikten står ofta i konflikt med ökad produktivitet.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□
16s	Som chef måste man ibland sätta utbetalningar till de försäkrade före vidare utredning av ärendet.	1□ □ □ □ □5	□

Övriga kommentarer eller synpunkter:

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Printed by Media-Tryck | Lund University 2014

During more than 30 years, the public sector has been subjected to increased forms of economification. A general trend of imposing management techniques within public administration has shifted previous understandings of how organising and control should be undertaken. Instances of efficiency and economy have become important, overshadowing instances of effectiveness and equity. As these instances play out within public administration dilemmas emerge, which actors need to make sense of.

In this dissertation, an exploration of actors' taken-for-granted assumptions within the Swedish central government is undertaken. More specifically, actors engaged in public administration within the Swedish Social Insurance Agency (Försäkringskassan) make out the central empirical focus. This dissertation contains open-ended interviews, self-administered surveys, as well as the use of focus groups as methods for continuous exploration.

Taking a theoretical stance within institutional theory, the concept of taken-for-granted assumptions is elaborated and explored in order to challenge prior knowledge of actors' understandings and behavioural alignment. It is argued that such taken-for-granted assumptions align with social systems, dominating certain contexts. Within public administration, these social systems are understood as Management and Civil Service.

It is concluded that dilemmas inherent in public administration are made sense of in two manners. Firstly on the basis of rejecting the premises for dilemma and secondly by compartmentalising internal and external perspectives. The separation of Management from Civil Service enables actors engaged in public administration to understand beliefs and practices within contemporary public administration.

Tom S. Karlsson is a researcher and teacher with the Department of Business Administration at Lund University School of Economics and Management (LUSEM). "Manager and Civil Servant: Exploring actors' taken-for-granted assumptions" is his doctoral dissertation.

LUND UNIVERSITY

School of Economics and Management
ISBN 978-91-7473-979-4