

Public Management of Private Non-Profit Sports Halls

PhD thesis



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FAABORG-MIDTFYN
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Public Management of Private Non-Profit Sports Halls
Offentlig styring af selvejende idrætshaller

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2 Introduction

Sports facilities are not a marginal phenomenon. The latest count for Denmark in 2013 showed the presence of 1494 multifunctional sports halls of more than 800 m², 5128 soccer pitches, 1934 tennis courts and 259 swimming pools along with many other types of sports facilities scattered across the country (Kaas og Mulvad, 2013). In Denmark – just as in other parts of the world – a large part of the population use such sports facilities. Children particularly are large-scale consumers of sports facilities. For example, 50% of all children use multifunctional sports halls of more than 800 m². Even though adults practice sports and other physical activities outdoors to a greater extent, their use of sports facilities is still significant as 13% use a multifunctional sports hall, 16% use other types of sports halls, 15% use a particular type of outdoor pitch and 14% use a gymnastics hall (Laub & Pilgaard, 2012). Further, sports facilities play an important role as a venue for physical education in schools.

In Denmark as in many other western countries sports facilities are either fully or partially funded and operated by the public sector (Bergsgard, Houlihan, Mangset, Nødland, & Rommetvedt, 2007; Bergsgard & Norberg, 2010). Danish municipalities contribute more than 80% of the support for sport from the public sector. Further, a majority of the subsidies from local government to sport are used to subsidise sports facilities (Eichberg & Ibsen, 2012; Ibsen & Seippel, 2010). The support to sports facilities was 3.356 billion DKK (447.5 billion EUR) in 2012, representing 92.1% of the support to sport by local government (Ministry of Culture, 2014).

Against this background the lack of attention to how the public services provided by sports facilities can be improved is surprising. In a way, sports facilities seem to have been a part of an apolitical agenda in which there is a widespread understanding that sport is a public good and hence the public sector should provide sports facilities for as many of the population as possible. It seems to have been possible to pursue such an agenda without assessing different public policies regarding their consequences for the efficient use of resources. National sports organisations and local voluntary sports organisations (VSOs) have also kept considerations of efficiency off the agenda while promoting the need for more facilities, based on the claim that too few facilities are a barrier to increased participation in sport. Perhaps because municipalities have in many instances accepted uncritically their obligation to provide sports facilities, few questions have been asked about how the public sector can best manage and steer different types of sports facilities.

One reason for the reluctance to enter into such discussions might be that many of the sports facilities provided by public funding are used by VSOs and that the politicians are cautious of challenging a sector driven by voluntary efforts. The same reluctance might be the reason for not challenging the large part of the sports facilities which are organised as private non-profit (PNP) facilities, in which the VSOs are deeply intertwined in the board, in the management and often in running parts of the daily operations and activities themselves (Ibsen & Habermann, 2006; Rasmussen, 2012). Similar involvement of voluntary efforts exists in a number of other facilities that accommodate other types of voluntary associations (for example, within culture and arts). In areas with such reliance on voluntary efforts it seems to be a difficult matter to discuss politically whether such units, that is either run by or are dependent on voluntary associations such as VSOs, can and should be steered/managed in accordance with the same principles of efficient use of public resources that are widespread in other parts of the public sector. When one examines how non-profit organisations such as sports facilities are supported few questions have been asked about whether and how they should be managed by the public sector. For example, Lorentzen (2008) concluded that in a Norwegian context:

“support for the infrastructure of the local voluntary non-profit organisations represents the largest expense for the municipalities. That support avoids all types of negotiations and must be seen as a “tacit” or hidden part of the municipalities’ policies targeting voluntary non-profit organisations.” (Lorentzen, 2008, p. 331)

This seems to be the case in the Danish context too. As shown above, the cost of sports facilities is also in the Danish case the majority of the municipalities’ expenses. Also, the legislative framework in Denmark has left it to the municipalities to provide the infrastructure, i.e. the sports facilities, (almost) for free and then it is up to the participants to carry out the activities they prefer (Ottesen & Ibsen, 2000). Hence, as it has been seen as a given that it was the role of the municipality to provide sports facilities, few debates on whether and how the municipalities were to provide sports facilities have been rare. This thesis focuses on bringing such debates of the tacit parts of the policies of municipalities targeting sports facilities into the open to make it possible to make more informed choices when deciding which policies to pursue in the years to come.

Hence, this thesis enters this contested area of how public management of PNP sports facilities, which are based on or reliant on voluntary efforts, is best constructed. The research is based on Denmark, but the findings might also be relevant in other countries in which the public sector funds

sports facilities using similar types of institutional setup. In focus is the PNP organisation which is used to perform a range of different tasks that could also be fulfilled directly by the public sector such as day-care, schools, care homes, cultural centres and sports facilities (Thøgersen, 2012, 2015). But even though organising voluntary efforts is a widely-adopted solution, there is little evidence for the consequences of organising the relationship between different types of PNP organisations, such as the PNP sports hall, and the public sector. This thesis takes its point of departure in examples of how the public administration can organise that relationship via different types of public management and the consequences of such differences for performance. Public management is defined as: “the study and practice of design and operation of arrangements for the provision of public services and executive government” (Hood, 2007). In this context that definition of public management¹ is seen as a point of departure for assessing what happens in the link between the design of different types of public management subsidy schemes targeting PNP sports halls and how those differences influence the performance of PNP sports halls. In order to measure how the performance is influenced, it is also a part of the thesis, which will be further elaborated below, to relate to the concept of “performance management” which is about measuring performance achieved and using that information to improve future performances.

2.1 Public management and private non-profit organisations – an odd couple?

Before proceeding, it is relevant first to consider the relationship between public management and PNP organisations in general. The relationship between voluntary efforts and the public sector is a contentious topic, as it is intertwined with the debate in Denmark on how the public sector can be organised and steered in a manner that offers maximum value for taxpayers (Produktivitetss Kommissionen, 2013, 2014). Given the need to find new solutions in the light of increasing demands on welfare services at the same time that public economies are under pressure, analysts, researchers and politicians increasingly discuss how citizens can be a part of the solution of the welfare challenges ahead. It is argued that a part of the solution is to integrate citizens more directly in the decision processes and also by letting citizens be a part of the implementation process afterwards via, for example, voluntary efforts (Agger & Tortzen, 2015; Mandag Morgen, 2012; Regeringen, 2014; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011). To grasp these tendencies, which can be described as experiments in types of public management other than the classical public management

¹ In Iversen & Cuskelly (2015) we used the term steering for policies targeting sport facilities with the aim of increasing utilisation. It is these policies of steering that with a common denominator in the thesis is labelled as 'public management' and used in accordance with the definition by Hood (2007).

² In the conceptual articles Iversen (2013) and Iversen & Cuskelly (2015) I use normative institutionalism and in the thesis I use the more generic and more widely known term sociological institutionalism. Normative institutionalism is a part of the broader stream of

approaches based on hierarchies and control, new concepts are introduced in the research and practice of public management. For example, the collaborative governance concepts of co-production, co-creation or collaborative innovation are introduced as possible solutions to include citizens more in solving the complex challenges of the public sector and the demands for higher efficiency in a time of scarce resources (Mandag Morgen, 2012; Nørgaard, 2014; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011).

Even though the collaborative approaches are argued to be novel, these approaches share central traits of the arguments for using PNP organisations when providing public services. PNP organisations have been a widespread phenomenon ever since the middle of the nineteenth century (Haberman & Ibsen, 2006) and the experiences of creating policies targeting them, and how they run their daily operations, might therefore inform how policies and research using the “new” phenomena of collaborative approaches to governance could be better designed.

The overlap between collaborative approaches to governance, PNP organisations and the public sector is that they share a focus on collaboration between the public and the civic sectors. PNP organisations have often served as an organisational framework for the voluntary efforts of citizens and they perform tasks that could just as well have been performed directly by the public sector. Among the differences are that the PNP organisations use voluntary efforts, that their funding is (partially) provided by citizens or via the efforts of citizens, and that PNP organisations are typically initiated by citizens. The creation of PNP organisations, and in particular PNP sports halls, often occurs in a dialogue with the public sector and via subsidies from the public sector. These are similar traits to the thoughts behind the collaborative approaches to governance, where the interaction between the civic and the public sector sphere are argued to be important and where a degree of autonomy for citizens in formulating their needs is expected (Lorentzen, 2008; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011).

Even though collaborative approaches to governance stress the importance of users having influence, the framework within which those public management phenomena take place are decided by policies. It is therefore still important to assess the consequences of different types of public management policies even though these might not be carried out directly by public bureaucracies (Peters, 2011).

An example of research on the consequences of different types of public management via different subsidy schemes is the work by Ibsen (2014) who argues that there is a “blind spot” in the current political interest in how subsidies to voluntary organisations are granted. According to Ibsen, too much attention is paid to how much is granted in subsidies and too little attention is paid to how the subsidies are given. Drawing on theories and research from the interaction between public administration and the voluntary sector Ibsen differentiates between granting subsidies as a fixed amount independent of performance or a variable amount dependent on performance.

Ibsen makes a theoretical analysis to assess the possible consequences of granting subsidies in different ways. He concludes that to grant subsidies independent of performance results in the principal having little influence on which targets the organisations pursue, whereas granting subsidies dependent on performance gives the principal a larger influence on which targets the organisations have to pursue. Hence, Ibsen sheds initial light on the consequences of different types of public management, on a theoretical level, argues what might happen with organisational performance of voluntary organisations under different types of public management. Like Ibsen this thesis starts with an interest in what happens when such differences in public management occur. But where Ibsen stops at the theoretical level, this thesis also looks at what happens empirically over time when the different types of public management are applied by the public administration towards PNP organisations.

The aim of the thesis is therefore to assess how different public management regimes implemented by the public sector targeting PNP organisations influence their output. Given the similarities between using PNP organisations to implement policies and the more recent interest in collaborative public management phenomena, analysis of the consequences of public management of PNP organisations is highly relevant. This thesis might therefore give important insights into the research and practice of other current policy processes and their implementation in the complex area of creating structures of collaboration between the civic sphere and public administration.

2.2 The setting of the particular PNP organisation – the PNP sports hall

To assess how the collaboration between the PNP sports hall and the municipality might take place, it is necessary to consider which possibilities the municipality has to influence the PNP sports hall. The primary connection between the municipality and the PNP sports hall is via subsidies, as these make up a substantial part of the revenue of sports facilities and because the building of sports facilities is almost always dependent on municipalities granting subsidies for the building process

(Alm, 2014; Rasmussen, 2012; Thøgersen & Iversen, 2014). How the subsidies are granted is not regulated in detail by law. A municipality can, by referring to different types of law (Ministry of Culture, 2013; Ministry of Education, 2011) and judicial practices (*kommunalfuldmagten*), still engage in different types of subsidisation of sport programmes – sport for all, elite sport and professional sport (Naundrup Olesen, 2012; Olsen, 2013). Municipalities are hence not obliged to establish and run sports facilities and they only need to allocate available space in existing sports facilities to activities organised by VSOs. Further, at the outset, municipalities are obliged to subsidise 65% of the cost that VSOs have when they rent facilities or run their own sports facility. However, it is only the proportion of the cost allocated to activities for youngsters under 25 years that municipalities are obliged to support and there are a number of exceptions to this obligation (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Therefore, a municipality can influence to what extent it wants to build and run sports facilities and the extent to which it wants to subsidise the operations of facilities owned and/or rented by VSOs besides the minimum levels required by law. Even though municipalities are also often involved in funding the construction of sports facilities, the issue here is the subsidies provided to run the daily operations of the PNP sports hall. The reason for this is that I aim to show the consequences of differences in public management for the daily operations of PNP sports halls.

In sum, the legal framework hence gives municipalities the flexibility to pursue different policy goals via, for example, different types of public management, the way sports facilities are organised, to what extent some sports facilities are reserved to particular VSOs or public institution(s), whether the subsidies are granted dependent or independent of how much activity is generated in the sports facilities etc. Municipalities therefore have a wide range of options when deciding which type of public management they want to use to target PNP sports halls. In this thesis I focus on the situation where municipalities conduct public management in different ways by using different types of subsidy schemes when they decide how and how much PNP sports halls are to be subsidised.

2.3 Research question

These considerations lead to the formulation of the research question of the thesis:

What are the effects on the performance of private non-profit sports halls when exposed to different types of public management aiming at increasing utilisation? And what are the intended and unintended consequences of those different types of public management?

The basic idea is that the way subsidies are granted might matter for the performance of PNP sports halls, as they are heavily dependent on subsidies from the municipality. As I will elaborate below, the target of policy and an expression of performance is utilisation. In short, I chose to study the utilisation of PNP sports halls because it is on the policy agenda of the municipalities under scrutiny in this thesis as well as being of a broader interest in the settings of other municipalities as well. Finally, while I will study the expected and intended consequences, not less importantly, there will be both a theoretical and empirical focus on the unintended consequences that might occur in the complex implementation process.

2.4 Case study background and introduction to research design

The Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn approved, in the summer of 2011, the implementation of New Public Management (NPM) subsidy schemes for all 16 of its PNP sports halls starting 1 January 2012. The main change was that the PNP sports halls would no longer receive the main part of their income, their subsidies, primarily on the basis of their expenses, such as pay, maintenance and other costs. Instead their subsidies would be calculated on the basis of how much VSO activity took place in the sports hall. Hence, the more timeslots that the PNP sports hall is able to sell to the VSOs, the greater its subsidy from the municipality. Further, contrary to the previous situation, the PNP sports halls were also allowed to keep all the income that they received from customers.

Besides linking the level of subsidy to the level of activity by VSOs, the changes also created an enhanced subsidy model based on collaboration between the PNP sports hall and the other local actors nearby, such as public and private institutions, private companies, other civic organisations and other relevant actors. On the basis of applications from the PNP sports halls, every year two or three sports halls were chosen by the municipality to have a local master plan made with the aim of increasing levels of activity through closer collaboration between the different local actors. The municipality provided the funding for help to run the process and to obtain a written product of the process, but it was otherwise the idea behind this public management approach that local actors are the driving force behind running a successful local PNP sports hall and increasing its utilisation.

These changes in the subsidy scheme were in stark contrast to how the subsidy scheme operated in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn prior to 1 January 2012, and very different from the subsidy scheme in the Municipality of Aalborg. In the Municipality of Aalborg the subsidy is independent of how much activity takes place in the PNP sports hall. Hence an increased number of timeslots used by VSOs does not result in any increase in the amount of subsidies received. In fact, the net result for the PNP sports hall is negative with regard to earning any income, as it has to hand over the revenues received from the VSO to the Municipality of Aalborg while at the same time bearing the increased cost of more users, such as increased costs of cleaning, energy consumption and maintenance of the sports facility. Every PNP sports hall simply receives a fixed amount that is based on historically based considerations on how much is needed.

At this point it is not relevant to go into more detail on the possible consequences of designing the subsidy schemes in such different ways. For now it will suffice to show that these policies are immediately and noticeably different, which makes it plausible to pursue the idea of asking whether such differences in public management will make a difference for PNP sports hall utilisation.

Performance (utilisation) was measured in both municipalities in weeks 9 and 13 in 2012 before the changes in public management were implemented in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn as well as weeks 9 and 13 in 2014, two years later. Besides measuring utilisation, interviews with the management, the chairman of the board, and the chairman of the largest Voluntary Sports Organisation (VSO) using the sports hall were conducted with the aim of tracing events linking between type of public management and utilisation. Half of the 54 interviews were conducted in the second half of 2012 and half of the interviews in the second half of 2014.

3 The focus of the thesis elaborated

The focus of the thesis is on the background of the described differences in public management to consider how those differences influence utilisation of PNP sports halls. In this chapter it will be argued that there are (at least) four perspectives each of which contributes to stress the relevance of research question of the thesis. Firstly, rather unusually, it will be argued that the thesis satisfies the immediate and practical need of the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn to have the consequences of the changes in the subsidy scheme assessed. Secondly, it is shown how the “top-down” public management perspective differs from other possible perspectives on sports facility research. Thirdly, the thesis sheds light on the possible consequences when the public sector decides to grant subsidies to PNP organisations such as PNP sports halls in different ways. Finally, the thesis creates a new performance information system that can help handle the increasing interest in performance management of sports facilities.

3.1 Do public management policy initiatives result in better public solutions?

As part of the policy process resulting in a change of the public management subsidy scheme targeting PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, politicians and bureaucrats debated to what extent these policy changes would result in the changes that were expected. This discussion fuelled an interest in the Industrial PhD programme targeting the public sector with the purpose of providing better public solutions (Innovationsfonden, 2015). The Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn had the ambition of creating better solutions and by initiating the Industrial PhD it could investigate whether the policies decided actually led to such better solutions.

The history behind the changes in the subsidy scheme is that in 2008 the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn decided on a “Leisure strategy” that has been guiding its policy or implementation decisions ever since (Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2008b). A substantial part of this strategy focused on sports facilities – and particularly the PNP sports halls which constitute the majority of the municipalities’ expenditure on sports facilities. It was argued that sports facilities faced different challenges such as a major need for renovations, a disproportion between number of facilities and the amount of funds directed towards them, ample capacity and a lack of ability among sports facilities to tap into the increase in participation in sports (Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2008b, p. 18ff). Following this analysis it was decided that the existing subsidy schemes should be revised. The aim of the revision was to support the Leisure strategy’s focus on creating more activity in the sports facilities subsidised by the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn and thus to make them more

viable. One of the policy recommendations was that existing subsidy schemes targeting the PNP sports halls should be revised, so that the incentive for sports facilities to maximise utilisation were increased (Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2008b, p. 28). The subsidies granted by the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn are decisive for the PNP sports halls as these subsidies make up a substantial part of their revenue. Hence, by altering these, the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn expected that the strategies of the PNP sports halls might change.

Several other municipalities have also shown an increased interest in considering the different consequences of designing public management of sports facilities in different ways (Hedensted Kommune, 2014; Norddjurs Kommune, 2014; Vejle Kommune, 2014). This increased interest might be due to the position of sports and leisure in the strategic policies on how to attract more inhabitants to the municipalities (Ibsen, 2009; Wøllekær, 2007b). In these it is often stressed that sports and leisure are essential aspects of being an attractive municipality that people consider when moving house. For example, in the overarching strategic policy of the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, it is stated that: “we need to develop offers in the nature, leisure and the arts that is suitable for a modern way of life and families with young children” (Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2008c, p. 3) and that: “the many offers in the municipality need to be developed towards the demands of the future in quality, diversity and flexibility. The thriving voluntarism needs to be nurtured and developed in close collaboration with the voluntary organisations. A more up-to-date framework needs to be developed for culture and active leisure.” (Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2008c, p. 5).

The revision of the public management subsidy schemes in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn hence can also be seen as a result of a wider interest in how municipalities can promote themselves via improving leisure and sports facilities. The increased level of interest can be exemplified by the fact that a number of municipalities have invested in analysis of their sports facilities (See for example Forsberg, 2014; Forsberg & Høyer-Kruse, 2013; Høyer-Kruse, 2010, 2011a, 2011b).

The aim to result in better public solutions is also an integral part of an Industrial PhD in the public sector (Innovationsfonden, 2015). As I will elaborate further in the sections below, the consequences of policies creating different subsidy schemes targeting PNP sports halls have so far not been known. For that reason it is important that the thesis keeps a close dialogue with practice so that the findings will be applicable in the realities of everyday bureaucracy and politics in municipalities. The close dialogue with practice is secured on the basis of my experience as an

officer with the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn since 2007 and the continuous dialogue with the municipality throughout the research process (from 2012 to 2015), and in the aftermath of the research process when I returned to my position in the municipality.

3.2 A contribution to the literature on sports facility policy research

What most other approaches to sports facility policy research overlook is that an important dimension of research in sports facilities is that almost all sports facilities are dependent on subsidies from the public sector. These subsidies are organised according to a policy deciding, via different public management regimes, how and how much the public sector invests in sports facilities. Hence, it is relevant to consider in more detail the importance and consequences of the difference in policies focusing on different ways of granting subsidies to sports facilities from the public sector. But what are the different options for deciding on which policies are the most relevant for municipalities? At the outset, political differences might exist that in the first place could be argued to result in different policies being pursued. However, sports policy in Denmark seems to be an area where consensus is widespread. For example, it was not possible to show any differences in sports policies due to differences in political ideologies (different majorities/mayors) across municipalities (Ibsen, 2009) and the latest major reform of the subsidies to the national sports organisation was decided unanimously in the Danish parliament (Ministry of Culture, 2015). On that background there might be some optimism on different types of sports facility research delivering knowledge that will inform policies given that it does not seem to be a policy area rife with political conflicts defining policies. In this section different approaches to sports facility research will be introduced and it will be shown how the perspective of this thesis is different from the other perspectives.

3.2.1 *How and why were sports facilities built?*

One branch of this research assesses how and why different sports facilities were built. At least in a Danish context, sports facilities have often been built on the basis of the need by local communities often with VSOs as important actors (Høyer-Kruse, 2013b; Ottesen & Ibsen, 2000). Hence, the increase in number of sports facilities in Denmark over time has often been due to a claim from local actors that more sports facilities are needed (Eichberg & Ibsen, 2012; Hansen, 1996; Wøllekær, 2007b). This is exemplified by the growth in the number of village halls and sports halls. From the 1870s to 2009 1853 village halls (*forsamlingshuse*) were built in Denmark (Nørregaard Frandsen & Wøllekær, 2014; Wøllekær, 2007a). These were initially built as a reaction to restrictions by the state on the right of teachers to speak freely in public discussions on school

premises. As a reaction to such restrictions the village halls were often built by donations and voluntary efforts (Hansen, 1996; Ottesen & Ibsen, 2000). From the 1950s until the mid 1980s more than 1000 multifunctional sports halls were built in Denmark (Hansen, 1996). These consisted typically of a handball court of 20 x 40 metres, particularly suited to accommodate indoor sports such as badminton, volleyball, basketball and, of course, handball. As more villages and towns got a sports hall there grew increasing pressure to build a sports hall in almost every town or village, as citizens in the different areas all wanted the opportunity to enjoy sport in such a multifunctional venue (Hansen, 1996). Particularly in the Danish climate, with periods of cold and wet weather, it was and is necessary to have such indoor sports facilities to be able to do sport during the winter.

Further, the growth in sports facilities can be seen as a result of the implementation of government white papers in 1952 and in 1974 and a new law in 1968. Those political decisions collectively led to what was known as “the best leisure policy in the world” according to which the public sector, primarily the municipalities, was obliged to give the public free access to public sports facilities (Ottesen & Ibsen, 2000, p. 17f; Svendsen, 2003). Even though these policies did not directly aim at obliging municipalities to fund new sports facilities they supported the pressure from VSOs and other civic organisations that argued in favour of more sports facilities.

Therefore, according to this branch of research, the growth in the number of sports facilities has not taken place due to centrally decided policies in the municipalities or the state on which and how many sports facilities are needed (Hansen, 1996; Ottesen & Ibsen, 2000). Instead the laws implemented supported local voluntary organisations such as VSOs in their sometimes perceived and sometimes real demand for more sports facilities. Hence, it was to a greater extent the municipalities that responded to the demands from different local voluntary organisations to build sports facilities, rather than the municipalities themselves formulating active policies deciding on how and when they intended to support sports facilities via the funding of building, maintaining and running the operations of sports facilities. Seen from this perspective, the municipalities arguably were more reactive in their policy formulation. This differs from the proactive approach analysed in this thesis, which focuses on the consequences of active public management via shaping and developing sports facility policies.

3.2.2 How many sports facilities are needed?

Another branch of research that could inform decisions on sports facility policies investigates how many sports facilities are necessary. For example, in a German context, equations of how many

facilities are needed are based on factors such as the population of a given area, how many people use sports facilities and what the preferred sports are (Bundesinstitut für Sportwissenschaft, 2000). In countries such as the UK, the US and Australia, examples of such objective approaches to planning sports facilities can be found (Høyer-Kruse, 2013b). In a Danish and Scandinavian context the number of sports facilities per inhabitant has been analysed (Kaas og Mulvad, 2013; Rafoss & Troelsen, 2010) and on that basis it might also be assessed where the amount of sports facilities seems to be too low in relation to the number of inhabitants. The immediate strength is that if the target is to have sufficient sports facilities for all, it is tempting to be able to calculate how many are needed and perhaps use these numbers to inform policies. However, a critique of such planning approaches is that they might not take into sufficient consideration, for example, the local composition of age and socioeconomic characteristics and how they influence the need for different types of facilities. Similar facilities might have very different uses depending on the local sport cultures and such planning models might result in too much emphasis on the number of facilities rather than their optimal position and how they should be filled with sport activities after they have been built (Veal, 2009).

Another branch of research with a similar focus is the use of sports facilities and the possible consequences of distance to sports facilities (Hallmann, Wicker, Breuer, & Schönherr, 2012; Limstrand, 2008; Wicker, Breuer, & Pawlowski, 2009; Wicker, Hallmann, & Breuer, 2013). In a Danish context Høyer-Kruse (2013b) shows that there is no correlation between distance, availability, proximity of facilities or number of facilities per inhabitant and participation in organised sports by either adults or children. Against that backdrop it is evident that decisions by the municipality on which facilities to support have implications for the types of physical activity that take place. Such considerations could inform municipal policies when deciding what to build and where to build it. But it does not give any insight into how public management policies influencing the daily operations of the sports facilities could be constructed. To give such insights is the aim of this thesis, which therefore offers a different perspective than the planning approaches introduced above.

3.2.3 What do the users think?

Yet another approach to sports facility policies is to focus on the users of sports facilities. A common denominator for such an approach is that what is analysed is the expectations, experiences and requests seen from the “bottom-up” perspective of the users of the sports facilities. For example, based on customers’ perceptions of service quality in English public sports facilities, Liu,

Taylor, and Shibli (2008) show that four distinct customer segments with different priorities on six service quality dimensions can be identified. Such research in segmentation makes it possible politically to consider which types of users might be prioritised in policies. There are also different examples of the user approach within sports facility research and analysis in a Danish context. For example, Laub and Pilgaard (2012) have analysed user satisfaction with sports facilities and show that 72% of the Danish adult population who participate in sport to some or a large extent are satisfied with their local sports facilities. Another measurement of user satisfaction can be seen in reports on the sport habits of citizens of Danish municipalities and what they find important regarding sports facilities (for example Høyer-Kruse (2010, 2011a, 2011b); Ibsen and Nielsen (2011); Ibsen, Thøgersen, and Tofft-Jørgensen (2013); L. B. Nielsen and Ibsen (2012)). Questions asked, for example, deal with the users' assessments of their use of the sports facility, what the users think of the way the sports facility is organised and what the users think of how the management run the sports facility.

Another angle on the user perspective is the focus on the intersection between architectural design and the users of the sports facility. Examples from the Danish context include Mogensen (2005), who starts from changes in activity patterns and analyses what effect such a tendency has on how sports facilities should be constructed. Mogensen, Munch, and Roessler (2010) and Wikke and Skousbøll (2010) analyse how the role of the aesthetic qualities of sports facilities influence how users experience them. Jensen (2009) analyses the requirements of children and youngsters in the construction of sports facilities.

Sports facility research seen from such a user perspective focuses on how the users' experiences of sports facilities could inform policy by showing how sports facilities can be constructed in a manner that improves the user experience. However, such considerations might in some instances lead to costly alterations of sports facilities and for that reason may simply be impossible to implement.

3.2.4 How is the research agenda of this thesis different?

A common theme across the different types of research in sports facilities is that they do not start from what is often an important criterion for policies – the scarce resources and the budget constraints in real life municipal politics (Serritzlew, 2004). It is, for example, less useful to calculate the optimum provision of sports facilities per inhabitant if you do not have the resources afterwards to build and run the sufficient number of sports facilities. It might also be impossible to build the physical framework that, according to the users and sports organisations, is most suitable

for a given sport or physical activity. If the ideal physical framework simply is too expensive to build or run then such analysis might be superfluous.

Particularly in the aftermath of the global financial crisis and the increased focus on steering local government economy in Denmark (Ejersbo & Greve, 2014) such idealised considerations on how many sports facilities are needed might be challenged as the policy area of sport in municipalities can be expected to compete with other policy areas for the allocation of scarce resources. In all municipalities there is a budget constraint, but particularly in many rural municipalities there is an increasing need for local governments to cut budgets due to a lower tax base which is a consequence of a range of different factors such as a loss in production jobs, urbanisation and demographic changes (Nørgaard, 2014). The smaller sports facilities located in rural areas are therefore expected to be under increasing pressure in the years to come. However, there has been little attention to those types of facilities in a Danish context, as to a large extent the focus instead has been on establishing and efficiently running large, centrally located and architecturally well crafted facilities (Rafoss & Troelsen, 2010). For example, whether different types of public management benefit larger sports facilities at the expense of the smaller ones has not been considered.

One risk of analysing sports facilities primarily from what might ideally be needed, which sports facilities are architecturally the best seen from a user perspective, and how satisfied users are with existing sports facilities, is that – while such an analysis might give a strong description and analysis of what is needed – an otherwise well performed analysis risks not having any effect when it hits the budget constraints in real life politics of the public sector. The research approach pursued in this thesis therefore is different from the other approaches. I argue that municipalities have reasons to draft and decide policies that take seriously the principle that their policy on sports facilities needs to contribute to an efficient utilisation of the sports facilities. And that it is particularly relevant to assess how such policies affect small sports facilities in rural areas as their future survival is not a given taking the current and future challenges of rural areas into consideration. This is noticeably different from the other sports facility research introduced above which could also be used to inform policies of sports facilities. Obviously that does not mean that these other research agendas are not relevant when considering different policy initiatives, but my approach asking whether and how policy contributes to the efficient utilisation of sports facilities is

a novel perspective that sheds light on a policy aspect that has not been highlighted so far in sports facility research.

3.3 Why is the thesis relevant to public administration?

A pivotal part of research in public administration has been and is the use of different public management policy tools to distribute the revenue which is based on taxation (Hood, 2007; May, 2012). Which tools are chosen in the public administration toolbox when resources are to be distributed has attracted interest from many different scholars. One often-cited overview of different tools is Salamon (2002), which distinguishes 14 different tools: direct government provision, governmental corporations and sponsored enterprises, economic regulation, social regulation, government insurance, public information, charges and special taxes, contracting, purchase-of-service contracting, grants, loans and loan guarantees, tax expenditures, vouchers and tort liability.

Hence, it is a challenge to choose the right tool and it might not be easy to implement new tools or change existing ones. An example of how changing policy tool is difficult is that subsidy schemes targeting VSOs often continue without debate as to whether any changes would be relevant (Lorentzen, Klausen, Berglund, & Waldahl, 2007; Thøgersen, 2012). Therefore, by looking at a case where a subsidy scheme with an impact on VSOs actually has been changed, as is the case in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, new knowledge is generated. Such research is also highly relevant for other municipalities considering changing subsidy schemes that directly or indirectly affect PNP organisations.

The interest from the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn in choosing the right tool for the implementation job can hence be connected with the more general interest in the sphere of public administration research to assess to what extent the target of a policy is actually achieved. And a basic prerequisite for public administration is to use the funds with which it is entrusted with as great an effect as possible.

The question of how to run the public sector more efficiently can, on a more general level, be traced back to the Taylorism of the early twentieth century and the subsequent development in public administration and public management (Heinrich, 2012). Just as industrialists came to break down the factory production line into smaller units to produce goods most efficiently, in public administration there were also attempts to develop efficient types of public management by describing the aims of different parts of the administrative process and measure the extent to which

they were able to live up to these aims. This can be seen as a first move towards public management based on performance measurement, and, in the decades that followed, such a rational approach was supplemented by other approaches for measuring and managing public sector performance such as Total Quality Management (TQM), which took into consideration factors other than the sheer economic ones. This was a response to over-optimism about the possibilities for rationally planning and executing policies (Moran, Rein, & Goodin, 2006). In the decades that followed – the 1960s and 1970s – such rational public management continued to prevail. In the 1980s and the 1990s different tendencies in public management within the overarching framework of New Public Management (NPM) were introduced and created an increased interest in how citizens experience their encounters with the public administration and with that an increased attention to the efficiency of the public sector occurred (Heinrich, 2012).

Another recurrent theme when measuring performance in the public sector is which goals should be measured, how they are to be measured and how policy success afterwards should be evaluated. This interest has also reached the area of PNP sports halls, which in this case is defined as an interest in measuring the performance by assessing utilisation. In sum, the interest in conducting performance management in the public sector has been on the rise (Walker, Boyne, & Brewer, 2010).

Of particular interest has also been whether it is possible to harvest the intended effects measured on a given target, as it is recognised that it is not easy to achieve success using the same tool in different contexts (Christensen, 2006; Christensen & Lægheid, 2011; May, 2012). This thesis acknowledges the importance of the context that public management regimes are implemented in. It does so by giving particular consideration to the consequences of using public management tools in a context with a heavy involvement of volunteers. The members of the boards of PNP sports halls and of VSOs are volunteers, as often are the coaches leading activities in the sports halls. The possibilities and effects of incorporating volunteers as part of the solution when implementing policies, is a matter of increasing interest (Mandag Morgen, 2012). Among the alleged advantages are that volunteers can perform important public tasks which otherwise would not have been executed due to the scarce resources of the public sector. Another of the arguments behind this approach has been that volunteers can add extra quality to tasks normally carried out by the public sector (Agger & Tortzen, 2015; Mandag Morgen, 2012). Against that backdrop a number of different policies aiming at including volunteers in performing different societal tasks have been

decided at the level of both the state and the municipalities. However, a general challenge is that voluntary associations might not be interested in solving problems or performing tasks other than those that meet their immediate interests – often the cause for which that particular voluntary organisation exists (Habermann, 2007; Ibsen, Thøgersen, & Levinsen, 2013; Wang, 2004). Among the challenges, if volunteers are to perform more diverse societal tasks, is thus to create formal structures that enable voluntarism to unfold in a setting that is less rooted in the relatively narrow context of voluntary associations. To fill that void PNP organisations might be a part of the solution, as they are detached from the users such as VSOs, but also operate at arm's length from the public sector.

In the example of the PNP organisations under scrutiny here, the PNP sports halls, it is for example not the VSO itself that runs the facility. Rather, the facility is run by an autonomous organisational structure (the PNP sports facility). Even though VSOs and PNP organisations across different national contexts are likely to share traits (Cuskelly, Hoye, & Auld, 2006; Ibsen, 1992; Tschirhart & Bielefeld, 2012) this thesis focuses on PNP organisations in Denmark.

The PNP sports halls, like other types of PNP organisations within culture and education (Ibsen & Habermann, 2006), produce a public good that could equally be produced by the public sector. Further, a characteristic is that if a PNP sports hall for any reason ceases to operate, any surplus has to be used for the purpose of the PNP sports hall stated in the articles of the PNP Sports Hall. Hence the founding organisations that typically are appointed as members of the board will *not* receive any surplus if the PNP sports hall ceases operations. That it is a *private* non-profit organisation also distinguishes it from *public* non-profit organisations as the latter are created by law, have no tied capital, no member organisations or members and are to a lesser extent based on voluntary efforts (Ibsen & Habermann, 2006).

Further, the PNP sports hall is dependent on receiving subsidies from the municipality, but on the other hand it also has commercial traits as it also operates in a market. In principle PNP sports halls are outside the public sector, but at the same time they are non-profit and partially dependent on volunteers to sit on the board and to carry out maintenance and on voluntary efforts by VSOs to create activities in the facility. In that sense the PNP sports halls are an interesting case for how links between the state and the voluntary sector might be created.

In sum, it has therefore been argued thirdly that the thesis is also interesting seen from the perspective of research in public administration, as new knowledge of the intended and unintended consequences of different public management schemes targeting PNP organisations might be generated.

3.4 No performance information system aiming at performance measurement of sports facilities in Denmark

Another area where the thesis will contribute new knowledge is by creating a performance information system to measure the performance of sports facilities. Policies often consist of a more or less precisely formulated target and subsequently it is decided by politicians and/or by the public administration how that target can be measured (Moynihan, 2008; Moynihan & Soss, 2014). As mentioned earlier, there have been few policies targeting the performance of sports facilities in a Danish context and hence there has been little debate about how to measure the achievement of any given political target. Perhaps as a consequence of that, a point of departure to discuss any possible success by PNP sports halls seems to have been to assess whether VSOs are satisfied with their sports facilities. According to that criterion, VSOs are fairly satisfied as, in a survey of Danish sports organisations, 63% of the chairmen of the boards of VSOs indicated that they are either satisfied or very satisfied with their sports facilities (Laub, 2012). However, such a measure is not well suited when performance is understood as utilisation, as the users might be very satisfied exactly because there are few (other) users.

The reason for the focus in this thesis on utilisation is that competitiveness is an increasingly important goal in the public sector. Competitiveness is no longer a requirement limited to private companies. Public institutions and publicly supported institutions such as PNP sports facilities are also expected to be competitive (Alexandris, 2010; Bruijn, 2007; Moynihan, 2008; Porter, 2008). In this thesis, competitiveness is defined as manifesting a high level of performance, i.e., how well or badly the PNP organisation performs in relation to a politically defined goal. Such measurements of performance are not as simple as in the private sector, where performance can often be measured in terms of levels of profit. In the public sector there is often a multitude of targets which result in what is measured not being limited just to performance measured in economic terms (Bozeman, 1984, 1987, 2013; Hal G. Rainey & Bozeman, 2000; Walker & Bozeman, 2011). For example, there is no benefit to having cheap schools if the pupils do not learn anything in them (Nannestad, 2003).

Internationally, different measuring tools exist via performance information systems developed in

the UK and Australia. They measure, for example, the number of users and how satisfied they are with the sports facility (Howat, Crilley, & Murray, 2005; Liu, Taylor, & Shibli, 2009). However, these approaches result in little knowledge being generated on how the main activities in sports facilities are conducted as these approaches do not register what actually takes place on the sports floor of the facility. To fill that void, the measure of “utilisation” in this thesis is what actually takes place on the court. There are at least three reasons in favour of utilisation being a highly relevant measure.

First, a focus on utilisation is widely accepted for sports facilities in Denmark. That they should be used as much as possible is a priority found in both publications on the state level (Ministry of Culture, 2009) as well as in municipal policies. For example, the municipalities under scrutiny here also have the aim to maximize the utilisation of their sports facilities. In the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn the aim of maximising utility is explicitly mentioned in the Leisure strategy as being the aim of the changes in the subsidy scheme to increase the utilisation of the sports facilities (Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2008b, 2012). In the Municipality of Aalborg the Leisure policy includes the aim that: “Leisure facilities need to be utilised flexibly and efficiently for both sport for all and elite sports. If a sports hall is empty, it should be easy to book for both citizens and groups of persons.” (Aalborg Kommune, 2010). Further, the Municipality of Aalborg is deeply engaged in developing and promoting a system that through the use of thermal cameras can measure the utilisation of sports facilities (Aalborg Kommune, 2012, 2013; Aalborg University, 2015). In sum, it is therefore argued that utilisation is also an important policy goal for both the Municipality of Aalborg and the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn.

Second, when this thesis was initiated in early 2012 few analyses of different aspects of utilisation had been conducted in Denmark. Several of the analyses were based on assessing the seasonal bookings of sports facilities (KOARK Arkitekter, 2007; Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2008a). Such analysis of utilisation does not capture cancellations, failure to attend (no-shows), seasonal changes, number of active persons or percentage of floor used and is hence an imprecise way to assess whether the target of a high level of utilisation is achieved. An initial phase of the thesis therefore was to develop and apply a methodology to be used in both the context of the thesis and in other settings (see below and Iversen (In review-b)). Hence, together with the findings in this thesis the aim of developing a methodology for measuring the performance of sports facilities via a

performance information system is to contribute to discussions on how the performance of sports halls can be measured.

Third, it is also of a more general interest to focus on welfare facilities such as sports facilities as interesting findings might emerge that can be used in other contexts with similar challenges. For example, it has been shown that there is ample capacity in public schools as a number of the rooms in schools are only utilised 20–30% of the time (Fisker, 2012). In order to use public funds as efficiently as possible, it is important that sports facilities in general – and particularly those that are expensive to run such as swimming pools and indoor sports facilities – are utilised as much as possible. This is due to the fact that the cost of adding another user is marginal as the vast majority of the cost of running the facility is connected to keeping it operating on a daily basis. The goal to maximise utilisation is therefore relevant considering that sports facilities and other welfare service facilities to a large extent are built, maintained and operated using public funds and hence they should be utilised by the public as much as possible.

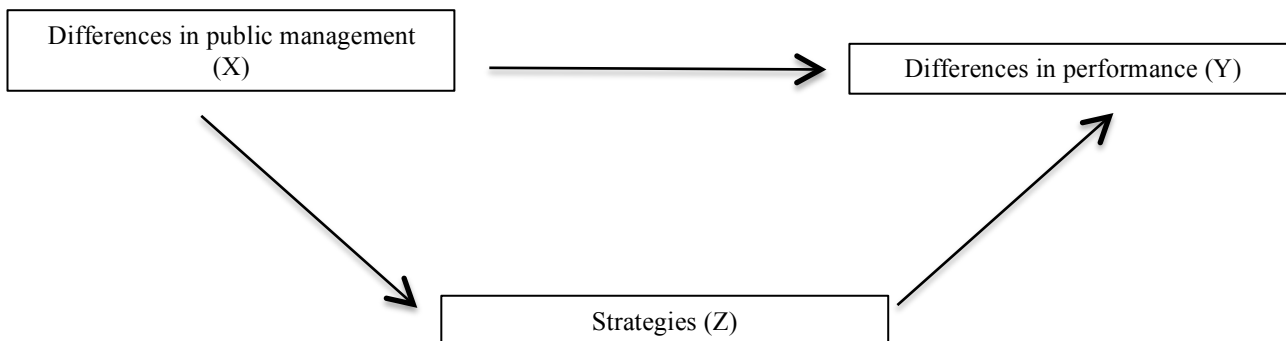
3.5 Summary: the relevance of the thesis

In summary, it has been argued that there are (at least) four reasons to be interested in the relation between different subsidy schemes and their possible impact on the performance of PNP organisations. First, the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn want to assess the possible consequences of different types of public management on utilisation. Second, having a focus on sports facility policies that takes seriously the demands to use public funds efficiently to maximise performance adds new perspectives to the research on sports facilities. Third, seen from the perspective of public administration there is a gap in the literature on the effects of different subsidy schemes on the performance of PNP organisations. Finally, maximum utilisation is a relevant aim for sports facilities. This is made possible via a method for measurement developed in this thesis which makes it possible to measure the utilisation of sports halls.

The goal is to measure the effects of different public management regimes on performance. Having defined performance as utilisation, the question is how to create a link between different regimes and differences in performance. This is done by arguing that the increasing pressure for competitiveness transforms into a need to form a strategy for being so by creating a unique and valuable position (Porter, 2008). In this case that unique and valuable position is argued to be one that increases utilisation. Against that backdrop, the focus is on the consequences of different public

management subsidy schemes for strategies and how those strategies result in different developments in utilisation.

Figure 3.1: The relationship between public management, strategy and performance.



The performance of PNP sports halls is defined as utilisation. If a subsidy scheme promotes strategies which result in better utilisation, this will be seen as a better performance than before. Inversely, if a subsidy scheme seems to result in strategies resulting in lower utilisation this will be assessed as a decrease in the performance of the PNP sports hall. As Figure 3.1 shows, it is the point of departure for the thesis that differences in public management may directly influence the performance of PNP sports halls. An example of this is when subsidies are given directly to VSOs and their decisions whether to use the PNP sports halls or not influence utilisation without the PNP sports halls having any direct contact with the public management subsidy scheme. In this thesis, the focus is on the situation where the PNP sports hall actually has the possibility to influence its level of subsidy by attempting to influence utilisation, and it is argued that the PNP sports halls do so by pursuing different types of strategies (Z) depending on which type of public management they are exposed to (X). That the strategy chosen may influence utilisation is shown by the arrow from strategies (Z) to performance (Y). It is therefore a central claim in the thesis that it is imperative to dig further into how strategies are formed, what role differences in public management have for which strategies are developed, and how those strategies might result in differences in performance.

4 Contents of the thesis

The thesis consists of four articles. In the first article the theoretical and conceptual framework is developed (Iversen & Cuskelly, 2015). The second article introduces the method used to measure utilisation (Iversen, In review-b). The third article uses the method developed in the second article to assess the possible consequences of measuring the performance of in Danish sports facilities in general and what the consequences have been for utilisation when implementing different types of public management in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn and the Municipality of Aalborg (Iversen & Forsberg, 2014b). Finally, the fourth article assesses which strategies the sports facilities in the chosen municipalities pursue and to what extent different public management subsidy schemes impact the strategies chosen and whether those strategies seem to influence utilisation (Iversen, In review-a).

Besides the core articles of the thesis mentioned above, two more articles (article 0a and article 0b) that have provided the background analysis and knowledge of the thesis are worth mentioning and their content is elaborated below.

4.1 Article 0a: Iversen, E. (2013). Driftsformer og idrætsfaciliteter - hvordan åbnes den 'sorte boks'? (Types of ownership and sports facilities – how to open the “black box”?), *Forum for Idræt*.

Iversen (2013) was written in the early phases of the project and investigates the possible differences between sports facilities owned directly by the public sector and those owned by PNP organisations. This is done by introducing the possible consequences of the two types of ownership on the organisational behaviour of sports facilities. Which organisational behaviour might occur when sports facilities with different types of ownership are exposed to formal institutions (laws and legal procedures) and informal institutions (norms and expectations) is considered. In sum it is argued that these two types of institutions shape an institutional frame. It is further argued that differences in the institutional frame influence the organisational behaviour of sports facilities depending on their type of ownership. How the institutional frame influences the organisational behaviour is hypothesised using sociological² and rational institutional theory. Sociological institutional theory focuses on how the organisational behaviour of sports halls is influenced by what is expected to be appropriate behaviour by other actors. Rational institutionalism focuses

² In the conceptual articles Iversen (2013) and Iversen & Cuskelly (2015) I use normative institutionalism and in the thesis I use the more generic and more widely known term sociological institutionalism. Normative institutionalism is a part of the broader stream of theories, which is denoted sociological institutionalism (Hall & Taylor, 1996). As I in both the thesis and the articles focus on the role of norms in institutional behaviour the two concepts can in this context be used interchangeably.

primarily on the consequences of actors being rational and maximising their own utility. In the article it is argued that how the sports facility will react to different public management policies depends on which of these theoretical logics might play out empirically. Following the logics of rational institutionalism, the PNP sports hall will react differently than the municipal owned sports halls due to the differences in the institutional frame. For example, the PNP sports hall might attempt to attract more activities because this increases its income. On the other hand, the logic of the sports hall owned by the municipality is different, as increasing levels of activity do not result in improved finances as the sports hall in the municipality cannot generate income in that manner. Following rational institutionalism it is rational for the municipal sports facility to focus on the public institutions as both are embedded in the public sector.

If sociological institutionalism is to show its relevance, it is suggested that behaviour is shaped by the informal interplay between VSOs, management of sports facilities and the municipality. According to sociological institutionalism, the “logic of appropriateness” developed in such interplay will matter when organisational behaviour is decided. Seen from the perspective of sociological institutionalism, ownership by a municipality might cause a sports facility to encourage other users as well as the current ones if that is a target pursued by that municipality. In a PNP sports hall, in contrast, the fact that existing users have a stranglehold via close interactions between the board and management results in privileging the existing users. The results are shown in Table 4.1 and indicate how sports halls can be expected to react to the different subsidy schemes.

Table 4.1: Expectations of the possible behaviour of sports halls.

	Sociological institutionalism	Rational institutionalism
Owned by the municipality	Focus on users other than the present ones	Focus on the current public institutions
PNP sports facilities	Focus on existing VSOs and public organisations using the sports hall	Focus on attracting more activities (both VSOs and other)

The argument pursued is hence that the organisational behaviour depends on the institutional frame. That institutional frame can be interpreted on the basis of either rational or sociological institutionalism. Which theoretical explanation (sociological versus rational) is most relevant will depend on the empirical findings; the findings of article 0a constitute the background for the development of theoretical expectations and the empirical findings presented later in this thesis. The initial analysis on how the sports facilities are expected to react to different subsidy schemes on the basis of their ownership was an important first step in considering the differences between public ownership and PNP ownership and the possible consequences of these differences on behaviour.

Hence, the article was particularly important as the analytical background for the theoretical and conceptual article, article 1 (Iversen & Cuskelly, 2015).

4.2 Article 0b: Thøgersen, M., & Iversen, E. (2014). Den kommunale støtte til idrætsforeninger - succes eller sovepude? (The subsidies from municipalities to Voluntary Sports Organisations – a success or a pretext for inaction?) In T. Skovgaard & K. Eskelund (Eds.), *Samfundets idræt*. Odense: University of Southern Denmark Press.

Another article produced in the early stages of the project investigated whether there is any measurable relation between the legal and economic framework that municipalities offer VSOs and whether they thrive (Thøgersen & Iversen, 2014). The legal and economic framework is defined in the article as:

- the level of subsidies given by the municipality to VSOs to run their clubs
- the VSOs' (almost) free use of public facilities and
- the subsidisation of the VSOs' own or rented facilities.

Whether VSOs thrive was operationalised using both objective and subjective measures. The objective measures are the population density of VSOs and the population density of members of VSOs in each municipality. The subjective measures are VSO satisfaction with the subsidisation from the municipality and VSO satisfaction with facilities.

Theoretically, the article was based on institutionalism by arguing the significance of the formal and informal institutions under which VSOs operate (Scott, 2001). However, the article focuses solely on the possible consequences of differences in the formal institutional framework consisting of the laws, subsidy schemes and access to sports facilities provided by municipalities. Hence it was hypothesised, first, that the higher the level of direct subsidy to VSOs, the better they would thrive and, second, that the better the subsidisation of sports facilities and the higher the relative number of sports facilities, the better VSOs would thrive.

The quantitative analysis was conducted on the basis of a number of sources. First, a large survey of Danish sports clubs conducted in 2010 with 5203 responses and a satisfactory response rate of 50.4% was used for the subjective measures. The National Statistics Bureau in Denmark provided data on how much municipalities spent on subsidising VSOs and sports facilities. The Danish

Foundation for Sports and Cultural Facilities provided data on the number of facilities in each municipality. Finally, we collected and analysed subsidy schemes from all Danish municipalities in order to assess any differences. A multi-level analysis was conducted of the VSOs' subjective measures on whether they were thriving to be able to distinguish between the level of the VSO and the level of the municipalities. Regression analysis was used to analyse whether the VSOs thrive according to the objective measures. A number of controls were chosen in order to rule out other possible explanations: size of municipality, urbanisation, level of tax income, and types, sizes and ages of VSOs.

In conclusion, a very limited correlation was found between the formal institutional framework and the applied measures for how much VSOs thrive. For the work on the thesis, it was interesting that there was no correlation either between how much is spent on sport and whether VSOs thrive or between how much municipalities spent on sports facilities and whether VSOs thrive. Of particular relevance for the thesis was the result that there was no correlation between how much municipalities spent on sports facilities and whether VSOs are satisfied with those facilities. The findings did indicate, however, that the population density of sports facilities mattered for the density of VSOs, the density of members of VSOs and the satisfaction of VSOs with sports facilities.

In relation to the thesis this article contributed new knowledge about the widely proposed idea that what matters for VSOs is the absolute size of the (economic) framework offered by municipalities – that more is better. Such ideas are particularly pertinent among the national sports organisations, which agree that the size of the subsidisation of VSOs (and themselves) is imperative for whether VSOs thrive (DGI, 2013). But this article's main conclusion was that it is not the size of the economic framework that matters for whether VSOs thrive. The data collected for the article also showed that more than half of the Danish municipalities contribute significantly more to sports facilities than is required by law. This shows that the municipalities have the possibility to decide to use resources differently than they do today without getting into trouble regarding adherence to the current laws. Hence, that article fuelled a further interest in analysing the consequences of different ways of organising the subsidy schemes, when the absolute size of the subsidy seemed to matter less than might be expected. Knowledge from this article was used in both the conceptual and theoretical papers (Iversen & Cuskelly, 2015) and as an inspiration for the qualitative analysis (Iversen, In review-a).

- 4.3 Article 1: Iversen, E. B., & Cuskelly, G. (2015). Effects of different policy approaches on sport facility utilisation strategies. *Sport Management Review*(0). doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2014.12.004>

This article contributed by developing the conceptual framework to be used for the empirical analysis. The framework was developed with the aim of assessing the effects that different types of public management have on the utilisation of private non-profit (PNP) sports facilities. Based on theories drawn from the public administration literature three different public management approaches that might be used for constructing subsidy schemes are introduced: New Public Management (NPM), governance and budget (Peters, 1996; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011; Rhodes, 1997). How such different public management approaches will influence the utilisation of a sports facility is assessed using insights from institutional (Scott, 2001) and motivational theory (Le Grand, 2003, 2007, 2010) from political science, along with insights into how VSOs might respond to attempts of public management (Cuskelly et al., 2006; Ibsen, 1992). The conceptual framework consists of twelve different strategies that the PNP sports halls might pursue when exposed to these different approaches to public management. The strategies are created in the interaction of structural influences via institutional analysis and the influence of the actor perspective captured via the use of motivational theory on what might motivate the management and the boards of the PNP sports halls and the boards of the VSOs. It is argued that it is likely that a sports facility will choose one or more of the strategies described, and which strategies it chooses will have an impact on the level of utilisation. The aim of the article is to show plausible conjectures (Rhodes, 2013) for future empirical research into how to increase sports facility utilisation via different policies and thus inform future research into the complex interplay between the public sector, sports facilities and VSOs.

- 4.4 Article 2: Iversen, E. (In review). Introduction of a new method for measuring sports facility utilisation validated through the use of thermal cameras. *Managing Sport and Leisure*.

In Iversen (In review-b), the advantages of introducing a performance information system to measure utilisation of PNP sports halls is shown and the validity of the system is critically assessed. It is argued that the methods used so far provide too little information on utilisation as they only register variables that tell us little or nothing about what actually takes place on the court in the sports hall (Howat, 2004; Howat et al., 2005; Taylor & Godfrey, 2003) or are too imprecise due to

the way they are conducted or the data they rely on. For example, many earlier analyses relied on booking schemes (KOARK Arkitekter, 2007; Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2008a) which is an unreliable measurement of utilisation as what is booked often differs from what takes place (Forsberg & Høyer-Kruse, 2013; Iversen & Forsberg, 2014a). This new performance information system aims at increasing the level of detail of the collected information by describing what actually takes place on the court (number of active persons, type of activity, how much of the court that is used and the level of intensity, type of organisation offering the activity, booking no-shows, as well as the age and gender distribution of participants). It is argued that the more precise information provided by this method makes it possible to deliver better analyses and recommendations to municipalities and sports facilities wanting to increase their utilisation. Further, via the use of thermal technology, the manual survey method was validated. The validation could only be done on the variables that are registered by the thermal method – i.e. whether there is activity in the sports hall and the number of users in the sports hall (Gade, Christensen, Jensen, Moeslund, & Harder, 2014; Aalborg University, 2014, 2015). The validation of the manual survey data showed that the manual method tends to exaggerate the number of users and the number of timeslots used. However, the thermal method has its difficulties when assessing precisely a high number of users or if the users are many children. On that background the conclusion is that the decision of which method to use depends on whether the priority is to get more precise measurements of whether and how many persons are in the sports hall or whether the priority is to get a more detailed description of what actually takes place. If the priority is the former, the thermal method has its strengths, but if the aim is to get a nuanced idea about what takes place on the court, the manual method might be preferred.

4.5 Article 3: Iversen, E., & Forsberg, P. (2014). Mål eller kaos? Muligheder og begrænsninger i at indføre 'performance management' i danske idrætsfaciliteter. (To measure or not to measure? Possibilities and limitations if implementing “performance management” in Danish sports facilities). *Forum for Idræt*.

The method developed in article 2, Iversen (In review-b), is used in this article. Besides being used in this thesis in two municipalities the manual survey method employed in 2013 and 2014 has been defining for how utilisation of sports facilities has been measured in Denmark and it has so far been used in research reports in three other municipalities in Denmark (Forsberg, 2014; Forsberg &

Høyer-Kruse, 2013; Høyer-Kruse, 2013a). Since publication of this article in 2014, the method has been used in another five Danish municipalities in the spring of 2015.

The results presented in the article on the basis of the first round of data collection in 2013–2014 indicated first that there is ample capacity in Danish sports halls, as different measurements of how much space is available show that 25–30% of the available timeslots are not booked. Further, on about 25% of occasions when a sports hall is booked, it is not used. A more detailed analysis was conducted using 3.455 registrations of activity in 56 sports halls in five different municipalities. Analysis of different sports shows that the number of active persons on the court and how much of the court is used varies significantly. For example, on average, tennis has less than eight players active in a timeslot but they use 89% of the court. School sport sessions use about the same floorspace (93%), but more persons are using the space (26.8 persons on average). It is also shown that in 20% of the timeslots used for badminton 40% or less of the court is in use. Hence, it could often be possible to have more than one activity on the court at the same time or to consider which type of activity should be prioritised. Finally, it is also shown that when sports activities and other activities that do not normally take place in the sports facility are conducted, the level of physical intensity drops significantly indicating that there is a possible conflict between short-term targets of increasing utilisation and longer-term targets such as increasing the physical condition of the population at large. Finally, the activity-based subsidy scheme (NPM) does seem to result in higher utilisation compared with the non-activity subsidy scheme (budget) as the PNP sports halls under the NPM-based public management in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn increased utilisation by 7.6% while the sports halls under the budget-based public management in the Municipality of Aalborg showed a decrease of 8.1%.

4.6 Article 4: Iversen, E. (In review). Does size matter when public policy tools meet (the voluntary) reality in sports facilities? *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*.

Finally, Iversen (In review-a) analyses of data from the 54 semi-structured qualitative interviews of managers of PNP sports halls, chairmen of boards of PNP sportshalls and chairmen of boards of largest VSO using the PNP sports hall are conducted. It starts from the understanding that the expectations from the public administration of the voluntary sector are on the rise as the former sees the latter as the (partial) answer to some of its fiscal challenges. However, little is known of the consequences of using different public policy tools in areas

where the voluntary sector plays a major role. In focus here is the private non-profit (PNP) organisation and the consequences of its presence as a layer between the public administration and the voluntary associations. The implementation of an activity-based subsidy scheme as a public management tool is followed and compared with a non-activity-based subsidy scheme. The reasons for not in this article to pursue the consequences of the governance public management subsidy scheme is discussed in chapter 7.

With inspiration from the conceptual framework introduced in Iversen & Cuskelly (2015) it is discussed how different policies might result in different strategies and whether these strategies seem to increase the utilisation of PNP sports halls. As shown in article 3, Iversen & Forsberg (2014b), the activity-based NPM subsidy scheme seem to result in higher utilisation and the not-activity based budget subsidy scheme seem to result in lower utilisation. In article 4 these findings are further analysed by assessing the importance of the size of the PNP sports hall. It is shown that the size of the sports facility plays an important role in the consequences of the implementation of an activity-based public management model. For example, the PNP sports halls under the activity-based subsidy scheme invest more efforts in new activities – mostly in dialogue with local VSOs. Further, both the PNP sports halls and the VSOs under the activity-based system are aware of the challenge of increasing utilisation, but they have difficulties in figuring out how they can actually achieve this. One of the consequences is examples of members of boards indicating that they find the pressure to increase utilisation inherent in the NPM stressful and that they fear it might be difficult to recruit new volunteer members to the board of the PNP sports hall. This is in contrast to the non-activity based subsidy schemes, where the board and management pay little attention to creating new activities and where the VSOs primarily focus on developing their own activities. Elaborating on the importance of size, the larger sports facilities can offer different goods other than just courts and they are more interested in how their business can grow in areas than other the ones connected to subsidies. However, under the activity-based scheme the large PNP sports halls focus on keeping all the time slots busy due to economic considerations, whereas under the non-activity based subsidy scheme there is a greater focus on keeping utilisation by VSOs high due to the fact that such utilisation legitimises the receipt of funding from the municipality. The findings are summarised in Table 4.2.

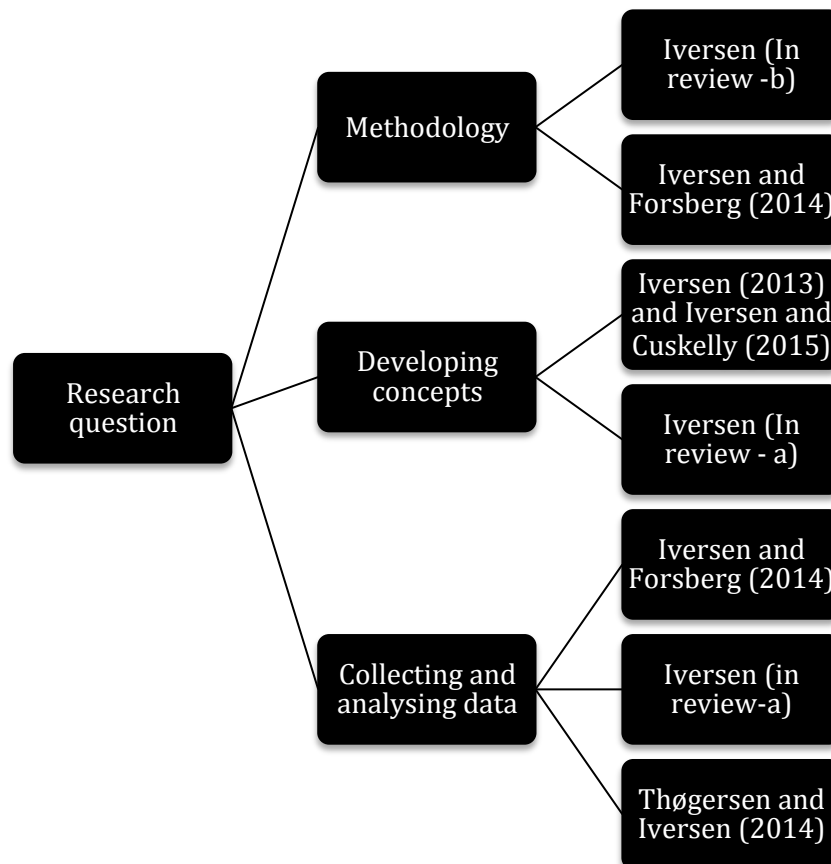
Table 4.2: Strategies of PNP sports halls.

	Big	Small
NPM	Attempting to increase utilisation via prioritising among users and focusing on other businesses	Establishing dialogue with VSOs about how to increase utilisation and attempt to start new activities themselves
Budget	Keeping existing VSO users happy and focus on other businesses	Keeping existing users happy

4.7 How the articles are connected

What might now seem to be a number of articles well connected in a rational and logical order is, of course, the result of a more muddy research process where the different phases overlapped. There has been a constant dialogue between methodological and theoretical considerations, which is illustrated in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1: The connection between the articles of the thesis.



After having presented the main results and the structure of the thesis, it is relevant to discuss which considerations made those results possible. Hence, a first step is to establish on which approach to the philosophy of science the thesis rests.

5 Philosophy of science approach

What is valid knowledge? This is a contested issue within the social sciences. The disagreements between different theoretical and methodological approaches can often be traced back to the philosophy of science behind the approaches, and how they relate to their ontological and epistemological basis. Hence, the choice of a philosophy of science has implications for how the results of the research should be evaluated and assessed. This thesis is placed within the framework of the philosophy of science that is termed critical realism. In order to discuss the pros and cons of choosing this philosophy of science more precisely, the contrast with other philosophies of science is shown.

The question of ontology is connected to the basic question about what “characterises the domain of reality, that the discipline explores” (Jacobsen, Lippert-Rasmussen, & Nedergaard, 2010, p. 17). Roughly there are two extreme positions of ontology: The first is arguing from a positivist point of departure that the societal reality is out there and that it can be captured with the types of methods that are widely used within the natural sciences (Boolsen & Jacobsen, 2010, p. 62). According to the most extreme positivistic positions the world is objective and we can observe it, sense it and quantify it. The other ontological extreme argues that the world is a social construction. Seen from that perspective what for us seem to be objective measurable units are actually phenomena socially constructed in society (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Approaches based on this approach include hermeneutics and phenomenology and these along with other similar streams of thought bear the collective term of being constructivist (Berg, 2000, p. 104). The different ontological points of departure also influence the choice of epistemological approach. Epistemology is about how via different methods we can collect knowledge about the phenomenon that we want to observe and understand (Jacobsen et al., 2010, p. 16). Which method is deemed valid often depends on the ontological point of departure (Jacobsen et al., 2010, p. 17). If one ontologically starts from a positivistic oriented point of view then one would often choose methods based on registering the objective and observable data in society and base the analysis on these facts (Boolsen & Jacobsen, 2010, p. 57). If instead one has a constructivist point of view, the choice of epistemology would result in choosing methods that seek to disclose the constructions of society. These constructions will rarely be directly observable or measurable and the choice of a constructivist epistemology will therefore often result in the choice of methods, where one can consider how a given observation is to be interpreted (Collin, 2010, p. 260f; McEvoy & Richards, 2006).

Such differences in ontological and epistemological points of departure influence how causality is understood. From a positivistic oriented ontological and epistemological point of departure, the focus will often be on disclosing quantifiable variations on the variables and analysing which variables can explain which variations in other variables and include controls as well (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 16; Sayer, 1992). Hence, a positivistic oriented ontology and epistemology will often employ a quantitative methodology involving: “logic, observation, experiments or other types of sensing which might result in qualitative studies” (Boolsen & Jacobsen, 2010, p. 57).

Methodologically, a positivistic oriented ontological and epistemological approach is often coupled with a quantitative methodology (Danermark, Ekström, Jakobsen, & Karlsson, 2002, p. 2; Maxwell & Mittapalli, 2010).

With a constructivist ontological and epistemological point of departure the aim is to achieve a better understanding of possible interpretations of the world and how these interpretations can be understood (Maxwell & Mittapalli, 2010). For that purpose methods such as interviews, where the interpretation of the observations is the key issue, are preferred. A certain pluralism in the choice of methods is possible, but:

“qualitative researchers who accept a strong constructivist philosophy reject quantitative researchers’ characteristic assumption that objective, verifiable knowledge about the world is possible and the view of the world as analysable in terms of causes. This prevents these qualitative researchers from accepting (let alone using) some central features of quantitative design, data collection and analysis.” (Maxwell & Mittapalli, 2010, p. 147).

The choice of either a positivistic or constructivist approach has therefore been criticised and defended in different ways. Among the arguments in favour of a positivistic approach is that it might show causal correlations or the lack of such correlations across variables based on a high number (N) (Boolsen & Jacobsen, 2010, p. 64). A qualitative approach does not to the same extent strive for a high N, but rather to disclose how a limited number of phenomena can be interpreted with the aim to create a better understanding of the consequences of those phenomena.

Inspired by Berg (2000), Danermark et al. (2002) and McEvoy and Richards (2006), differences between positivism and constructivism are illustrated in Table 5.1 below:

Table 5.1: Differences between positivism and constructivism.

	Constructivist paradigm	Positivist paradigm
Ontology	The world is socially constructed and exists due to the interpretations of the societal actors	The world exists mainly independently of the societal actors
Epistemology	Knowledge is created in the interaction between the researcher and the societal actors included in the research	The world exists objectively and can be studied via the use of the senses
Research process	Explorative (inductive)	Hypothesis driven (deductive)
Applied methods	Primarily qualitative	Primarily quantitative

5.1 Which view on the philosophy of science is taken by this thesis?

The research question of the thesis is on the intended and unintended effects of differences in public management of PNP sports halls. Such an analysis could start from either a positivist or a constructivist paradigm. But, as will be elaborated in below, a relevant philosophy of science for this thesis is “critical realism”. This argument rests on the aim and purpose of the thesis being to embrace the idea that the world consists of more than can be objectively sensed, but at the same time also accepting that the world is not solely constructed. Therefore neither a positivist ontological approach nor a constructivist approach seems to be ideal.

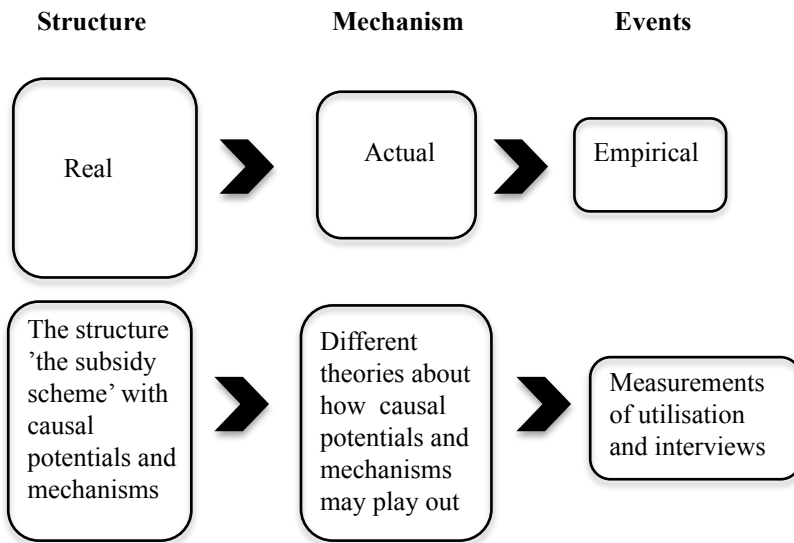
5.2 The ontology of critical realism

Despite the fact that critical realism is not a unitary philosophy of science, it has some general traits (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 1). Ontologically, critical realism presents the idea that the world exists independent of our attempts to observe it and that it is possible to construct theories about that world (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005; Danermark et al., 2002; Maxwell & Mittapalli, 2010). Such an ontological approach could immediately be termed positivist, but considering how the ontology of critical realism is constructed, important nuances occur. One of the most important critical realists, Bhaskar, split reality into three domains: the empirical, the actual and the real (Bhaskar, 1975). First, the empirical domain consists of experiences and facts that can be observed and sensed (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 21). Second, there is the actual domain, where the forces that might not be immediately visible in the empirical realm are also considered. In the actual domain researchers work on theories that can help to explain the events that are observed in the empirical domain (Sayer, 2000, p. 12). However, these theories about the world might be wrong. This results in the introduction of a deeper domain with more hidden constructs, the real domain. In this third domain are found the mechanisms that support and cause events and phenomena within the actual domain. They might be captured by the theories in the actual domain, but even though they are not captured

theoretically, the real domain continues to exert an influence on the actual and the empirical domain. The real domain consists of objects and phenomena that can be physical, such as minerals, or they can be social structures, such as bureaucracies. These physical or social structures result in the events registered in the empirical domain and are theorised and tested in the actual domain (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 24; Danermark et al., 2002, p. 20f; Sayer, 2000, p. 11). While the empirical and actual domains hence consist of what can be sensed, which has many common traits with the positivistic approach, adding the real domain has the result that the ontology of critical realism appears open to structures and mechanisms that cannot be sensed and hence are not directly observable.

The recognition that there is a real domain makes the understanding of causality more complex. Besides analysing the empirical and the actual domain, it is also decisive to disclose the real domain and the relation between the real domain and the other two domains. To disclose those connections, objects and causal potentials are important concepts to understand. An object in the real domain can for example be “bureaucracy”, “the family” or, in this case, “the subsidy scheme”. Hence, within the social sciences, the objects are most often societal constructs that help organise the social world. In this case subsidy schemes organise the relationship between the municipality and the PNP sports hall and the subsidy scheme is an object with a causal potential. By having a causal potential, it is not a given that the effects will be the ones that are causally logical or expected. The subsidy schemes can have different effects depending on whether the causal potential is activated. Causal potentials are defined as: “capacities to behave in particular ways, and causal liabilities or passive powers, that is, specific susceptibilities to certain kinds of change” (Sayer, 2000, p. 11). Causal potentials refers to which underlying inclinations a given object has in relation to some causal mechanisms being more likely to occur than other mechanisms. In this case, how the subsidy scheme is structured makes some actions by PNP sports halls more likely than other actions. Such actions can be more precisely described as causal mechanisms.

Figure 5.1 The three ontological domains and their interpretation



Inspired by Mcevoy & Richards (2006)

Causal mechanisms are situated in the real domain and consist of a series of events resulting in a particular action or outcome (Sayer, 1992, p. 105ff). For example, one causal mechanism could be that the sports halls would respond to the economic incentives in the subsidy schemes by attempting to sell more timeslots. That is a possible causal mechanism which can be broken into different parts – for example, by discussing what it is that makes it reasonable to argue that the sports hall would react in that manner.

That a causal potential exists for a particular causal mechanism to unfold does not necessarily mean, however, that this causal mechanism will unfold. Whether it unfolds depends on an often complex interplay with the causal potentials of other objects. Such an understanding of causality focuses less on empirical regularities and more on treating the world as an open system, where many different causalities play out and where the consequences are tendencies rather than a priori determined (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 56; Rhodes, 2013). The social sciences often operate in such an open system in opposition to the natural sciences, which to a higher extent base their knowledge production on a closed and controlled system such as a laboratory (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 27; Sayer, 2000, p. 14).

By analysing in detail how causal mechanisms foreseen play out empirically in relation to a given mechanism, it is also indicated that what is of interest is more than just knowing whether the presence of A in general has resulted in B (Sayer, 1992, p. 107). Rather, the ambition is to increase

the understanding of the mechanisms behind different phenomena (George & Bennett, 2005: p. 130ff). In this case we want to take an in-depth look at which causal mechanisms can lead to differences in performance. The challenge, however, is that such an analysis can be argued to be contingent, which means that: “the actual effects of causal mechanisms will ... depend upon the conditions in which they work. The relationship between causal powers or mechanisms and their effects is therefore not fixed, but contingent.” (Sayer, 1992, p. 107).

It is on that background often argued that critical realism is best suited to increase the understanding of a given phenomenon. The increased understanding is created by having the empirical and the factual seen as the tip of the iceberg, whereas the real domain is the part of the iceberg below the surface and to disclose that part it is necessary to conduct in-depth studies using interpretations (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 24f). Inspired by a figure from Sayer (1992, p. 109), Figure 5.2 below can be used to explain the connection between the observation of objects and the outcome of a causal mechanism.

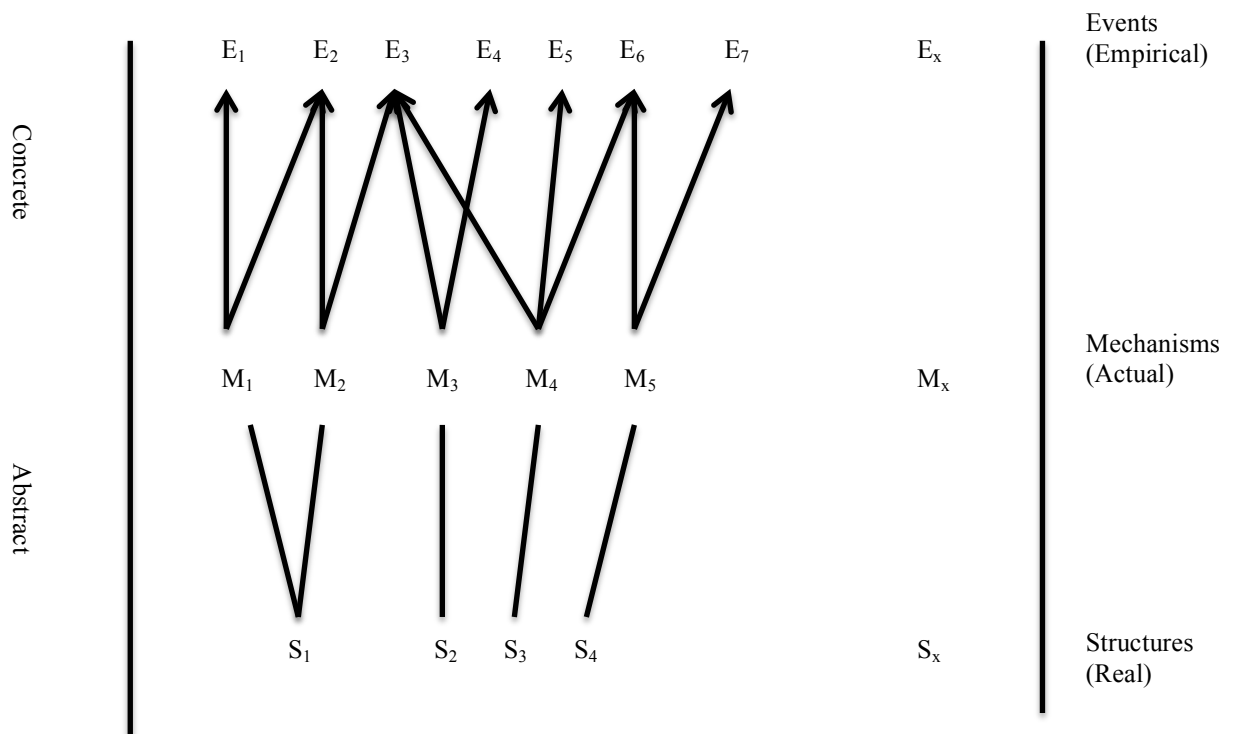
Figure 5.2: The connection between observation of objects and the outcome.

X (S) ——— (p1, p2, p3) - - - - - (c1, c2, c3, c4) - - - - - (e1, e2, e3, e4)

The object (X) here is different subsidy schemes and how those subsidy schemes are constructed (S). Depending on how the subsidy scheme is constructed, it will have different causal potentials, which under different circumstances can lead to different events. The event (e) is the event that actually takes place. These events are dependent on both the causal potentials in the subsidy scheme (p) and other objects’ causal potentials (c). Finally the relationship between the object (X) and the causal potentials (p) are necessary which means that only some specific causal potentials in the subsidy scheme are possible. The fully drawn line demarcates this. Whether those causal potentials (p) materialise depends on the conditions (c). Depending on those conditions, the causal potentials (p) might result in an event (e). The specific causal potentials is in this thesis formulated on the basis of theory and different competing hypothesis on how the causal potentials in the subsidy schemes play out in the interaction med other objects causal potentials (c) – it could for example be the interplay between the subsidy scheme, PNP sports halls and the importance of VSOs for sports facilities as this is addressed in article 1, Iversen & Cuskelly (2015). This contingent relationship is shown in the model by a stippled line. This indicates that the result of the mechanism may depend on the actual process and no changes might occur (fx e1). But there is also the possibility that rather large changes might occur (fx e2).

In sum, the consequence of the ontology of the critical realism is sketched in Figure 5.3 below. The underlying structures make different mechanisms possible. To which events the mechanisms lead depends on how the mechanisms influence the interplay they end up having with other mechanisms. Where the events are tangible and in the empirical domain, the mechanisms and structures in the factual and in the real domain are more abstract.

Figure 5.3: The ontology of critical realism.



Inspired by Sayer (1992, p. 117)

Starting from the ontology of critical realism, the focus in the thesis is firstly on observing what can be measured immediately as changes in utilisation in the empirical domain as quantitative changes after the changes in the public management subsidy schemes. Secondly, the ambition is via the interviews to disclose parts of the actual and real domains. Such disclosure enables a search for structures and mechanisms which can explain the phenomena observed in the empirical and actual domains.

5.3 The epistemology of critical realism

Epistemology connects to the question of how to collect knowledge about a societal phenomenon that we want to study. This section will assess to what extent it is possible to capture and analyse the intended and unintended consequences of the different subsidy schemes over time.

According to critical realism, when interpreting the objective world one makes different analytical constructions that can be used to make in-depth analyses of a given phenomenon. For example, it might be difficult in the empirical domain to observe any changes, which might make it relevant to create conditions which make it easier to observe the given mechanism. Using an analogy this is what happens within the natural sciences, when all other things are being kept equal in a closed system, so that a particular mechanism, as for example the effect of gravity, is isolated and hence can be observed. Using a similar logic it is argued within the realm of the positivistic branches of the social sciences, that it is possible to make observations over time, where all things are being kept equal and it is therefore to a large extent possible to isolate any effects of a given hypothesis. But since according to proponents of critical realism social science research always deals with open systems, such a reduction in complexity is simply not possible, as it in open systems is not possible to show such clear-cut causalities (Sayer, 1992, p. 131).

Hence, according to critical realism, the task of the social sciences should be limited to explaining existing phenomena. This line of reasoning starts from the understanding that the theories and observations pursued so far within social science are fallible attempts at capturing the complexity of the world. The knowledge that is condensed in theories is a product of history, and such knowledge can be improved (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 205; Danermark et al., 2002).

Even though the notion of closed systems are discarded, some proponents of critical realism do support the idea that it is possible to have pseudo-closed systems, which is the type of system that is closest to the closed systems of the natural sciences. Such pseudo-closed systems are societal constructs and can for example be the system of justice, how family life is organised, the family in itself, the educational system or the health sector (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 68). In such systems there will be an increased level of predictability which makes it possible to a greater extent to observe regularities across similar pseudo-closed systems. It is important to stress that it is not argued that this leads to the type of stability that makes it possible to run the same type of closed system experiments that is promoted by the proponents of the more positivistic parts of the social sciences (Danermark et al., 2002, p. 69). Rather, the aim is to assess and analyse the mechanisms

found in a pseudo-closed system in order to analyse how those mechanisms influence and result in future events. In this case hence we look at the pseudo-closed system the municipal public management of PNP sports halls via different subsidy schemes. The system is a pseudo-closed system, as it is a structure created by the polity of the municipality, shares a number of traits and exists as a societal structure with a built-in degree of predictability.

The approach hence uses an epistemology that uses particular methods to disclose the mechanisms behind the intended and unintended effects of implementing different subsidy schemes. Further, in order to attain a precise understanding of the mechanisms, there is a continuous cycling between using an inductive and a deductive epistemological approach. Such an approach is termed abductive and is on a par with the claim from critical realism that using a multitude of methods is a way of attempting to capture the complex causal mechanisms in the real domain (Danermark et al., 2002; Omwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010).

5.4 Conclusion on the ontological and epistemological point of departure

Table 5.2 below is a summary of the three paradigms presented:

Table 5.2: A summary of the three paradigms.

	Constructivist paradigm	Critical realism	Positivist paradigm
Ontology	The world is socially constructed and exists on the basis of the interpretations of the actors in society	The world exist both of phenomena, that can be objectively sensed and phenomena that needs interpretation to analyse	The world exist independent of societal actors
Epistemology	Knowledge is created in the interaction between the research and the societal actor that is studied	Epistemological relativism. The creation of knowledge is contingent depending on the analytical and societal context in which it is created	The truth is objective and can be sensed and proven
The research process	Explorative (inductive)	Testing of hypothesis and explorative Abductive	Testing of hypothesis (deductive)
Methods	Primarily qualitative	Combinations	Primarily quantitative

Critical realism also supports my investigation of the intended effects as well as any unintended effects that might develop via the use of theory. Hence, it is necessary to elaborate on how the theories introduced can be used for this purpose according to critical realism.

5.5 Theory-use according to critical realism.

Starting from the idea of a pseudo-closed system, one can assess to what extent different theories can be argued to have explanatory power in relation to the mechanisms that can be observed because, according to critical realism: “The possibility of empirically assessing theories in the absence of crucial test conditions is perhaps clearest in the (most common) situation where the objective is to select amongst two or more hypotheses. For in this case we are ultimately interested in the relative performance of hypotheses whatever the relevant selection criteria.” (Lawson, 1998, p. 157).

From this point of departure a multitude of theories exist on public management types (NPM, governance and budget), how different types of structure might impact the effects (rational and historical institutionalism) and what role the difference in motivation might have (egoistic versus altruistic). I have used these to develop the theoretical understanding of the subsidy schemes. (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 27; Sayer, 2000, p. 14) and to assess which mechanisms it is relevant to consider. The idea of developing possible strategies via the use of theories is inspired by the stance of critical realism on using interdisciplinary approaches to increase the knowledge of complex mechanisms (Buch-Hansen & Nielsen, 2005, p. 58f). The assumption is that different structures and mechanisms are found in the real domain. One type of mechanism that is likely to play a role is a tendency to rational behaviour, as the subsidy schemes have important economic implications for the sports halls, and it is hence relevant to use theories that can increase the understanding of how the presence of such mechanisms may influence the empirical and the actual domains. But it also seems likely that considerations other than economic and rational ones will be found as mechanisms in the real domain. As the boards of PNP sports halls are dominated by VSOs, and as the most important group is the users, it is likely that structures exist in the real domain that might lead to non-rational behaviours. By using a multitude of theories different possible structures and mechanisms have systematically been described in Iversen & Cuskelly (2015). The next step has been to analyse which of these strategies seem to be found in the empirical domain, how these strategies contribute to describe mechanisms, and thereby develop the theoretical understanding in the actual domain – and on that background to draw partially closer to disclosing some of the mechanisms in the real domain. Using a multitude of theories gives a richer description of the phenomenon studied and a better insight into which mechanisms that might be found in the real domain. On that backdrop it was assessed how the chosen theories contributed to analyse any possible linkages between public management models, strategies and utilisation.

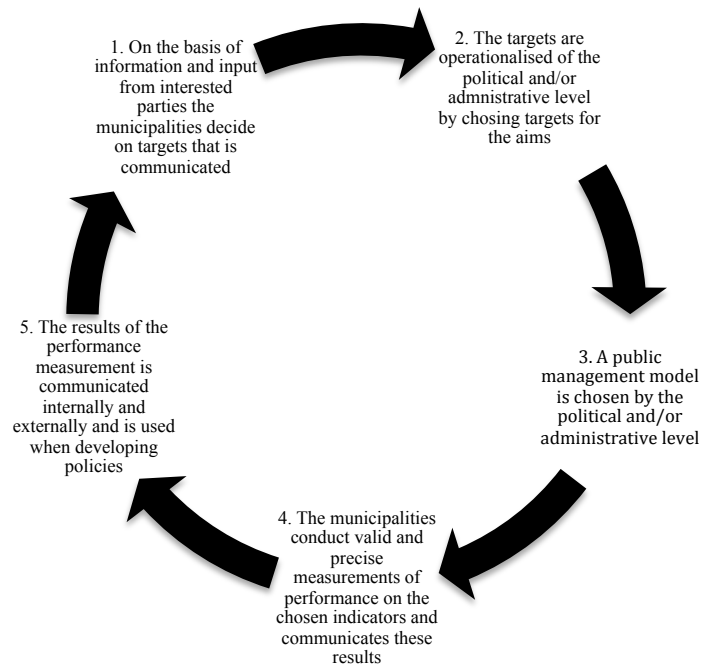
The choice of using different theories was also a result of the argument proposed by critical realism, i.e., that theories are a result of human activities and that they might be wrong. It would hence be too optimistic to believe that it is possible to gain a sufficient understanding of any given phenomenon by trying to understand it using only one theory. Hence, the choice of critical realism as a theoretical framework for the thesis suggests the use of several theories to inform the analysis. The theories used are considered in the next section.

6 Theory

This introduction to the theoretical perspectives might seem brief but it is more thoroughly developed in the conceptual articles. Therefore, for an in-depth introduction to the conceptual and theoretical framework, I refer to Iversen & Cuskelly (2015), which is the most comprehensive theoretical article of the thesis. In the sections that follow theoretical perspectives will be introduced with the aim, based on a theoretical analysis, of presenting the strategies the PNP sports halls might pursue when exposed to different types of public management.

The core of the theoretical perspective starts from the stream of performance management literature that deals in different ways with measuring performance and using performance information to improve the performance of the public sector (Bruijn, 2007; Moynihan, 2008). Performance management is increasingly used throughout the western world (Bruijn, 2007; Kristiansen, 2014; Walker et al., 2010) and the concept of performance management is often coupled with the move for NPM reform (Van Dooren, Bouckaert, & Halligan, 2010). This thesis therefore places itself in the slipstream of that development as it is assessing the consequences of a shift to public management based on NPM-principles.

Figure 6.1: A cyclical approach to performance management.



Inspired by Moynihan (2008, p. 6).

The thesis defines performance management as the type of public management that incorporates and uses performance information to make decisions with the aim of improving performance (Van Dooren et al., 2010). It therefore starts from a cyclical approach to performance management, where the performance is measured and where it is assessed to what extent the changes in performance can be attributed to differences in subsidy schemes (see Figure 6.1).

The structure of this theoretical chapter is partially connected to the different phases in the cycle and the necessary theoretical introductions and elaborations. The next sections deal with phases one to three, phase four is partially dealt with in the articles of the thesis and in the discussions and conclusions. The participating municipalities also deal with phase four to the extent that they communicate the results themselves. Phase five is left fully to both participating municipalities and any other municipalities that might find the results relevant when considering change in their local policies.

6.1 Considerations when deciding and operationalising targets and and choosing indicators

Part of performance management is to assess how the public administration performs. In that way performance management is often seen as a phenomenon that is created by the intentional behaviour of government agents and there is often a value judgement connected to it – performance can be either good or bad. Performance often equals the registered outputs and/or outcomes (Van Dooren et al., 2010). It is hence important to define the goals and targets of policies on which performance will be assessed and the indicators on which the success or failure of the policies might be measured.

The idea that is at the heart of performance management is therefore that politicians, often with help from and in dialogue with public administration, decide on which targets should be pursued. From that point it is up to the managers in public administration to pursue those targets and to have their success in achieving those targets measured on a set of indicators (H. G. Rainey & Jung, 2010; Walker et al., 2010). An initial decision, therefore, is what the goals and targets of the subsidy scheme are. It is argued by a number of different scholars that the goals of public organisations are vague, multiple and mutually conflicting compared with the goals of private organisations (H. G. Rainey & Jung, 2010), and that needs to be taken into consideration in any analysis of how public administration can steer public institutions most efficiently (Andrews, Boyne, & Walker, 2011; Hvidman & Andersen, 2014; Le Grand, 2010). It is immediately apparent that PNP sports halls

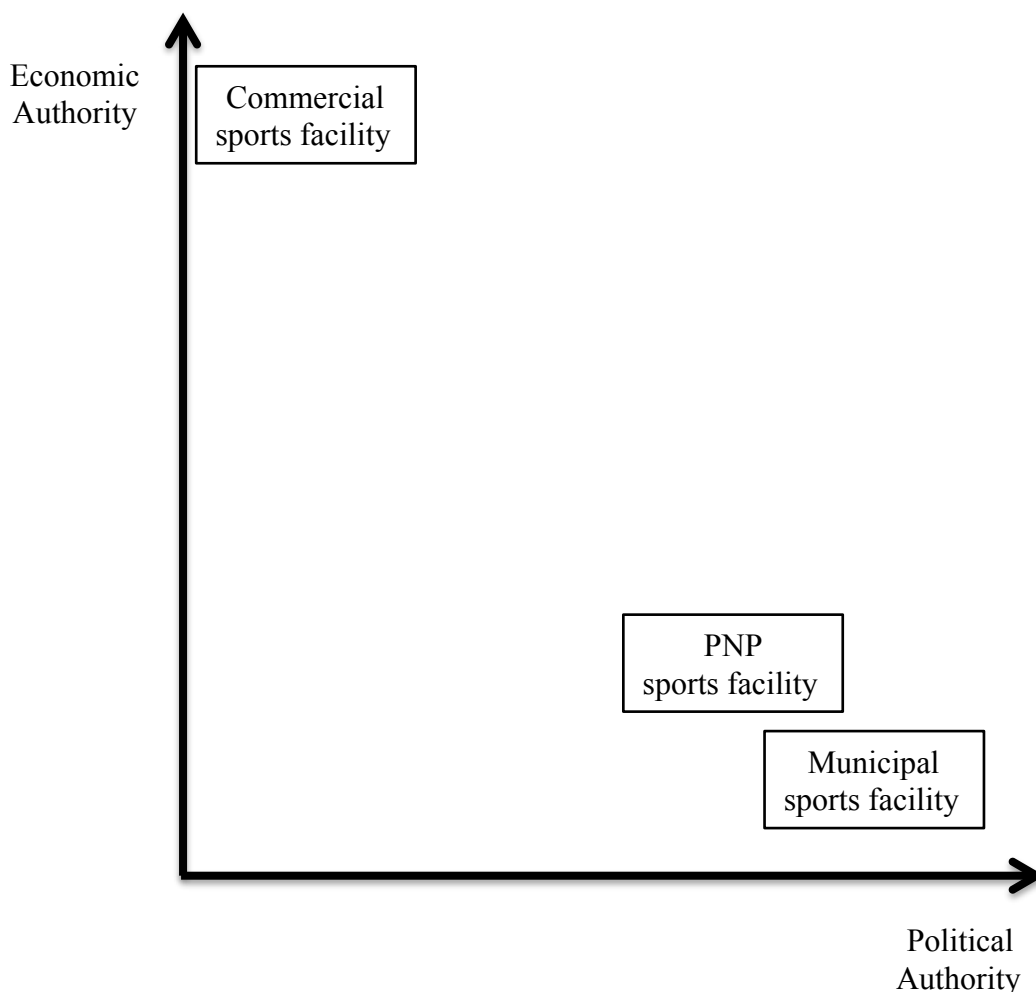
have some characteristics similar to a public organisation as to a large extent they rely on public subsidies and to some extent have mutually conflicting goals. The PNP sports hall needs to take into consideration the wants and needs of its user groups, primarily VSOs, and at the same time to consider any possibilities of running the PNP sports hall as a business and generating income to improve its finances. Hence, it is important when formulating theoretical assumptions about the effects of policies and the subsequent goal-setting and targets to assess theoretically to what extent the PNP sports hall can be seen as either a public or a private organisation.

6.1.1 Is the PNP sports hall a private or a public organisation?

To assess whether PNP sports halls should all be dealt with as primarily private or public organisations, the concept of “publicness” introduced by (Bozeman, 1984, 1987) is used. The degree of “publicness” is measured on two dimensions. First, public authority covers the idea that many organisations, including private organisations, are under the influence of decisions made within the public sector. Examples are different types of subsidies or laws and other similar measures aiming at regulating behaviour. Second, economic authority deals with how markets influence all organisations. An example is that a public organisation can also be dependent on selling services and products to other public authorities, companies or persons (Bozeman, 2013; Bozeman & Bretschneider, 1994). The degree of economic authority and the degree of political authority influence how the organisation will formulate strategies and which strategies are formed both influence the organisation’s performance (Bozeman & Moulton, 2011).

Using insights from public administration literature as well as the knowledge about non-profit private institutions in general (Amirkhanyan, Kim, & Lambright, 2014; Ibsen & Habermann, 2006; Thøgersen, 2013) it is possible to assess the balance between economic and political authority (the “publicness”) of the PNP sports hall when compared with other types of sports facilities – commercial sports facilities and sports facilities owned by municipalities.

Figure 6.2: Different types of sports facilities in the publicness grid.



Commercial sports facilities receive no direct public funding and, aside from legal regulations on matters such as health, safety, and employment, are not subject to public policies. If in financial difficulties, the commercial sports facility closes. Hence, commercial sports facilities are under a high degree of economic authority and to a lesser extent under political authority. Contrary to commercial sports facilities, the main funding of a sports facility owned by the municipality comes from the public purse. As sports facilities owned by municipalities are embedded in the public sector they are under a more direct influence of public authority via different types of policies.

PNP sports facilities receive a large proportion of their revenue via direct and indirect public subsidies and income from selling goods and services to the public sector. There is little or no tradition of competition between PNP sports facilities in attracting users. Many VSOs were involved in the creation of the PNP sports facilities they use and are often responsible for their daily

operations, managing issues such as maintenance and cleaning. There is often some geographical distance between different facilities which tends to reduce competition.

Even though PNP sports facilities might attract support from philanthropists or charitable foundations, they receive only a marginal income from sources other than the public sector and fees paid by the VSOs. If a financial challenge occurs, a PNP sports facility will rely upon the municipality to provide support or assistance.

Hence, the PNP sports hall can be argued to have traits more similar to a public organisation than to a private enterprise. Public organisations are rife with mutually conflicting goals, however research indicates that having clear goals and performance measures that are appropriate for a public organisation might result in better performance of that public organisation (H. G. Rainey & Jung, 2010). A risk of focusing solely on utilisation is that such a focus might result in missing some of the targets that are less clearly formulated and might be more difficult to measure, such as for example the role a PNP sports facility might play in a small community as the only publicly supported welfare institution left. But with that risk in mind, I have chosen to accept the limitations of focusing on a clear goal in order to assess whether better performance could be achieved (Bruijn, 2007). This is also in line with the focus that both municipalities in this study have on increasing utilisation – both via their policies and via their actions.

That municipalities and other actors within public administration have adopted the principles of performance management in the public sector is not new, but there is increasing debate on how to establish valid measurements of performance (Heinrich, 2012; Nielsen, 2013). Also, there has been a focus on how performance management might have unintended consequences such as a focus on short-term performance at the cost of long-term performance (Bevan & Hood, 2006) and how measuring performance might result in too much focus on the indicators (Thiel & Leeuw, 2002). This thesis taps into both discussions as, first, it is an example of how to establish measurements of utilisation and to assess whether the established measurements are valid (Iversen, In review-b) and, second, the focus is also on unintended consequences, such as any signs of an increased focus on short-term performance or increased focus on performance on the indicator chosen, i.e., utilisation.

As can be seen in the cyclical model illustrated in Figure 6.1, after having decided on the targets (step 1), the next step is to choose the indicators of performance (step 2) in a manner that is valid. The next step in the cyclical approach to performance management is therefore to choose which

public management, in this case subsidy schemes, could be implemented in order to achieve good performance on the chosen indicator, i.e. utilisation.

6.2 Introduction to different public management theories (NPM, Governance and Budget)

When targets and indicators are decided, the next step is to choose a tool from the public management toolbox to pursue a given target. The choice of tool might be part of the political process, but following the idea in performance management of “letting managers manage” (Kettl, 1997), it is often left to the public administration to decide which public management tools are chosen. In this case, the subsidy scheme has been suggested by the public administration and then confirmed politically in the participating municipalities. The subsidy scheme is hence the result of contingent local policy processes in the two municipalities. What is considered in this section is, therefore, to what extent the empirically decided subsidy schemes can be aligned with the theoretical constructs. This confirms the idea that theoretical constructed theories often cannot be found empirically in pure forms (Christensen & Lægreid, 2011), but that it remains relevant to identify which overarching steering paradigms the subsidy schemes resembles, to be able analyse the possible consequences of the different subsidy schemes (Lynn, 2012). The overarching theoretical regimes are thus chosen due to their partial alignment with the empirically found subsidy schemes and are briefly introduced in the following sections.

6.2.1 *Budget based public management*

First, elements of a budget based performance management regime are found in the non-activity based subsidy scheme in the Municipality of Aalborg. This approach is arguably inspired by the approach to public administration based on hierarchies and stricter administrative structures that was characteristic of the public sector in the western world in the 1960s and 1970s, labelled Old Public Administration (OPM) (Christensen, 2006). This approach focuses on due process, open and transparent decisions, accuracy in dealing with public matters and the idea that the public employee should be a neutral representative taking care of the interests of the citizen within the framework of the laws and the policy goals set forth by the politicians. One of the criticisms of OPM has been that this approach to public management is inefficient and that market-like incentives are more efficient (Christensen, 2006). But it is also argued that the incrementalist logic (Christiansen, 2008; Lindblom, 1959) often related to OPM, where the municipality uses the budget from the previous year to guide next year’s budget, has its advantages. The incrementalist public management approach based on OPM is in this thesis labelled “budget”. The advantage is argued to be that actors tend to be satisfied when they receive the same subsidy this year as they did last year. This

possibly results in fewer political disagreements and allows the municipalities to control PNP sports facilities budgets without relying on market structures, which are influenced by supply and demand. According to some scholars, this might not be a negative outcome as it is argued that the products of the public sector are not well suited to the dynamics of the market (Pierre, 2011). Hence, a possible advantage of the budget-model might be that complex matters are better solved than they might otherwise have been using market mechanisms.

Seen from the theoretical perspective of OPM, the sports facility faces a complex task, as it can be seen as the mediator between different interest groups and in order to perform that task well the management need to know which resources they can rely on. Such stable funding conditions might mean that they can focus on their core tasks such as, for example, maximising utilisation.

6.2.2 NPM based public management

In the activity-based subsidy scheme in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn elements from New Public Management (NPM) are seen. This approach to public management dominated much research in the 1990s (Hood, 1991). However, according to a number of different scholars, the idea of NPM convergence spreading itself all over the western world has been exaggerated as the NPM label has been given to so many different types of reforms and policies and implemented in different ways and at different paces (Goldfinch & Wallis, 2010; Pollitt, 2013; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Among the many different types of reform and policies bearing the NPM label, one widespread notion is that NPM should introduce market-like mechanisms to steer public organisations, as it is believed that introducing such mechanisms from private enterprises will result in the public sector being more efficient and responsive to the needs of customers. Theoretically, introducing market-like mechanisms creates clearer incentives for the providers of the public services to be more focused on efficiency in order to be able to compete with other organisations.

The introduction of market-like mechanisms in this thesis is labelled as an attempt at public management via NPM. In the activity-based subsidy scheme in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn the level of subsidy is connected to number of timeslots used by VSOs. This can be seen as a market-like approach to public management, as the idea is to create incentives for the PNP sports hall to work on increasing the number of timeslots VSOs use in order to increase its subsidies. Hence, the basic analysis of this public management model is that if the subsidies are connected to levels of activity in the PNP sports hall, the sports hall is expected to react to the economic

incentive and to attempt to increase the number of timeslots used in the sports facility by attracting more VSOs.

6.2.3 Governance based public management

An element found in the public management model in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn is in this thesis termed a governance perspective. From this perspective, different actors are included in public management via the process of making, coordinating and implementing policy (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). The idea of governance can be seen as part of the response to the hollowing out of the state, accepting that the state cannot solve all of the complex problems societies face in a globalised world (Klijn, Edelenbos, & Steijn, 2010; Sørensen & Torfing, 2011, 2014). How the governance perspective plays out empirically will have different characteristics depending on the number of participants in the network, how the power between the actors is distributed, how dependent they are on each other's resources and how often they meet (Rhodes, 1997; 2006). The larger the network, the higher the chances are that public management via governance will have broader effects regarding policy goals, assuming that the members of the network agree on the policy goals. A high degree of resource dependency will also result in higher probability that the network will be successful, as all of the involved actors will be motivated to work towards the same policy goals. The type of network management implemented also matters. The tighter the control from the public authority, the greater the influence the public authority will have on keeping the focus on the initial policy goals (Rhodes, 2013). However, such a strategy of tight control risks being ineffective as the persons involved in the network might perceive it as an attempt to minimise their chances of gaining influence. Scholars argue, therefore, that a better solution is to manage the network based on trust (Klijn et al., 2010) and on strategic signposting that sets broad parameters for what the network should be steering towards (Rhodes, 2013). Governance based on such principles arguably increases the likelihood of the network increasing its performance.

Part of the subsidy scheme from the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn to the PNP sports halls includes an extra subsidy to sports halls that agree to formulate a masterplan together with other local actors such as local businesses, other voluntary organisations, relevant public institutions and other relevant parties. The municipality provides the funding so that the PNP sports hall together with other local actors can pay external consultants to help them make a strategic plan of how to increase the efficiency and utilisation of the PNP sports facility. This could be argued to be an example of strategic signposting, as the municipality signals the aim of the masterplan. But besides signalling that the municipality requires the focus on efficiency and utilisation to form part of the

masterplan, how the PNP sports hall creates and implements the masterplan is a matter for itself. From a governance perspective, this type of public management could result in the sports facility management together with the other local actors increasing the utilisation of the sports facility.

On the basis of this theoretical analysis of the three different public management regimes, the next step is to assess how these regimes will be received by the organisations – the PNP sports halls. In order to analyse how the PNP sports halls develop strategies, two different theories handling the structure and actor perspectives theoretically are introduced. First, sociological and rational institutionalisms are introduced to grasp how the institutional structures might influence the PNP sports halls' reactions to the different subsidy schemes.

6.2.4 The impact of organisational behaviour on strategies

In short, one of the clearest distinctions between rational and sociological institutionalism is whether actors are thought to be acting rationally (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Peters, 2012). Proponents of rational institutionalism argue that actors exercise rationality similar to that of actors in the ideal market. However, North (1990) added that actors in the market have attributes other than rationality and gives two examples. First, the actor is not solely wealth maximising. Second, it is difficult to collect and decode sufficient amounts of information to gain an overview of all possible actions. However, the assumption of rationality is not discarded, as the actor generally will have a tendency to follow rational considerations on the basis of their assessments of the costs of different actions. Depending on the type of public management, there will be different rational incentives. If there is an economic incentive to sell more timeslots to VSOs, it is expected that the PNP sports hall will focus on selling more timeslots. In contrast, a lesser economic incentive will result in less focus on attracting more VSO activity to a PNP sports facility, which might focus instead on selling products on the commercial market to other users. Seen from the rational institutional perspective it is imperative to assess the economic incentives in the public management model to explain why PNP sports facilities choose a particular strategy to increase utilisation. The economic incentives in the subsidy scheme will, to a large extent, influence how much the PNP sports hall focuses on increasing utilisation.

In contrast to rational institutionalism sociological institutionalism presupposes that actors are *not* rational. Instead, a central tenet of sociological institutionalism is the “logic of appropriateness”, which manifests itself in actors asking themselves questions such as, “What kind of situation is this? What kind of person am I? What should a person such as I do in a situation like this?” (March

& Olsen, 2006). A key point of sociological institutionalism is that the strategies of the organisation draw in the actor's intuitive perception of what is right or wrong, rather than on the basis of strategic and rational rule based considerations.

From a sociological institutionalism perspective the range of strategies available to PNP sports facilities is limited due to the "logic of appropriateness". This logic is difficult to grasp, as it could be argued that such a logic is only possible to discover via a concrete empirical study and hence it is not possible to develop expectations of possible strategies a priori. However, it is argued that in organisations a continuous interpreting of values and norms takes place and that these are represented and observable in an organisational culture, that it is possible to analyse and hence it is also possible to theorise a priori about which strategies might occur (Berg, 2000; Christensen, Læg Reid, Roness, & Rovik, 2007). According to this line of thought strategies can be created partially in the interplay between the actors that contribute financially to the PNP sports halls (primarily the municipality) and the primary user groups (VSOs, public organisations and institutions). The relationship between PNP sports halls and VSOs is influenced by the close and frequent interactions between them. VSOs are often closely intertwined with the daily business of PNP sports halls and in many cases they are the sole tenants. According to sociological institutionalism, the special relation and connection between the PNP sports halls and VSOs could result in a stagnating or even decreasing utilisation as PNP sports halls develop strategies focusing primarily on the demands of existing user groups. Such strategies might exist because it is seen as appropriate that the current users, primarily VSOs, are seen as the dominant users of a sports facility.

6.2.5 The impact of motivation on strategies

The next step is to assess how the motivation of the actors might influence choice of strategy from an actor perspective. The work of Le Grand (2003, 2007, 2010) is used as a point of departure to consider how the motivation of public employees might have different consequences as this line of thought has shown its worth in similar settings (Andersen, 2013; Bøgh Andersen & Holm Pedersen, 2012). Le Grand's basic tenet is that public sector employees can be either a knight or a knave. Knights work towards a particular goal (such as increased sports facility utilisation) because they are altruistic and want to do good things for other persons in society. Knaves mainly want to do good things for themselves (Le Grand, 2007, p. 18f). However, most often the motivation of public sector employees is a combination of the two (Andersen, 2013). Le Grand introduced four types of approaches that he argues interact with motivation (Le Grand, 2010). The principles underpinning

Le Grand’s four approaches are: “trust”, where employees with a professional background are trusted to spend the budget efficiently; “targets”, where accomplishing politically decided goals results in better performance; “voice”, where the users can express their (dis)satisfaction; and “choice and competition” where user choice is coupled with provider competition. These different approaches can be found in the three public management models introduced above (NPM, governance and budget). “Trust” is mostly a part of the budget model, as it can be argued that the success of that management model relies on the PNP sports halls pursuing the increase of utilisation by themselves. “Voice” cuts across the different models as VSOs in all models have direct links to the board and the management of the PNP sports halls and the PNP sports halls are also in a close dialogue with the municipalities. “Choice and competition” is primarily a part of the NPM management as this model in principle relies on the users being interested in choosing between different options and the PNP sports halls to navigate in order to attract more customers. These overlaps are used to assess possible strategies on the background of the influence by structures (rational and sociological institutionalisms) and by actors (motivation).

Figure 6.3: What influences the strategies of PNP sports halls?

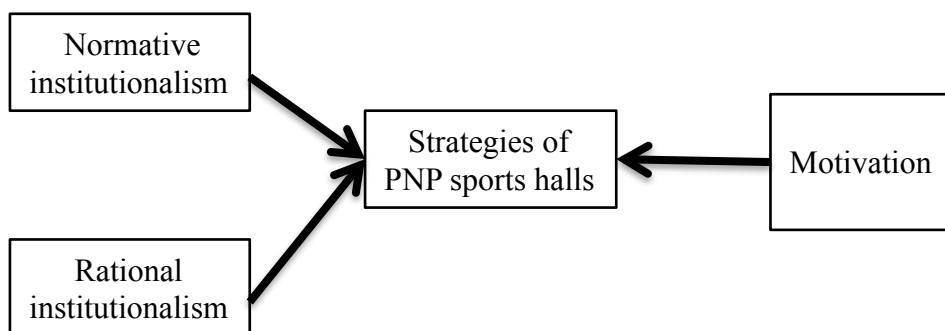


Figure 6.3 shows first that a mix of knavish and knightish motivation will influence the strategies of the PNP sports halls. The formation of strategy is also influenced by the structures of which the PNP sports hall is a part, which is shown by including the influence from the institutional structures – be they rational or sociological. The next step then is to assess which strategies might be formed on the basis of the theoretical considerations.

6.2.6 A theoretical framework for PNP sports hall strategies and their consequences

Having developed a more general framework for understanding how and why the strategies of PNP sports facilities are established from the perspective of public administration theories, a number of strategies that might emerge from applying different models of public management to PNP sports

facilities are developed. Table 6.1 shows how different types of public management (X) influence strategy (Z) and how different strategies influence utilisation (Y).

Table 6.1: How different types of public management subsidy schemes (X) may influence strategies (Z) and how strategies may influence utilisation (Y).

Type of new institutionalism	Rational institutionalism		Sociological institutionalism	
Motivation	Knightish	Knavish	Knightish	Knavish
Subsidy scheme: NPM	Z: Strategy 1: Focus on selling, marketing and attracting active customers (+)	Z: Strategy 2: Focus on how to gain most income with smallest possible effort (+)	Z: Strategy 3: Focus on how to satisfy local government, the VSOs and new user groups (+)	Z: Strategy 4: Focus on influencing the perception other actors has of the PNP sports facility (-)
Subsidy scheme: Governance	Z: Strategy 5: Focus on collaborating with all possible user groups participating in the master plan to increase income (+)	Z: Strategy 6: Focus on maximising income by showing good will to new users but instead focus on existing users (-)	Z: Strategy 7: Focus on what the old 'appropriate' users expect and how to satisfy them (+)	Z: Strategy 8: Focus on what is expected from the old 'appropriate' users and how to make them expect less (-)
Subsidy scheme: Budget	Z: Strategy 9: Focus on new activities and users to the extent it can be done without harming existing users (+)	Z: Strategy 10: Focus on manipulating measurement so the PNP sports facility seems busier than what is actually the case. (-)	Z: Strategy 11: Focus on maximising utilisation by living up to local government expectations (+)	Z: Strategy 12: Have a half-hearted dialogue with existing users and showing indifference to new users (-)

(+) indicates that this strategy is argued to increase Y (utilisation) (-) indicates that this strategy is argued to decrease or stabilise Y (utilisation)

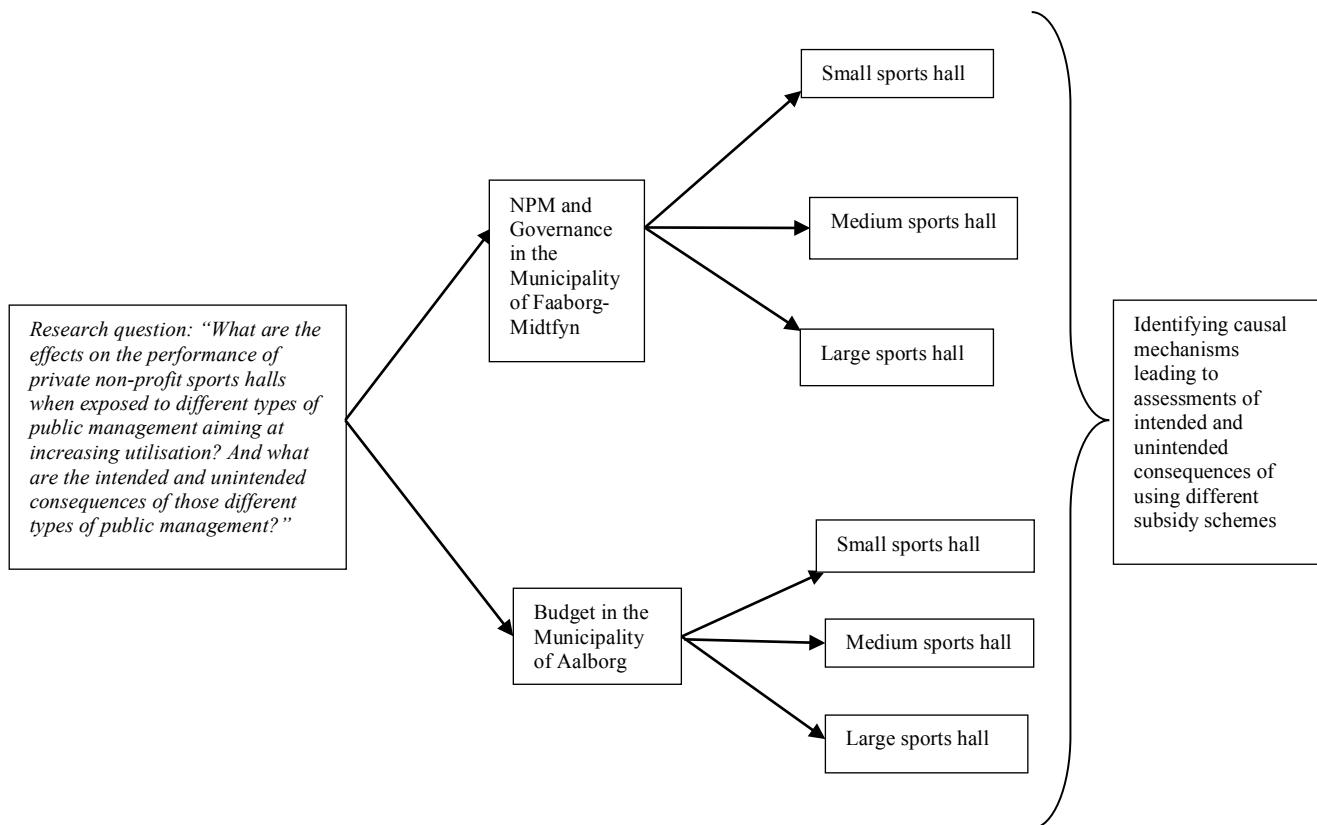
These different approaches to choice of strategy are further elaborated in Iversen & Cusckelly (2015) where a more in-depth argument for the different strategies and their consequences can be found. After having presented the theoretical perspectives, the next step is to present how those theoretical considerations are pursued empirically. To do that, the methodological considerations of the thesis are presented in the sections that follow.

7 Methodology

In order to consider the effects of different subsidy schemes on utilisation, a preliminary measurement was carried out in 2012 in both the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn and the Municipality of Aalborg. In weeks 9 and 13 in 2012 utilisation of 13 courts in nine PNP sports halls was measured using the method for assessing utilisation introduced in Iversen (In review-b). Those weeks were chosen to assess utilisation in indoor sports halls as both utilisation during peak season and utilisation in a week between peak season and low season are relevant to get a fuller picture of how utilisation might develop over time. The method assesses utilisation by collecting 11 variables (such as start/end time, number of active persons, type of activity, age, gender, intensity) and makes it possible to get a quantitative assessment of what takes place in the sports facility. Further, interviews were conducted in the autumn of 2012. The selection of which respondents are to be interviewed is often based on interviewing as many as possible rather than considering how the interviewees are different and how they are similar and on that background assess whether the variation in the interviewees is large or small (Goldstein, 2002). Hence, it has been an important priority to have a large variation in the types of interviewees selected as well as interviewing persons in the same roles across the different PNP sports halls. Therefore, at each PNP sports hall three interviews with different persons were conducted: the manager, the chairman of the board and the chairman of the largest VSO using the sports facility (see appendix 3). This resulted in 27 interviews in 2012. To be able to compare utilisation over time utilisation was measured again using the same method in the same weeks 9 and 13 in 2014. In the autumn of 2014 another 27 interviews was conducted with the same persons as in the first round of interviews. They were interviewed as late as possible in the project period to maximise the chances of tracing any change. The interviews lasted between approximately 30 minutes and 75 minutes.

Figure 7.1 shows the research design. The aim is to be able to trace any connections between the three different types of public management, the three different sizes of sports halls and the intended (increased utilisation) and unintended effects of differences in public management. To do so a total of nine cases were selected; three PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Aalborg and six PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn that differ in size. Further, in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, six PNP sports halls are exposed to NPM subsidy schemes and three of those six PNP sports halls are exposed to the governance subsidy scheme.

Figure 7.1: The research design



The decision to use both quantitative and qualitative methods is a logical consequence of critical realism as a plurality of methods is important when assessing the mechanisms in the real domain, which is necessary when assessing any effects. As a first step towards discovering these mechanisms, it is relevant to show any quantitative changes across time. Disclosing what the development has been in utilisation does this. However, this type of survey on the activities does not in itself say anything about the causal mechanism behind these changes, and they are therefore supplemented with the qualitative analysis of the interviews in order to get closer to the causal mechanisms behind the choice of strategy and its possible impacts. The qualitative analysis is the part of the thesis in which it is possible to dig into the mechanisms behind the intended and unintended effects of the different subsidy scheme. In the sections below the principles behind that qualitative approach are elaborated further.

7.1 Causal mechanisms in a pseudo-closed system

A case can be understood as an instance of a class of events observed over time with the aim of developing theory on the causes of similarities or differences among cases (George & Bennett, 2005). In this case, where the focus is on strategies of PNP organisations, PNP sports halls are

chosen as examples of how PNP organisations might react under different types of public management. On that background, an analysis via observations seeks to explain why an entity, in this case the PNP sports hall, takes one action rather than another when reacting to a type of public management. In accordance with the chosen philosophy of science, public management via different subsidy schemes is the object (X), and the PNP sports hall is the case that illustrates the intended and unintended effects of the different subsidy schemes.

Starting from the understanding that subsidy schemes and PNP sports halls constitute a pseudo-closed system, it becomes imperative to assess which causal mechanisms are more present than others. In other words, any correlations between X and Y can be explained against the backdrop of the variation in the mechanisms in the real domain in relation to the object subsidy schemes (X) and not due to influences from other objects – what is termed the challenge of “equifinality” (George & Bennett, 2005). A strength of the methodology is that two measurements of utilisation exist at two different points in time, which is a stronger design than a cross-section design, in which it is difficult to assess whether development in the independent variable might influence the dependent variable or whether the observed variation in the dependent variable is due to other factors (Hellevik, 2011).

However, a basic challenge in measuring any effects is that changes in the subsidy scheme in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn came into effect on 1 January 2012. Methodologically, it would therefore have been preferable if the measurements were taken in weeks 9 and 13 in 2011 instead and the interviews in 2011 as well. But this was simply impossible since the project as it was initiated on 1 January 2012. Further, it can be argued that the motivation and behaviour of the management of the PNP sports halls might not be significantly affected so soon after the subsidy scheme has been implemented. Finally, it is debateable whether measurement after only two years is enough time for any changes to be observable. The implementation of new policies can take time and it also takes time before the effects of policies are observable (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

In summary, it remains a basic strength of the methodology that the intended and unintended effects are measured at two different points in time. To assess changes over time makes it more plausible to argue that any changes in the dependent variable (utilisation) might be due to changes in the independent variable (different subsidy schemes). It remains essential, however, for the

methodology of the thesis to analyse in detail how any changes in the independent variable via different causal mechanisms might translate into changes in the dependent variable.

The necessity of identifying causal mechanisms is due to the stance that critical realism takes on causality, according to which it is not possible to isolate causalities as society is seen as an open system in which everything is not equal. Within the sphere of critical realism, the closest to an all things being equal scenario in which it is possible to observe the relationship between X and Y is the pseudo-closed system which in this case is the municipal public management of PNP sports halls. The municipal public management of the various PNP sports halls shares a number of characteristics due to the similarities of PNP sports halls across the different contexts:

- All chosen PNP sports halls have an organisational capacity which enables the facility to be a part of this project. That is, they can commit the organisation to collect data and for staff to participate in research interviews. Also, having a certain amount of organisational capacity makes it likely that they can respond to changes in the subsidy scheme.
- All sports halls are PNP and historically, both at the time of founding and in daily operations, they have been and are closely attached to associations and persons, who have contributed with voluntary efforts in establishing, developing and running the sports facility. Today, they rely on a close interaction between local associations and these associations are often deeply involved on the boards of the different PNP sports halls.
- All PNP sports halls are dependent on public subsidies and therefore their relation to the municipality is decisive for their daily operations and development. The municipalities are on the other hand obliged to subsidise sports facilities, which results in stable subsidy scenarios across different sports halls.
- All PNP sports halls have similar articles of association and thus share the same necessary considerations when running their daily business such as balancing the budget with the wants and needs of the VSOs and other user groups.
- The PNP sports halls are of similar physical construction, with a thermal envelope necessary due to the relatively cold climate and an interior designed for sports activities. This construction needs continuous maintenance, heating and cleaning both inside and outside and hence has high operating costs. This gives the sports halls fairly equal operating conditions when compared with other sports facilities, where the variety of operating conditions is greater. For example, a soccer facility might consist of just one soccer pitch or a field of twelve soccer pitches.

- The PNP sports hall can be seen as a unitary actor which means that it is a unit with similar external preferences, whereas there can be different positions internally between the board and the management of the sports facility. It is assumed that the management and the board have a joint rational interest in pursuing the same the strategy externally towards, for example, VSOs and the municipality (Roberts, McNulty, & Stiles, 2005). This assumption has the consequence that any disagreements between board and management are not visible. The argument for making this assumption is that what is in focus is the response of the PNP sports hall as an organisation and not the reactions of and disagreements between individuals (in this case between the chairman of the board and the management).

The cases are on that background “most similar” (Gerring, 2007). Hence, it is possible to assess which consequences different approaches to public management have, as the one primary variable that varies across the cases is the type of public management and it is further argued that the types of public management are so different that it is relevant to look into whether such differences have any consequences. The findings on the intended and unintended consequences in this context are arguably transferable to other similar subsidy schemes and sports facilities. It remains worth noticing, however, that there might be local peculiarities and relevant differences in background variables that are difficult to capture and assess. In the analysis, I have attempted to capture the differences that might occur due to a difference in the size of the PNP sports hall, but any differences due to, for example, differences in socio-economic profiles, number of VSOs in the area, and the more detailed history of the PNP sports facility remains in the dark. However, as the aim is to show any possible causal mechanisms that might be transferable to other settings, which remains the core focus of the thesis, those challenges are not dealt with at any length either methodologically or analytically.

7.2 Number of cases

The number of cases necessary varies. According to quantitative logics, case studies with a small N can generally be defended if these are followed by large-N studies of the conclusions in the small-N study (King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994; Lieberman, 2005). A different approach to case study design argues that a single case study is enough, when the aim is via “process-tracing” to analyse a process and make a chain of causality in that particular case probable (Beach & Pedersen, 2013; George & Bennett, 2005). In this thesis a position between those two extremes is pursued. Based upon Gerring (2007, p. 84) it is argued that a partnership between large-N and small-N studies can be important,

as small-N studies form an important point of departure for larger studies and it is the initial aim of this study that it can serve as an inspiration for such large-N studies. But due to the foundation in critical realism, it is not immediately imperative to conduct a large-N follow-up study as it is the analysis of the specific causal mechanisms that is of interest (Sayer, 1992). Such analysis can produce valid and useable knowledge even though no large-N studies are conducted (Flyvbjerg, 2001, 2004, 2006). Hence it is necessary to explore the mechanisms between the object X (subsidy schemes) and Y (utilisation) – and via case studies with a smaller number of N which attempt to get closer to an understanding of the mechanisms between X and Y, than large-N statistical studies would have made possible (George & Bennett, 2005; Gerring, 2007). On that basis I chose to conduct case studies of nine PNP sports halls as this can be seen as the middle way between meticulously digging into the causal mechanisms in one case and doing quantitative analysis of hundreds of sports facilities. The results of this thesis will in fact also play a role as a small-N study ahead of a large-N study as a large research project on the operation, management and public management of Danish sports facilities that will elaborate and develop the findings presented in this thesis will be initiated in 2015. The study will consist of both a survey of 1000 sports facilities and case studies in at least 10 different sports facilities (Centre for Sport and Health and Civil Society & Danish Institute for Sports Studies, 2014).

7.3 The quasi-experimental design

By collecting data in 2012 and again in 2014 it is possible to assess what would have happened if no new subsidy scheme had been introduced in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn. This choice of cases in such a natural experiment is different than it would be in scenarios where the aim was to put together the perfect experimental setting for an intervention study. First and foremost the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn initiated the study, and hence the subsidy scheme and cases was naturally the subsidy scheme targeting PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn.

Since for practical and political reasons it is not possible to exclude some of the sports halls for the implementation of the new subsidy scheme, it is necessary to make other methodological adaptations to be able to compare what would have happened if no changes had been made to the subsidy scheme. Therefore the Municipality of Aalborg has been chosen for its potential to enable such comparisons, which is due to both scientific and pragmatic considerations. Most importantly, the Municipality of Aalborg has a subsidy scheme that is similar to the scheme that of the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn before the changes and the Municipality of Aalborg in 2012 had

no plans to change the subsidy scheme. Further, the Municipality of Aalborg, with a total population of more than 200,000, and a larger city with more than a 130,000 inhabitants, might immediately seem very different from the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn. However, due to the merging with other municipalities, the chosen PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Aalborg share geographical settings with the PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn. Both municipalities have an immediate proximity to a larger city (Aalborg and Odense). Hence, the PNP sports halls chosen from the Municipality of Aalborg function as a type of control, as the development in the municipality can be seen as an example of what would have happened if no changes in the subsidy scheme had occurred. The design is hence quasi-experimental (Shadish et al., 2002) in the sense that one municipality (Aalborg) can be seen as a control for the treatment of the PNP sports facilities in the other (Faaborg-Midtfyn). Finally, the inclusion of the Municipality of Aalborg made it possible to validate the data on the utilisation of PNP sports halls using new technology. Due to the collaboration with the Municipality of Aalborg and its economic contribution to the thesis the measurements of utilisation could be made using thermal cameras. But despite the support by the Municipality of Aalborg, it was not possible to validate the registration of the 13 courts in all 9 PNP sports halls simultaneously, as this would have required investments in acquiring thermal cameras that was far beyond the economic realities facing the project in total. But the validation do contribute to the validity of the study, which is important as achieving precise measurement of utilisation is decisive for the validity of the thesis (Iversen, In review-b).

7.4 The possible consequences of the difference in the size of PNP sports halls

In the interplay between the different subsidy schemes, the size of the sports facility might influence which causal powers come into play and thus which mechanisms that might take place. The idea is that the larger the PNP sports hall, the more organisational power it will have and the more strategic it might be in order to maximise subsidies. Organisational power relates to having better educated management, a more professional board and better economies of scale.

Hence, the size of the sports facility might influence which intended and unintended effects it is possible to register. For that reason within each subsidy scheme three different sizes of sports halls are chosen:

- Small sports halls with only one indoor court of 20 x 40 metres. Often these are dominated by a few VSOs, have limited possibilities for selling food and other services and are located in a rural area.

- Medium size sports halls consisting of both a court of 20 x 40 metres and outdoor soccer pitches. Often these are dominated by different VSOs and have some, but still limited, possibilities for selling food and other services and are located in a rural area.
- Large sports halls consisting of two 20 x 40 metres courts, other facilities and a swimming pool. These are used by a multitude of different VSOs, have a differentiated offer of sports (such as a fitness centre) and extensive food services and are located in a town or a city.

An objection to this approach could be that it is not a given that large sports facilities are the ones most prone to react to the incentives in the different subsidy schemes. They might be running so close to their maximum capacity that they find it too difficult to increase utilisation further. They might also have other businesses that provide extra income instead of focusing on increasing utilisation further. Hence, their internal organisational logic and the logic of the public management attempt via the subsidy scheme might clash. However, the argument for choosing this dimension is that it remains a basic prerequisite that the size of the organisation matters as the presence of organisational resources is imperative to be able to react to subsidy schemes. It will therefore be an empirical question, and a part of the qualitative analysis, how they actually react – whether the large sports facilities will be influenced to a greater extent than the smaller ones by the subsidy scheme or whether their internal organisational logic prevails.

7.5 Qualitative research strategy

The considerations set out above lead towards describing in greater detail on which considerations the qualitative analysis of the thesis rests. Qualitative analysis often consists of an inductive approach, where theories and concepts are developed as the data is analysed. However, such a “grounded theory” approach does not exist in a vacuum, but will always be inspired by existing theoretical and empirical knowledge (Kelle, 2000). The qualitative research strategy is in the same manner not created on a tabula rasa, but is under the influence of the knowledge that is generated throughout the creation of the thesis. Hence, a “progressive focusing” approach is pursued, where I as a scientist and as a former officer in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn have knowledge and insights which hopefully will enable a fruitful dialogue between prior theoretical understandings and empirical observations (Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012). Such an abductive approach (Omwuegbuzie & Combs, 2010) creates a dialogue between different methodological approaches and analytical strategies with the purpose of having openness for new insights that result in deeper understandings. In the initial stages of the analysis there is also openness towards surprising patterns of behaviour. Hence, there has been

openness towards pursuing tendencies in the empirical data that are not formulated in the theoretically developed expectations.

7.6 Planning and doing interviews

In a few instances it was necessary to consider what to do in 2014 when a new person had been elected to the board of the VSO or the PNP sports hall or there had been a change in the management of the PNP sports hall. The solution to that dilemma has been to interview the new person in the same role. The argument for that trade-off is that it is how the person in that role perceives the research question that is of importance. Therefore, the person interviewed in 2014 was in the same role in the organisation as the person interviewed in 2012.

The interviews are semi-structured to allow the interviewees, on one side, to elaborate on how they perceive the questions relating to the theoretical assumptions and on the other side to allow them to take up new themes that they find relevant and that might lead to changed or new expectations (Kvale, 1997).

The questions include, for example, questions about the role of the subsidy scheme, which possibilities the PNP sports hall sees for creating extra activities in its premises and the dialogue with local associations (see appendix 1). These overarching questions are developed on the basis of the theoretical explorations, the research question and the knowledge I possess after having worked with subsidies of PNP sports halls since 2007. Hence, no specific hypothesis is formulated. Rather, the initial theoretical and practical knowledge of the field is seen as the framework that via coding of the interviews is a way to structure the work with the interview data (Kelle, 2000). The results of this first round of interviews have two functions in the thesis. Firstly, it generates background knowledge that enables a stronger dialogue with the theoretical analysis of the thesis. Secondly, open coding is used to capture any additional ideas that might inform the analysis of the research question.

Based on the first round of interviews the conceptual framework was created (Iversen & Cuskelly, 2015) and used as a framework for interviews in 2014 (see appendix 2). The interviews focus on the possible reasons for differences in utilisation. Through focusing in the interviews on the dependent variable (utilisation), the intended and unintended effects are assessed – i.e. whether it is plausible that the subsidy schemes contribute to an increase or a decrease in utilisation.

The questions are as short as possible and will hopefully prepare the ground for descriptive answers, as it will then be my task as a researcher to interpret how the descriptive answers are to be

interpreted (Kvale, 1997). Further, I have found inspiration in what Leech (2002) calls “Grand tour questions”, where the interviewee should be able to comment on what he or she thinks is most important, for example: “Could you tell me a bit about what is important regarding the municipality’s support for the sports facility?”. Another type of questions used is: “Example questions”, which are more specific than “Grand tour questions” and could for example be: “Now that we have talked about the municipality’s support for sports facilities – have you any thoughts on the significance of the economic support from the municipality on your sports facility?”.

When planning an interview it is important to consider the type of setting. As a former officer of the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, I would be considered a “known investigator” (Lofland & Lofland, 2006). On one side this is an advantage as my knowledge of the field is high and that increases the chances of making sound methodological choices in the initial stages of the research project. On the other hand, my status makes it important to consider whether the interviewees might withhold relevant informations. They could, for example, be tempted to exclude information that is important to the thesis due to a fear that I might use the information in a municipal context. This challenge is handled by taking care to make it clear to the participants that the research project has nothing to do with the municipality and that information given to me as a part of the research project will in no way, shape or form be given to the municipality. Further, it is explained to the participants that I am on leave from my municipal job.

The potential interviewees were contacted via mail and/or phone and asked whether they would like to be a part of the project. I have a widespread knowledge of the different persons in the sports facilities in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn via my job as a leisure consultant. This prior knowledge has been used to assess which sports facilities have the necessary organisational resources to be a part of the project.

On the basis of the criteria for selecting cases the Municipality of Aalborg gave me information about the organisational resources of different PNP sports halls and those that would be relevant to include in the project, which led to the selection of three PNP sports halls that matched the criteria for selection.

Further, the importance of the participants being open and honest in the information they are giving was stressed as a part of the introduction to the interviews and it was underlined that the information given will only be used in the research context (Lofland & Lofland, 2006, p. 45). A part

of the information has also been to stress the importance of the project – that it will contribute to ensuring that the subsidy schemes targeting sports facilities are as good as possible – and their contribution to this important matter has been stressed in both phone-calls and emails. This was also a way of increasing focus on: “What’s in it for them?” and by doing so motivate them to participate (Lofland & Lofland, 2006).

In general, it was important to prevent their fear of my possible intentions as a former bureaucrat to shed a negative light on their perceptions and actions. Wolliver (2002) discussed a similar problem in research on activists of pro-choice and pro-life activists (pro-choice activists are in favour of abortion, whereas pro-life activists are against). Wolliver noticed that it was more difficult to get interviews with a good flow with pro-life activists, as they feared that she as a researcher in gender would be pro-choice and hence interested in putting them in a bad light. A local representative from a PNP sports hall or a VSO could have a similar concern with my role, as they could fear that a former bureaucrat would be interested in representing municipality interests by putting them in a bad light. My answer to such critical attitudes was that I focus on doing research and that I am solely loyal to the research conducted with the aim of finding better public solutions.

As an introduction to the interviews one must set the frame for on/off the record (Goldstein, 2002). I explained that if I were to quote them directly using their names in the thesis I would contact them for consent. Further, the interviewer’s role in the interview is to balance being professional and generally knowledgeable, but less knowledgeable than the respondent on the particular topic of the interview (Leech, 2002, p. 665; Lofland, 2006, p. 46f). Until I started the PhD project on 1 January 2012 it was often my role as an officer in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn to convince the sports halls and VSOs that the solution proposed by the municipality was the best possible. On that background whenever relevant in the interview context I stressed that the aim of the research is to expose how they experience the changes seen from their perspective, and that it is not my intention to argue with them about whether that perspective is the “correct” one seen from the perspective of the municipality.

Despite my efforts to convince the participants that I am not part of the public administration of the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, it remained a feeling during the research phase that respondents withheld information from me on matters that might be controversial to the municipality. For example, information about the use and sometimes misuse of the rules of the subsidy scheme in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn seemed to be withheld. On the contrary, however, I had the

feeling that I did get the full story in the Municipality of Aalborg, where I was seen as truly neutral. This was probably also due to the fact that in the Municipality of Aalborg I was able to present myself as a neutral scientist and not as a former public bureaucrat. However, in one particular case in Aalborg the chairman of a sports hall was concerned about whether it would be exposed to the municipality how low the utilisation of that particular sports hall actually was, which indicated that there was concern in Aalborg also to which extent the results would be given to the municipality. I explained that the project consists of before and after measurements, and that individual data on that particular sports hall would not be exposed, which calmed down the chairman and he decided to participate.

7.7 Transcription

Important interpretations also take place when transferring from speech to text (Kelle, 2000; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Hence, it is important for the reliability of the study that a number of conscious decisions are made about how to transcribe so that it is clear for the person transcribing how to transcribe.

A basic notion when transcribing is naturalism versus denaturalism (Oliver, Serovich, & Mason, 2005). Naturalism is about securing that what is spoken is transferred to text as precisely as possible. Hence, a transcription includes breaks, how the sentence was said, the atmosphere in the room, whether the interviewer and the respondent speak at the same time etc. Denaturalism is about transferring what is said to sentences that can be relatively easily understood so that these sentences can be interpreted. Denaturalism is the obvious choice here given the use of interviews to assess the effects on performance of different subsidy schemes rather than interpreting and analysing what is spoken.

Research assistants made the transcriptions and they received instructions on how to do the transcriptions in order to secure that it was done in a similar manner. Even though several of the interview persons speaks with a dialect, the transcription is made in official Danish, so that the interview persons cannot be immediately recognised on that background (Oliver et al., 2005).

7.8 Coding in Nvivo

There are immediately two possible approaches to coding in the computer assisted qualitative data analysis software program Nvivo: “topic-coding” and “analytical-coding” (Richards, 2009; Sinkovics & Alfoldi, 2012). Topic coding divides empirical material depending on the themes that

emerge in the data. Analytical coding starts from theoretical and conceptual founded operationalisation which is then applied to the data. These two processes are in this thesis used in a fruitful dialogue that makes it possible to refine the coding scheme as the analysis progresses.

The 27 interviews from 2012 were transcribed and coded in Nvivo following the themes that the interviewees chose to talk about on the basis of the open questions. Against that backdrop new insights and hypotheses that could be pursued further in the second round of interviews in 2014 were formulated. The idea of the first round of interviews was hence also to capture any tendencies in the data that can be used to make the theoretical framework stronger and inform the analysis behind the interview guide created to guide the interviews in 2014.

After the second round of interviews the material was coded again with a particular focus on pursuing the themes from Iversen & Cuskelly (2015) (analytical-coding), but also to pursue the insights gained from the first coding when relevant. By going through the data material several times the ambition was to create a dialogue between the two types of coding that would result in increased knowledge of which parts of the conceptual framework are most relevant to pursue further and which parts of the conceptual framework seem less relevant. Finally, new insights driven by the topic coding might occur in the second round of coding interviews as well.

7.9 Discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the methodological setup

What then are the strengths and weaknesses of the methodological choices made? One way to approach a conclusion is to assess the validity and the reliability of the study. First, internal validity is about assessing whether sufficient in-depth knowledge is collected to be able to answer the research question. External validity asks the question of whether these conclusions can be extrapolated to a larger number of cases (Gerring, 2007).

The internal validity is expected to be high as a multitude of methods and theories were used to secure in-depth analysis of a relatively low number of cases. Further, by giving the interviewees from the board, the management and the VSOs the chance both to respond to the theoretical expectations and also to formulate themselves how they reacted to the different types of public management, many different aspects of intended and unintended effects are covered. By assessing both the possible effects of different public management strategies, how the sports halls reacted to these and whether those reactions might have resulted in a change in utilisation, I sought to describe any causal mechanism that connects the independent and dependent variables. A threat to the

internal validity is, however, that the advantages of my close relations to the research field might also have resulted in interviewees not being totally honest in the research interviews. This might be a challenge for the findings, that some of the unintended effects of different types of public management reform in that way might remain hidden. However, from the PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, there were critical utterances about the role of the public management system implemented, which leaves some optimism about the internal validity. Further, I have been in a continuous dialogue with the current officials of the municipality, which delivered important and ongoing insights to the thesis that would not have been captured had I not been in-between spheres like that. Examples are information on how the different PNP sports halls formally and informally received different parts of the public management strategies and how they reacted to other policy initiatives such as the proposed cutbacks in the years ahead.

Another methodological challenge is measurement validity, which deals with whether the measurement tools are sufficiently precise. As the thermal validation of the data showed, there was reason for some concern about whether too many exaggerations occurred. However, in the manual survey method 4% of the findings showed that persons were in the sports hall when no one was actually there (Iversen, In review-b). Regarding the number of persons present, the tendency to exaggerate is partially due to the tendency of the thermal methods to understate the number of persons when many persons (especially children) are on the court (Iversen, In review-b). It is a challenge to the purpose of the manual survey method if the number of persons is exaggerated too much. Such tendency makes it difficult to estimate how much it is possible to improve utilisation. But the problem in this case is lessened by the fact that what is measured is the development over time using the same method. Hence, any exaggerations should be the same over time – as it is the same persons or persons in the same role who conducted the manual survey observations in the PNP sports halls.

Further, what makes the manual survey method particularly relevant is that it provides different types of information about the development of different variables, which allows us to show more about any intended and unintended effect than would otherwise be possible. For example, analysis of the data shows no indications of indicator fixation, which might be seen as an increased focus on spreading activities over a greater number of timeslots, as this would drive up the level of subsidy as the level of subsidy is based on the number of timeslots used. But there is no tendency for the PNP sports halls under the NPM subsidy scheme to have fewer users per activity or to use a smaller

proportion of the court when compared with the development under the other public management regimes (Iversen & Forsberg, 2014). Another example of the advantage of the manual survey method is that the collection of data on different variables makes it possible to assess whether there are any surprising unintended effects: for example, whether the focus on subsidising VSO activities would result in a greater increase in VSO activities under the NPM regime than under the other regimes. As Table 7.1 shows there are no major changes in the composition of who organises the activities in the different sports halls and the organisation, which indicates that it does not seem to be the case that the NPM subsidy schemes result in an exclusive focus on getting more VSO activity in the PNP sports hall:

Table 7.1: Composition of who organises activities.

Number of activities arranged by different types of organisations		VSOs and other similar types of voluntary associations	Public schools and other public institutions	Other	The PNP sports hall
NPM	2012	156	83	4	3
	2014	161	76	11	13
Governance	2012	152	73	18	0
	2014	134	78	26	1
Budget	2012	163	92	3	0
	2014	167	88	1	3

Next is the discussion about the external validity, which deals with the question of whether the findings can be generalised across different social settings. A first point to mention is that what is found using critical realism are mechanisms argued to be contingent. Being contingent means that the results depend on the time of observation and that the mechanisms observed are under the influence of different causal mechanisms with other causal potentials. Such studies of contingent mechanisms can be difficult to transfer to other points in time and place. However, as the thesis focuses on a pseudo-closed system consisting of the subsidy schemes, it is argued that the causal mechanisms disclosed in this context can be transferred to other similar contexts. I.e. as argued above that the PNP sports halls and subsidy scheme under scrutiny here share traits with PNP sports halls and subsidy scheme in other contexts which makes it likely that similar causal mechanisms also will be found in those contexts.

Another way to discuss the quality of the research conducted is to discuss its reliability. Internal reliability assesses whether different observers would reach the same observations. Here, the

assessment of internal reliability can be separated in two: the internal reliability of the data collection method (the manual survey method) and the internal reliability of the thesis in general. Regarding the first matter, the structured approach to collecting data (via oral and written instructions) together with the findings from the thermal validation seems to indicate that the reliability of the manual survey method is expected to be high. However, we have no direct measurements of the inter-observer consistency, which leaves it to further tests of the reliability of the method to assess that perspective of internal reliability.

Regarding the reliability of the thesis in general, a basic precondition for qualitative studies is that it is difficult to replicate the research process that leads to the “thick” and detailed descriptions that are often the result of qualitative research processes. However, by also providing a “thick” description of the methodological setup, conducting a similar qualitative study in a different context is possible. One challenge is, however, that it might be difficult to create a similar setup where the investigator is operating on the verges of public administration and science, as has been the case in this Industrial PhD project.

8 Discussion of findings

In this section the findings of the articles will be discussed and elaborated. First, it will be discussed why the governance approach to public management in this context seems to have been less successful. Second, the results of public management via budget and NPM subsidy schemes will be discussed. Third, the findings on the differences in choice of strategies of the large and small facilities will be assessed before ending finally by discussing the theoretical learning that might emerge from the thesis.

8.1 The (partial and immediate) failure of governance

One initial discussion is to consider the results of the governance approach to public management as the results of this were not considered in Iversen and Forsberg (2014b) or in Iversen (In review-a). Different results that appeared during the research resulted in this prioritisation. First, analysis of data showed that the governance approach did not make much of a difference to the quantitative findings, as utilisation hardly developed over time. Second, and more importantly, the qualitative findings showed that governance did not seem to have all of the intended effects. Just to recapitulate, the municipality's idea with the masterplan was, via a subsidy, to enable the PNP sports halls to hire consultants to facilitate a process resulting in a written masterplan. The target was to have the local actors such as different voluntary associations, local businesses and other local actors join forces in order to take joint responsibility for increasing utilisation of the PNP sports hall.

That result did not materialise immediately. Several reasons seem to be behind the lack of achievement of an increase in utilisation. The interviews showed that it was to a large extent the "usual suspects", primarily persons representing local VSOs in different ways who were part of the process leading to the formulation of a masterplan. Further, there were even fewer examples of persons or organisations invited to be a part of the masterplan who afterwards became more integrated in the facility and/or took responsibility for increasing utilisation. Hence, some of the possibilities that theoretically should be a part of a governance approach to public management of sports facilities seem to have been circumvented by the existing structures of the PNP sports halls. It might be the fact that the board of the PNP sports hall assessed that other actors' resources as too small to be interesting to them – and in some cases it was perhaps the other way around, i.e., that the persons and organisations invited judged that the PNP sports hall had too few resources for them to be interested in investing time in being a part of the process.

On the positive side, there are examples of PNP sports halls, via the masterplan, having established collaboration with a neighbouring sports hall. Other examples of byproducts of the masterplan are PNP sports halls using the masterplan for an internal process to be clearer on their strategy for the future or to create a platform for adding or renovating buildings. However, the primary intention of the masterplan as a policy tool was to increase utilisation, which in the first round seems to have failed. In the long run, the governance approach might result in increases in utilisation as a by-product of some of these new collaborations – but in the short run the effects on utilisation did not materialise as expected.

Another reason for the governance perspective not having the intended effects might be that it was implemented simultaneously with the NPM reform of public management. Hence, the PNP sports halls met both types of public management at the same time and it seems plausible that such a cross-pressure might result in postponing implementation of the possible effects of a more diffuse masterplan and instead focusing on the concrete result of achieving the requirements of the NPM regime. Another reason might be that the PNP sports halls simply did not find the masterplan to be the right tool for them to handle the challenges they see ahead. It is also questionable whether it is possible to motivate local actors to take increased responsibility for the development of the local PNP sports halls via masterplans initiated by municipalities, particularly as there was no immediate help to implement the masterplan after the process had been finalised. Hence it seems to be relevant to consider an increased focus on how the implementation phase might be optimised.

Further, among the dynamics around the masterplan could be that the PNP sports hall might not believe that the changes in the public management initiated by the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn will result in any real changes, i.e., that the credibility of the subsidy scheme is low. The PNP sports halls might simply believe that they will continue to be able to call upon the municipality if in dire need for economic resources. Such a lack of credibility is known to increase the risk of impairing effects of public management (Andersen, 2013; Serritzlew, 2006, 2009). A final point, that will be touched upon later on in the discussion as well, is the question of whether the board members and management of the PNP sports halls have the educational resources and the relevant experience to be able to benefit from the possible advantages of being part of such a relatively complex process.

8.2 The (partial and immediate) success of NPM and the (partial and immediate) failure of budget

Under the budget version of public management, the PNP sports halls seem to focus primarily on the existing users, and since the existing users are not able to increase utilisation, the result was a drop in utilisation of 8.1% from 2012 to 2014. On the contrary, the NPM regime resulted in an increase of utilisation of 7.6% from 2012 to 2014. Hence it might be tempting to adopt the NPM model presented here as a “one-size-fits-all” solution to the public management of sports facilities. However, the interviews with representatives of VSOs showed that neither under the NPM model nor under the budget-oriented public management model did the VSOs to any major extent seem to have the impression that they are able to increase utilisation by increasing the scope and scale of their own “core activities”. In that way there seems to be a “glass bottom”, where the PNP sports facilities might change their strategy due to changes in public management. But it seems to be much more difficult to convince VSOs to change how they operate and to work with them on increasing utilisation. It could be argued that to see changes in behaviour on the operational level of VSOs is a next step that it is not likely to experience to any major extent so soon after changes in public management has been implemented. But it does seem that the VSOs under the NPM regime have a better understanding of the need to increase utilisation of the sports facilities. Several examples of VSOs attempting to participate in increasing utilisation of the sports facilities by introducing new activities and events was seen (Iversen, In review-a). Those attempts happened in the interaction between the management of the PNP sports halls and the VSOs. A reason for that interaction under the NPM public management regime might be that when the VSOs rent the PNP sports hall they generate an increase in the subsidy the PNP sports hall receive. Hence, the municipality bears a part of the economic burden when it is the VSO rather than the PNP sports hall that offers the activity. But the increased focus on creating activities to increase the income of the PNP sports halls might also be due to the fact that the intention to increase the performance of sports facilities is greater in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn. This is more directly stated in the policies (Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2008b) and it has been politically decided to cut 10–15% of the yearly subsidy to the PNP sports halls (Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, 2015). Further, when assessing the absolute levels of efficiency, relatively large differences across municipalities occur. Under the NPM regime in Faaborg-Midtfyn, the sports halls in 2014 received between DKK310 (EUR41) and DKK326 (EUR43) per hour of activity, where as the same numbers in the Municipality of Aalborg is between

DKK478 (EUR64) and DKK635 (EUR85) per hour.³ This might be the reason for a noticeable difference in the relationship between the municipalities and the PNP sports halls. As mentioned in Iversen (In review-a), the sports halls in the Municipality of Aalborg signal that they have acceptable economic conditions. As an example of that one PNP sports hall choose not to have adds in their PNP sports hall simply because they do not like how they look. The PNP sports halls in Aalborg are also to a greater extent confident that the municipality will help them out in different ways when they are in trouble. Also, the boards of the small sports facilities in the Municipality of Aalborg have the confident perception that the municipality gets a high value via the boards' voluntary efforts. It is finally not on the agenda of the different actors in the PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Aalborg that the funding base of the sports facility might be lowered and they seem to perceive them to be even less likely to be closed down (Iversen, In review-a).

In contrast, the chairmen of the boards of the PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn are more critical of the role the municipality plays, and they argue that the economic challenges are changing the board in the direction of having more business-oriented discussions about how to cut costs. Hence, a balance of public management targeting PNP sports halls – and PNP organisations more broadly speaking – seems to be to strike the balance between focusing on the business-like perspectives of public management while continuing to have large amounts of voluntary activities represented in the board and in creating activities in the VSOs. The transition towards an increasing degree of business orientation in the boards is on the way in the PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn as several interviewees indicated that it has been a priority to get people with business experience elected to the board. Time will show whether it is possible to recruit persons with a higher degree of business orientation and whether this will result in the VSOs playing a different and possibly less dominating role. So far the considerations of pleasing the local VSOs continue to dominate how the board and the management run the facility across different types of public management and the VSOs continue to indicate that they are happy about the way the sports facility is run. Of course, it is important to consider that the representatives of the VSOs interviewed here were from the largest VSOs in particular PNP sports facilities and that these might have a different view on matters than the smaller, more specialised VSOs.

³ The calculations are based on information provided by the Municipality of Aalborg and Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn on how many hours the PNP sports halls are used by VSOs and public institutions such as schools and how much is paid in subsidies to the PNP sports halls excluding subsidies to projects and buildings. Further, the information of utilisation collected in this thesis is used to estimate how much the PNP sports hall is used on average. This information is used to estimate a subsidy per hour.

Further, it seems evident that a challenge for the boards is the extent to which they are able to hire management and staff who are able to generate activities. Management and staff can increase sports hall utilisation by creating new activities themselves, by hiring professionals, or by convincing VSOs to offer different types of activities. In the small PNP sports halls, the management have neither the professional background nor the experience to start new activities. Hence, particularly in the small PNP sports halls under the budget-based regime, the management and the board do not by themselves work on increasing utilisation. Particularly under the budget-based regime it is also a concern that if other VSOs increase number of timeslots used a “zero-sum” game will occur resulting in a decrease in timeslots used by existing activities. Under the NPM-based regime the boards and management do attempt to increase utilisation, but most examples of doing so are via attempts to increase utilisation by starting new activities in dialogue with the VSOs (Iversen, In review-a).

One balance to strike therefore is to what extent a municipality aiming for increased utilisation can at the same time expect that a board based on voluntary efforts will respond to public management regimes in the way expected. Under the NPM regime it seems that the boards, managers and VSOs really try to increase utilisation, but express frustration in the difficulties of doing so. Under the budget regimes the PNP sports halls as well as the VSOs seem much less concerned about utilisation and taking efforts to increase utilisation. Several of the PNP sports halls across the different types of public management mentioned how difficult it is to increase utilisation even though they agree on the overall target of doing so. The difficulties are of increasing utilisation by selling more timeslots, but it is also perceived to be difficult to increase utilisation by increasing the number of players or number of activities in one particular timeslot. Hence, there are few examples of successful attempts of sharing the PNP sports hall and the attempts mentioned often result in conflicts and are unsuccessful. Further, few of the PNP sports halls indicate that they have increased efforts on marketing and few of them see other PNP sports halls as competitors. Against that backdrop, it could be interesting to assess how sports facilities that are operating more clearly on a market independently of VSOs react to different types of public management subsidy schemes. Examples in a Danish context could be tennis/squash courts, bowling alleys and fitness centres. Such sports facilities have higher income from sources other than the public sector.

In a way, using PNP sports halls as a layer between the public sector and the users using NPM has similarities with other attempts at using market-like incentives to secure efficient use of public

resources such as outsourcing (Blom-Hansen, 2003; Helby Petersen, Hjelmars, Vrangbæk, & Larsen, 2014; Hjelmars, Helby Petersen, & Vrangbæk, 2013) and free choice (Dunleavy, 2014; Ejersbo & Greve, 2014; Greve & Ejersbo, 2013). Just as is the case with the public management via NPM of PNP sports halls, the results of attempting to increase performance using outsourcing and free choice have been mixed. However, it has been found that such market-like public management are more prone to increase performance if the unit targeted by performance management reforms can be described as a simple, technical oriented unit. For example, outsourcing of technical services in municipalities has shown better results than more complex welfare products such as care for the elderly. Against that backdrop, the immediate success of performance management via NPM regimes is most interesting based on the idea that what PNP sports halls provide is the technical service of granting users access to a sports court in which they can do their sport. In contrast, if the PNP sports hall is seen as the local meeting place for organisations and persons that has as its task to mediate between different local interests for the benefit of the greater good for the local society, a more complex analysis of whether that can be achieved via NPM-like public management is required. In several instances in my research it was clear that the PNP sports hall plays a special role in its local society due to its history of being built, maintained and run by locals and by being the central local meeting place. As will be argued later, it therefore seems to be relevant to consider including measurements of other types of performance than utilisation in order to grasp the different aspects of the performance of PNP sports halls.

8.3 Differences between large and small sports facilities

One dimension that did not seem to make an immediate difference analytically was the difference in the size of the small and medium-sized PNP sports halls. One reason for this might be that the difference between being solely an indoor sports hall and being an indoor sports halls with outdoor pitches is simply too little to make that analytical distinction. Another possibility is that we do not capture the important differences in this small-N research and that any relevant differences might show up in larger-N studies. For example, it seems relevant to pursue the difference that might exist between artificial turf pitches and natural grass pitches, as the former permit activities all year, where as the latter are closed during winter and the wet parts of spring. This difference might significantly influence how the outdoor pitches influence the operations of the PNP sports hall. That the size of the sports facility remains an interesting variable can be seen by the result that small/medium and large sports facilities react differently to the different types of public management. Here, “small facilities” is used to refer to both small and medum-sized PNP sports

halls. As mentioned above, in the large sports facilities the staff are better educated and/or have more business experience than is found in the small sports facilities, where the staff have less training and typically their training is on the practical matters of running a sports facility (cleaning and maintenance). This might be part of the reason for the greater ability of the management of the large PNP sports halls not only to respond strategically to differences in subsidy schemes, but also to be able to act strategically towards increasing their income from sources other than via subsidies. And in contrast to the smaller PNP sports halls this is often done without going via VSOs.

Hence, larger facilities do attempt to maximise their subsidies. But it is also possible to register a degree of coolness by the management and the chairpersons of the boards towards the municipalities and their attempts to influence utilisation via different types of public management. For example, it is evident that other areas of business are more important to the large PNP sports halls, which for example is shown when a large PNP sports hall argues that keeping utilisation by VSOs as high as possible results mainly from legitimising the continued subsidisation by the municipality (Iversen, In review-a). The increased level of organisational resources in the large PNP sports halls does seem to lead to higher utilisation, however, as the large facilities have alternatives for increasing levels of utilisation in other ways than via increasing VSO activities.

Despite the differences across the different types of public management, it remains a conclusion that the possibilities to prioritise between different user groups to achieve higher utilisation are more widespread in the large PNP sports halls. To prioritise between different user groups is more problematic for the smaller PNP sports halls as the customers are intertwined with the board and the management. An example of the challenges of the interaction between the VSOs and the PNP sports hall is that the manager in a small PNP sports facility is not involved in assigning timeslots to VSOs – but just uses the schedule from last year and cuts out the ads from the local newspaper to get an overview of what takes place in the PNP sports hall (Iversen, In review-a). Hence, the management in such case play no role in prioritising between different user groups, as the user groups seems to define almost by themselves when they are to have their timeslots.

In sum, an important difference between the small and the larger VSOs seems to be the role of their history. Particularly among the small VSOs it emerged as a theme that the PNP sports hall was built by locals and continues to be maintained by locals. There remain very close links via the articles of the PNP sports hall between the VSOs and the PNP sports hall as representatives of the VSOs often have a large proportion of the seats on the board. The history of the facility therefore seems to be

much more present in the small PNP sports halls than in the large ones, which to a greater extent are run by both the board and the management on the basis of business considerations in the present rather than on the basis of the importance of historical circumstances.

8.4 Theoretical learning

Theoretical learning deals with how the analysis conducted here may result in any revision or developments in the analytical and theoretical frameworks that were the point of departure of the thesis. An important theoretical discussion is to consider the role of motivation. The motivation of the small PNP sports halls could immediately seem to be “knaveish” in the sense that they are mainly interested in doing things that are good for their VSOs. However, that might be because they do not see what has been decided as the target of municipal policies – to increase utilisation – as a legitimate target. Instead, they see the PNP sports hall as a local asset for the VSOs of that community. Hence, acting for the benefit of the VSOs is actually perceived by the members, coaches and board members of the VSOs as a “knightish” deed. Hence, from a theoretical perspective, it might be necessary to consider further the context and how that might shape which deeds are deemed to be knaveish and which deeds that are deemed to be “knightish”.

That it is possible to be motivated by a “knightish” interest in doing good for the local PNP sports hall or the local VSO is an important perspective to keep in mind when assessing how PNP sports halls or similar types of PNP organisations might react to attempts of public management. Another theoretical learning point is therefore that most strategies resulting in decreased utilisation are not necessarily fuelled by knaveish considerations, as was argued to be the case in Iversen and Cuskelly (2015). Rather, an even more nuanced approach needs to be considered in order to capture the differences in the interaction between different types of motivations, different institutional frameworks for understanding strategies, and different types of public management. For example, to have a “knightish” approach not towards society in general as presumed in Iversen & Cuskelly (2015), but instead towards the wellbeing of the local PNP sports hall and/or local VSOs might result in a negative development in utilisation.

The initial theoretical considerations that a PNP sports hall could be described as an organisation high on political authority and low on economic authority also need to be elaborated. It seems to be confirmed that PNP sports halls to a large extent rely on public authority, but their perception of how that might influence their behaviour should on the basis of the findings in this thesis be expanded to include also factors such as perceived independence and perceived contribution to the

public purse. This conclusion is backed by the observation that it is evident that many of the PNP sports halls feel the voluntary efforts they make imply that their roles are different from the roles of other public organisations with similar mixes of economic and political authority.

Another theoretical challenge is to consider the consequences of the observation that the municipal target of increasing utilisation in some instances clashes with the local “logic of appropriateness” of the VSOs. Following the line of thought that VSOs seem primarily to be focused on how the PNP sports hall can function as an asset for the local VSO and the local community, rather than on how utilisation might be improved, could have consequences for which institutional theoretical point of departure it is most relevant to choose. The theoretical point of departure assessing the possible consequences of institutional structures on utilisation has been sociological and rational institutionalism. Particularly with sociological institutionalism, the focus has been on how a “logic of appropriateness” is established via the interaction between PNP sports halls, VSOs and the municipalities.

However, it has become evident that the history of the PNP sports halls in some ways seems to matter a great deal for their reactions to public management. It could be argued that their history seems to matter for how the “logic of appropriateness” is constructed. There are several examples in the data that highlight the importance of the history of the PNP sports hall being built, maintained and used by locals and that these factors remain an essential part of the PNP sports halls’ DNA. For example a chairman of the board in a small PNP sports hall argues in an interview that: *“It is our sports hall. We have built it ourselves, or so have our fathers or grandfathers. It is our sports hall. It is very obvious that when too large changes are made, people come and ask what the hell it is that we are up to!”*. Hence, to elaborate further theoretically on which causal mechanisms might result in the choice of different strategies it could be relevant to include historical institutionalism in future theoretical analysis of PNP sports halls. This conclusion is backed by the focus in historical institutionalism on how the past shapes present organisational behaviour (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Peters, 2012). The reasons for PNP sports halls and other similar types of PNP organisations with a point of departure in voluntarism reacting sceptically to attempts from public administration increasingly to influence their decisions and targets could be further considered by such an increased focus on the institutional structure created by history.

Another part of the analysis has focused on the consequences of the presence of a PNP organisation – in this case a PNP sports hall – as a layer between the public administration and the citizens. The

results show that one risk of using a PNP organisation is that it might focus too much on the existing users of its services. Further, it does not seem that the construction in itself results in an increased focus on operating in the market as being exposed to a market-like mechanism does not result in the expected market-like behaviour. There are few signs of the PNP sports halls exposed to the NPM regime looking at their colleagues as competitors and there are few examples of attempts to sell more via the use of increased marketing and selling efforts. Neither are there any tendencies towards the PNP type of organisation in itself resulting in any new solutions to crafting public services. However, if the aim is *not* to integrate a variety of citizens, but instead to prioritise a close dialogue with VSOs and existing sports facility users, the PNP sports hall seems to be a relevant forum to do so. However, if the aim is to reach a broader perspective and for example to include more citizens in the activities in the PNP sports hall, then it is necessary to consider how the board members can be supplemented or replaced with other representatives with a more professional and neutral approach to the daily operations of the PNP organisation. One example of what can be argued is an unprofessional approach to running a board involved a manager of one of the PNP sports halls. The manager mentioned in the interview that he spoke of a vice chairman that talked to him at a birthday party, and gave him the guarantee that the board would fight to the end to avoid firing him. It is likely that such promises could also occur in more professional board settings. But to approach management at a birthday party is nevertheless inappropriate behaviour by a board member and such experiences underline the need in some instances for a more professional attitude towards running boards of PNP sports halls.

Finally, if there is potential for using PNP organisations as a tool for inventing new and more efficient ways of doing public services, it also seems to be necessary to develop new and more intense ways of cooperating than just the interaction a subsidy scheme provides. Even though it might have relevant effects, it cannot stand alone as a tool to regulate the relationship between the public sector and PNP organisations such as the PNP sports hall. Thøgersen (2015) shows that even though municipalities are positive about the possibility of choosing between public and non-profit welfare services, they are sceptical of the limited possibilities of controlling of the non-profit welfare services. This sheds light on another perspective of the discussion of public management regimes – that the municipalities need to consider whether they would like to have close steering and control – and if so, that might result in difficulties in creating the local support that makes PNP organisations such as PNP sports halls thrive. An interesting theoretical discussion to pursue is whether the idea of public management of PNP organisations might be diametrically opposed to the

increased focus on engaging citizens in solving the complex challenges of the welfare state. It may be very difficult to merge the steering dimension in public management with the empowerment dimension inherent in collaborative approaches to government such as having public services produced by PNP organisations.

9 Conclusion

This thesis has focused on the effects on the performance of PNP sports halls when exposed to different types of public management aiming at increasing the performance of sports halls via improved utilisation, and what the intended and unintended effects of different types of performance management have been. It has been shown that performance measured as utilisation increased when the PNP sports halls were exposed to activity-based NPM and that performance decreased when exposed to not-activity based public management. It was also shown that the governance approach to public management did not have the expected effects and led to no changes in utilisation.

Another effect was that larger sports facilities responded to the public management framework to a greater extent, possibly due to their greater organisational resources. Further, they are able to attract a higher number of VSOs, which also makes it easier for them to increase utilisation. It was also shown that the strategic abilities of the large PNP sports halls turned out to be greater than anticipated and they balanced increasing their business in other areas with responding to the incentives in the subsidy schemes. One reason for that is concluded to be the difference in training and competencies among the management of the large versus the small sports facilities. The staff of the large PNP sports facilities tend to be better trained and have more experience than the staff of the smaller PNP sports halls.

It has further been shown that the PNP sports halls under the budget-subsidy regime focus primarily on existing users and, compared with the NPM subsidy regime, there is little emphasis from the management, the boards and the local VSOs on increasing utilisation. Also, a possible reaction to the budget-subsidy scheme could be an increased focus on other users to attract income. However, even though it is signalled that new users are more than welcome little have been done by the PNP sports halls to attract new users. Hence, the general impression remains that the budget subsidy scheme is to some extent a pretext for inaction when it comes to increasing utilisation.

An unintended effect of the NPM public management regime seems to be stress, as a couple of the boards indicate that they have experienced going from a situation where the subsidy was independent of activity to a situation where it is dependent on activity. It is a concern whether such stress might negatively influence the possibilities to recruit volunteers to boards. Further, the lower subsidy per hour of activity also indicates that the boards in the PNP sports halls in the Municipality

of Faaborg-Midtfyn are under higher levels of financial stress than is the case with the PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Aalborg.

Another unintended effect was that across the different public management types, a “glass bottom” seemed to be a challenge for the different public management subsidy schemes having their intended effects. In most cases the VSOs simply did not respond to the PNP sports halls’ attempts to have them increase utilisation. For example, in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, it proved difficult for the PNP sports halls to change the VSOs’ behaviour. Interviews with the chairpersons of VSO boards showed that on the strategic level the VSO boards recognised the changes and attempted to increase utilisation, but when it came to the operational level among the coaches and players it was more difficult to penetrate the daily logic of the VSOs where the main interest is to create physical activities.

A new method for measuring utilisation has also been introduced and it has been shown how that method has defined how utilisation of sports facilities is measured in a Danish context as it in the period of 2012-2015 has been used in 10 of the 98 municipalities in Denmark. Even before the completion of the thesis the results from using the methods has resulted in a change of sport facility policy in several of the municipalities exposed to the method. It has been argued that the strength of the method is that it gives a nuanced picture of the activities, but that it tends to exaggerate the number of persons and the number of timeslots used. In this thesis the possibilities of nuanced analysis has been used to show that there were no immediate traces of indicator fixation, that is, that the increase in utilisation in the PNP sports halls under the NPM regime was not due to the users being dispersed over a higher number of timeslots.

9.1 Policy recommendations

Given that this is an Industrial PhD thesis part of its *raison d’être* is to suggest possible changes in policies that will result in better solutions for the public. On the basis of the findings in this thesis the following policy recommendations are:

- Municipalities should integrate elements of activity-dependent subsidies in their subsidy schemes targeting sports facilities. It influences the mindset of the sports facilities and gives clearer incentives to increase utilisation. The activity-dependent subsidies should target the types of activities wanted – and if activities are wanted outside VSOs – also activities outside VSOs should be given subsidies.

- Municipalities need to consider the role they want VSOs to play in the PNP sports halls in the future to avoid conflict between the different actors attempting to avoid expenses and to cash-in on possible revenue. Two roads seem to be recommendable:
 - o either to help the PNP sports halls to get more professional boards and to work in a more professional and business-like manner, or
 - o to increase the ownership by VSOs of the PNP sports halls. That could for example be done by the VSO taking over the sports hall or by integrating the VSO further into the board in order to share the economic burden more evenly.

The first solution seems to be the most viable one, if several different VSOs use the sports facility. The last one might be the best option, if only one or a few sport clubs use the sports hall or the sports facility. The first solution should particularly be considered with large sports facilities.

- There is reason to consider a differentiated approach depending on the size of the sports facility. The larger facilities have several other business options and the public management of them is easier, on one side, as they are more likely to respond to the economic incentives. On the other side they are also more likely to have their own agenda that they want to push forward. The municipality hence needs to consider to what extent the subsidy schemes need to be differentiated so that the larger sports facilities receive a relatively smaller subsidy in comparison with the smaller sports facilities. And municipalities need to have the organisational resources to counter the agendas of the large sports facilities if sports facility policy should be run by the municipality and not the sports facilities. For example, if it is all left to the PNP large sports halls to decide which business opportunities to pursue without being challenged by active policies from municipalities, management might be tempted to focus solely on profit margins. In that case, there is a risk that sports and physical activities in the PNP sports halls would be replaced by cultural and commercial events that return higher profit to PNP sports halls at the expense of physical activity opportunities.
- For both large and small sports facilities, the role of management is crucial and needs to be improved. Particularly the management of the small sports halls need to upgrade their competences as few of them had adequate formal or informal education enabling them to

initiate new activities by themselves. Hence, policies aiming at heightening the current competences of the management or recruiting new management often need to be pursued.

- Municipalities should consider supporting solutions to increase utilisation by having more than one activity in the PNP sports halls. The results show that there is ample space and it is therefore possible to increase utilisation.
- If attempting governance-like approaches via master plans to increase utilisation, municipalities should consider how that could be done in a way that motivates the PNP sports halls to participate – but even more importantly, if the aim is to reach out to new user groups, it is imperative that the PNP sports halls share that ambition. If not, there is a high risk that the masterplan will focus primarily on existing users.
- If PNP organisations are to be used as a layer between public administration and the users it should be considered whether the target for the PNP organisation is to provide a service to those who run the organisation or if it is to provide services to a wider audience. If the latter is the case then due attention needs to be given to securing broad representation on the board and the construction of a subsidy scheme where subsidies are given more independent of which type of non-profit organisation the sport is conducted in. In the case of the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, the public management subsidy schemes targeted only use by VSOs, which might be a part of the reason for the widespread focus on VSOs.

This thesis has pinpointed the advantages and drawbacks of different types of public management towards PNP sports halls. Another type of management of sports facilities used and considered in municipalities is to have sports facilities fully owned and operated by the municipalities themselves or to privatise them fully, and then subsidise the VSOs directly instead of subsidising the sports facility directly as it is currently done in the Municipalities of Faaborg-Midtfyn and Aalborg. Based on the analysis in this thesis, the PNP type of organisation has advantages that make it worth considering choosing this type of management. On one side it secures the possibility of including the VSOs' concerns and on the other side it opens for business possibilities that – all other things equal – are more difficult to pursue in facilities purely owned by municipalities. It might also be easier to engage persons to volunteer in a PNP organisation rather than in municipal or privately owned sports facilities, as it is easier to assess who benefits from voluntary efforts. The public management via subsidies also continues to give the municipality a say in how sports facilities are

to be developed – which is an important factor if the assumption mentioned initially in the thesis about the importance of sports facilities for municipal strategies on settlement and development turns out to be correct.

Another highly contested matter is the size of sports facilities. Should the small sports hall continue to exist or is a solution to the challenges of the small sports hall to create larger units consisting of several small sports halls – perhaps connected to a larger sports hall? This research has shown that having small sports halls integrated into larger units could solve some of the challenges faced by the small sports halls. The competencies of the management and the board could be improved and some of the excess activities from the larger sports halls might be moved to the smaller ones. However, it remains a challenge how to do this without eroding the support from the VSOs to conduct voluntary efforts. Hence, at this point the closest one can get to a policy recommendation is to support processes that on the basis of the given economic scenarios illustrate the advantages and drawbacks of different sizes of sports facilities for PNP sports facilities. The decision to join larger sports facilities should be made by the small sports facilities themselves. In the case of building new facilities it is recommended that these should be connected to a larger sports hall in order to secure the necessary competencies in order to secure a professional management and to improve the chances of achieving a high utilisation.

9.2 Limitations and future research

Even though the quality of starting from a pseudo-closed system approach is stressed, it is worth in future research keeping an open mind about other factors that might influence the utilisation of sports facilities. This research has formed the basis for the much larger research initiative on the operation, managing and public management of sports facilities that will be initiated in 2015 (Centre for Sport and Health and Civil Society & Danish Institute for Sports Studies, 2014). The project consists of a survey of 1000 Danish sports facilities and in-depth case studies of at least 10 different sports facilities. The research project starts from several of the questions raised and conclusions made in this thesis. For example, as a follow up on the indications in this thesis of the importance of having a local commitment by VSOs, the upcoming project will look further into any possible influence on the causal mechanisms of having one dominating VSO or several different VSOs using the sports hall. This might be one of the reasons for the difference between the small and large sports facilities that should be pursued further – that the difference between large and small facilities is to be found in the fact that the small sports halls are more dependent on one or a

few VSOs in opposition in the large sports halls where a number of different VSOs typically compete for the attention of the sports hall management. Further, it is also a part of the larger research project to pursue how the different types of public management influence performance such as utilisation under management types other than PNP – for example if the sports hall is managed by the municipality, if it is managed by the VSO or if it is totally private.

Another relevant discussion is the relevant performance targets for sports facilities. Here it has been argued that a relevant target is to focus on utilisation. But it could be argued that utilisation as a target is a poor match with the logics of VSOs and the law of public enlightenment that secures VSOs a privileged position in their use of sports facilities (Ministry of Education, 2011). It is therefore debateable whether utilisation is the most relevant output target – and it is also debateable if there should be more focus on outcome targets. It could, for example, be the effect that VSOs have on the civic education of citizens and that utilisation is less relevant if citizens are educated to take responsibility in the democratic processes in other parts of the society. That could also call for an increased focus on the use of the changing rooms, the café area or the meeting rooms where much of the democratisation might take place. However, recent research indicates that increased democratisation might not be the result of participating in VSO activity (Østerlund, 2013). Hence, it might be even more relevant to consider other outcome measurements such as the level of intensity at which different types of sports are conducted as the positive physical side-effects are often argued to be among the primary targets in different types of municipal policies targeting sports in general. Important first steps have been taken by developing measurements of intensity in the manual survey method, but further validation of that study, for example, by using accelerometers, or other devices that measure level of intensity, could be an interesting methodological development.

It is important to develop further the method used to measure utilisation of sports facilities. For example, having two observers simultaneously registering the same timeslots will enable assessment of the inter-observer consistency of the method. Also, when the thermal method is to be used and when the manual survey is a better choice needs to be considered individually. If the method is to be applied as a practical managerial tool for helping PNP sports hall to assess utilisation regularly, the precision of the method is less important. Rather, it is important that the method is easy to use and that it is not too costly. In a research setting it would often be the other way around as a method's precision, validity, and reliability would be much more important. At this

point the debate remains as to which method will best meet the requirements of the different contexts. The next years will show whether the thermal method will be developed to cover more variables at a lower cost, and whether the manual survey method can be automatised and validated to the extent that this will be the preferred method. Much of the reason to choose either of those methods will depend on which resources are found locally and which economic means are present. At the moment (spring 2015), both the manual survey method and the thermal method are being conducted in a number of different municipalities simultaneously. Hence, further analysis will be available during 2015 and it will be interesting to follow which of the methods will be the most dominant in the future.

It is also necessary to consider how different public management approaches to sports facilities impact utilisation and other relevant variables across longer periods of time than what has been possible to assess in this context. For example, if short-term increases in utilisation using NPM regimes result in long-term disillusionment by VSOs, then not much is perhaps gained in terms of utilisation in the long run. Also, what have been assessed are the consequences of the differences in public management regimes. An aspect of performance management theory that is not analysed here is how a PNP sports hall would react to the information given to them about how their performance has developed over time. If the collection of performance information (in this case on utilisation) is to have its intended effects, it should be communicated to the organisations targeted by the public management (the PNP sports hall), the organisations should use that information to inform and develop their performance, and, finally, attempt to improve their performance. Hence a basic limitation of the study, and a possible research agenda for future studies, is that how the PNP sports halls react when exposed to information about their performance over time remains undiscovered.

A final consideration on a possible future research area could be to consider the possibly different consequences of using PNP organisations to provide welfare services in different welfare areas. The PNP organisation is today used in very different welfare areas such as sports, culture, nursing homes, schools, nurseries etc. However, little is known about how the differences in the policy areas may influence the consequences of using a PNP organisation in that particular policy area.

10 English summary

This thesis examines the extent to which different types of public management can contribute to increasing the utilisation of Private Non-Profit (PNP) sports halls. The key measure of performance of the PNP sports halls is argued to be its utilisation, which is a target pursued by the municipalities under scrutiny in this thesis. Utilisation is measured as number of timeslots used, how many persons using the hall, and how much of the hall floor space is used. The unintended effects of using different types of public management are also investigated. Finally, a number of policy recommendations for municipalities wanting to improve the performance of PNP sports halls via using different types of public management are presented.

Three different types of public management are introduced and the possible consequences on the utilisation of PNP sports halls are assessed. The first type of public management introduced is an activity-based New Public Management (NPM) inspired public management model, where increased utilisation results in an increase in public subsidy. The second type is a governance model inspired by the theory behind policy-networks, where increased collaboration between local actors is expected to increase utilisation. Finally, the third type is a budget-based public management model with no connection between level of subsidy and level of activity.

Methodologically, the thesis is structured as a quasi-experiment as data were collected before changes in the type of public management were introduced and again two years afterwards. This makes it possible to identify any changes in the utilisation of the PNP sports hall. The core of this thesis examines whether these changes might be due to different types of public management.

The thesis uses a critical realist perspective meaning a plurality of theories and qualitative methods are used to inform the analysis of possible links via causal mechanisms between differences in public management and changes in utilisation. As a consequence of the critical realist perspective, the aim of the thesis is to explain rather than predict. It is argued that PNP sports halls share a number of traits that makes it likely that they might respond similarly under different types of public management. However, there are also differences between PNP sports halls that could explain variations in their responsiveness to different types of public management. One of these differences is size.

Three different sizes of PNP sports halls were identified for this study. A small sports hall only has an indoor court of 20 x 40 meter, a medium sized sports hall also has an outdoor soccer pitch, and a

large sports hall has two 20 x 40 meter courts, other facilities and an indoor swimming pool. Nine PNP sports halls of three different sizes equally distributed between small, medium and large were chosen as research cases in the Municipalities of Faaborg-Midtfyn and Aalborg. Six PNP sports halls were shifted to NPM in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn and of those six three were also exposed to a governance model. Finally, three PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Aalborg were exposed to the budget regime. Within each model, three different sizes are represented.

Utilisation was measured in weeks 9 and 13 in 2012 before the changes in public management were implemented as well as weeks 9 and 13 in 2014; two years later. Besides measuring utilisation, interviews with the management, the chairman of the board, and the chairman of the largest Voluntary Sports Organisation (VSO) using the sports hall were conducted with the aim of tracing events linking between type of public management and utilisation. Half of the 54 interviews were conducted in the second half of 2012 and half of the interviews in the second half of 2014.

The results of this thesis are presented in four articles:

- *Article 1: Iversen, E. B., & Cuskelly, G. (2015). Effects of different policy approaches on sport facility utilisation strategies. Sport Management Review*

The first article introduced a conceptual framework with the aim of theorising about the effects that different public subsidies may have on the utilisation of PNP sports facilities. Using NPM, governance, and budget it was argued how these different public management approaches influence the utilisation of a PNP sports hall. To do so, insights from rational and sociological institutional theory and motivational theory are introduced as well as knowledge about how VSOs react to external influences. The conceptual framework consists of 12 different strategies that can be pursued by the PNP sports hall that will either increase or decrease utilisation. It was argued that it is likely that a PNP sports hall can, and will, choose one or more of these strategies, and that the choice will impact the level of utilisation. The aim of the article was to show plausible conjectures for future empirical research into how to increase sports facility utilisation via different policies and thus inform future research into the complex interplay between the public sector, sports facilities and VSOs.

- *Article 2: Iversen, Evald (in review), Introduction of a new method for measuring sports facility utilisation validated through the use of thermal cameras. Managing Sport and Leisure.*

The second article introduces a performance information system aiming to measure the utilisation of sports facilities and, particularly, multifunctional sports halls with a court of 20 x 40 meters. The manual survey method introduced here differentiates itself from other performance information systems, which focus on measuring the general level of activity by measuring, for example, the number of users entering the sports hall. This new performance information system aims at increasing the level of detail of the collected information by describing what actually takes place on the court (number of active persons, type of activity, how much of the court that is used and the level of intensity, type of organisation offering the activity, booking no-shows, as well as the age and gender distribution of participants). It is argued that the more precise information provided by this method makes it possible to deliver better analyses and recommendations to municipalities and sports facilities wanting to increase their utilisation. Further, via the use of thermal cameras, the manual survey method was validated. The validation shows that the manual method tends to exaggerate the number of users and the number of timeslots used. However, as the thermal method registers fewer variables, it remains necessary to use the manual survey method if a more detailed description of what takes place on the court is needed.

- Article 3: Iversen, Evald and Forsberg, Peter (2014), Mål eller kaos? Muligheder og begrænsninger i at indføre 'performance management' i danske idrætsfaciliteter (To measure or not to measure? Possibilities and limitations of implementing "performance management" in Danish sports facilities). Forum for idræt.

The third article measures utilisation using the manual survey method developed in the second article to assess the possible consequences of measuring the performance of sports halls in Denmark. The article shows that 25–30% of the available timeslots in sports halls with a court of 20 x 40 meters are not booked and that in about a quarter of the situations where a sports hall is booked, it is not used. Further analysis was conducted using a dataset of 3.455 registrations of activity in 56 sports halls in five different municipalities. The analysis of different sports shows substantial variation in the number of active persons on the court and how much of the court is used indicating there could be more than one activity on the court at the same time. Finally, it is shown that the level of physical intensity drops when activities that do not normally take place in the sports halls are conducted. For example, meetings and cultural events might generate more income but result in lower levels of physical activity. It is concluded that there appears to be a conflict between

short-term targets of increasing utilisation and longer-term targets such as increasing the level of physical activity of the population at large.

- *Article 4: Iversen, E. (in review). Does size matter when public policy tools meet (the voluntary) reality in sports facilities? International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics.*

Finally, the fourth article shows that the activity based public management (NPM) seems to result in higher utilisation compared with the non-activity (budget). PNP sports halls shifted to the NPM-based public management in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn increased utilisation by 7.6% while the sports halls under the budget-based public management in the Municipality of Aalborg showed a decrease of 8.1%. The interviews revealed different types of causal mechanisms as possible explanations for those differences. For example, the PNP sports halls under the activity based NPM type of public management attempted to implement new activities mostly in a dialogue with local VSOs. Under the budget-based public management, the PNP sports halls did not focus much on creating new activities leaving the VSOs to focus primarily developing their own activities. Regarding the importance of size, larger sports facilities have the human and economic capital to act more strategically. Economically, they can offer different services other than just courts and they are more focused on growing their business in areas other than those linked to subsidies from the municipality. The increased level of human capital manifests itself in the fact that the management in the large sports halls are better educated and/or have experience from private enterprise. That background makes it possible for them to adapt to the public management models and maximise profits. They are also able to formulate their own agendas and pursue these. This is, for example, seen by the fact that in the large sports halls under the NPM activity based scheme, the focus is on keeping all time slots busy due to economic considerations. In contrast, the focus under the budget-based type of public management focus is to a greater extent on keeping utilisation by VSOs high due to the fact that such utilisation legitimises funding received from the municipality. Further, the results show that compared to small sports facilities, large sports facilities are more focussed on increasing utilisation and pursuing other business possibilities to increase profits. The small facilities primarily focus on keeping existing users happy.

The analysis also uncovered unintended effects. For example, across the different public management types, a “glass bottom” seemed to be a challenge in order for the different types of

public management to have their intended effects. Most of the VSOs simply did not respond to the subsidy schemes particularly where the subsidy schemes changed in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn. From the interviews with the chairs of the boards of the VSOs the impression was that the strategic level of the boards knew about and recognised the changes of the public management model. But this understanding did not diffuse into any major changes in the daily logics, decisions and actions of the VSOs.

Discussion of findings

Besides the consequences of NPM and budget based approaches analysed in article 4, the consequences of a governance approach to public management were also analysed. The analysis of the implementation of the governance public management model showed that there was a neutral effect on utilisation and the interviews showed that this model did not have the expected results.

The governance model was based on the assumption that new organisations and people would help to increase utilisation. Fewer than expected organisations and people joined the governance process meaning the expected benefit did not occur. The reason for this might be that it is difficult to implement such governance strategies from above when they are to be subject to the motivation and collaboration of the actors at the bottom. Further, it is also questionable whether the board and the management of PNP sports halls, particularly the smaller halls, have the education and competencies necessary to run complex governance processes.

With regards to size, there was no difference between the small and medium sized sports halls meaning these two sizes could be combined in comparison with large sports halls. A noticeable difference between small and large sports halls is the role of the formal and informal competences of both the board and the management. The large facilities were more able to hire staff with a professional management background. This may be a part of the reason for the large facilities' better ability to respond strategically to public management as well as their increased ability to attract income from sources other than via public sector subsidies.

Another reason behind differences in performance of the PNP sports halls could be differences in the level of subsidy. While the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn is currently (2015) cutting 10–15% of the budget for sports halls, there is no such pressure in Municipality of Aalborg. Further, the Municipality of Aalborg, before the cuts in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn, already pay 50% more in subsidy per hour of PNP sports hall activity. PNP sports halls in the Municipality of

Faaborg-Midtfyn are under more stress to increase utilisation to increase their revenue. This might also be a reason differences in approaches between PNP sports halls to the importance of utilisation and responding to public management models between the municipalities. Furthermore, respondents from PNP sports halls in the Municipality of Faaborg-Midtfyn are more critical of the role of the municipality than those from the Municipality of Aalborg.

Conclusions

The conclusion is that performance increased when the PNP sports halls were exposed to public management based on NPM and that performance decreased when exposed to public management based on the logics described as budget. Exposure to the governance approach to public management did not result in any changes in utilisation.

Larger sports facilities benefitted from the public management framework to a greater extent than the smaller ones, possibly due to their increased level of organisational resources. Further, the larger sports halls were able to pursue other strategic agendas (such as increasing revenue from other sources) rather than solely reacting to the public management framework, which also points to the importance of organisational resources.

Theoretically, the thesis raises different considerations. First, it needs to be considered how actions by PNP sports halls and VSOs might seem to be motivated by actions that primarily benefit themselves but, when analysed more closely, actually turn out to be motivated by more altruistic motivation. However, that altruistic motivation is directed by a VSO or a PNP sports hall rather than society at large. Several of the PNP sports halls mentioned that their history of being created by local actors and still being run and maintained using voluntary efforts demonstrated the importance of a local connection. Another theoretical consideration based on the findings is that it is relevant to consider how historical institutionalism might supplement rational and sociological institutionalism, given the historical role particularly played by the small PNP sports halls in communities and rural areas.

Another conclusion is that if a PNP organisation such as a PNP sports hall is to play a role as an organisation that is able to deliver new, better and perhaps more efficient solutions, it needs to consider how to strike an appropriate balance between focusing on existing users and offering services to new users. In this research, the boards of particularly the small PNP sports halls were

dominated by existing users, which mainly led to a focus on how to develop the services for the benefit of existing users.

Finally, a number of policy recommendations for municipalities targeting their public management to increase utilisation of sports facilities are listed. First, it is suggested that municipalities should integrate elements of activity-dependent subsidies in their public management of sports facilities, as these tend to increase utilisation. Second, it is important that municipalities work towards increasing the competences of the board and management. Increased level of competences seems to indicate that the management and boards are better equipped to balance a more professional and business-oriented approach to running sports facilities that meet the wants and needs of the VSOs. Third, a differentiated approach to the size of the subsidies depending on the size of the sports hall is recommended. Larger facilities have several other business options, more professional board members and management, and are better able to respond to changing subsidy and market conditions. Fourth, if attempting governance-like approaches via master plans to increase utilisation, municipalities should consider how that could be done in a way that motivates the PNP sports halls to include new user groups both in the short and long run when creating and implementing a strategic plan. If PNP organisations are to open themselves to a wider audience than they do today it is recommended that the municipalities work towards a broader representation of users in the sports halls and on the boards of PNP sports facilities than is currently the case.

On the basis of the conclusions it is recommended that the municipalities work towards striking a balance between professionalism and voluntarism. On one side it is a relevant target to want the PNP sports halls to increase utilisation and professionalise the management and the board to achieve the target of increasing utilisation. But, on the other side, it is necessary to consider whether such professionalization might result in a drop in the voluntary efforts. If too much strain is put on the volunteers in and around the PNP sports hall, the voluntary efforts might decrease and utilisation could decline in the long run. The results of this thesis indicate that, in the short term, it is possible to increase utilisation via activity-based public management without impacting on the motivation of volunteers to any noticeable extent. Hence, the majority of the activities in the PNP sports halls continue to be created by VSOs and the VSOs continue to report that they receive decent treatment from the PNP sports hall management.

11 Dansk resumé

Denne afhandling belyser konsekvenserne for udnyttelsesgraden af selvejende idrætshaller, når disse udsættes for forskellige typer af resultatstyring. Resultatstyringen består i, at kommunen fastsætter et mål, hvilket i dette tilfælde er en høj udnyttelsesgrad. Udnyttelsesgraden defineres som antallet af timer, idrætshallerne anvendes, hvor mange der benytter idrætshallen samt hvor stor en del af den der bruges. Det undersøges i afhandlingen, hvorvidt opfyldelsen af dette mål påvirkes af forskelle i styringsmodeller. Desuden fokuseres der på eventuelle ikke-intenderede effekter ved at introducere forskellige typer af styringsmodeller. Da afhandlingen er en erhvervs-ph.d., fremsættes der afslutningsvis en række anbefalinger til, hvordan kommuner kan forbedre styringen af selvejende institutioner.

Der introduceres tre forskellige styringsmodeller og det vurderes, hvilke konsekvenser disse har for udnyttelsesgraden af selvejende idrætshaller. De tre styringsmodeller er:

- en styringsmodel inspireret af New Public Management (NPM), hvor tilskuddet stiger med udnyttelsesgraden,
- en governance-styringsmodel inspireret af teorien bag policy-netværk, hvor samarbejdet mellem aktører forventes at give en stigning i udnyttelsesgraden,
- en budget-styringsmodel, hvor tilskuddet ikke stiger eller falder med udnyttelsesgraden.

Projektet tager sit udgangspunkt i et kritisk realistisk videnskabsteoretisk perspektiv, hvilket for det første betyder, at der anvendes en flerhed af teorier og kvalitative metoder som baggrund for analysen og for det andet, at der fokuseres på at forklare de konkrete hændelser og begivenheder (kausale mekanismer), der kobler mellem ændringer i styringsmodel og ændringer i udnyttelsesgrad.

Metodisk er projektet et quasi-eksperiment, da der indsamles data, før der sker ændringer i styringsmodellerne, og igen to år efter ændringerne er indført. Dette gør det muligt at undersøge udviklingen i udnyttelsesgrad i de selvejende idrætsfaciliteter, og det analyseres, hvorvidt ændringer i udnyttelsesgraden kan tilskrives forskelle i tilskudsmodellerne. De ni udvalgte selvejende idrætshaller er på mange måder ens, hvorfor der argumenteres for, at de responderer ensartet på forskellige typer af offentlig styring. Faciliteterne har dog forskellig størrelse, hvilket gør at størrelsens betydning for reaktionen på styringsmodellerne kan belyses. Der sondres mellem tre størrelser. Den lille selvejende hal består kun af en 20 x 40 meter hal, den mellemste selvejende hal

har udover en 20 x 40 meter hal også udendørs fodbold baner tilknyttet og endelig har den store idrætshal to 20 x 40 meter haller, andre faciliteter og en svømmehal tilknyttet. Seks selvejende idrætsfaciliteter i Faaborg-Midtfyn Kommune udsættes for en NPM styringsmodel og tre af disse udsættes yderligere for en governance-styringsmodel. I Aalborg Kommune udsættes tre faciliteter for en budget-model. Under hver styringsmodel er alle tre størrelser repræsenteret.

Udnyttelsesgraden måles i uge 9 og 13 i 2012, før der sker ændringer i tilskudsmodellerne, og i de samme to uger i 2014. Foruden målinger af udnyttelsesgraden, foretages der i hver af de ni idrætsfaciliteter interview med ledelsen, bestyrelsesformanden og formanden for den største idrætsforening, der anvender den pågældende idrætsfacilitet med henblik på at spore begivenheder og hændelser, der fører til koblinger mellem styringsmodeller og udnyttelsesgrad. Halvdelen af de 54 interview er udført i efteråret 2012 og halvdelen i efteråret 2014.

Ph.d.-projektet består af 4 artikler:

- *Artikel 1: Iversen, E. B., & Cuskelly, G. (2015). "Effects of different policy approaches on sport facility utilisation strategies". 'Sport Management Review'.*

I artiklen udarbejdes en teoretisk ramme, som belyser de forventede effekter af forskellige styringsmodeller og deres betydning for udnyttelsesgraden i selvejende idrætsfaciliteter. Der argumenteres ud fra tre forskellige styringsmodeller (NPM, governance og budget) for, hvordan de forskellige offentlige styringsmodeller har indflydelse på udnyttelsesgraden i en selvejende idrætsfacilitet. For at kunne gøre det introduceres rationel og sociologisk ny-institutionel teori og teori om, hvilken betydning motivation spiller. Endvidere inddrages også viden om, hvordan foreninger agerer. Den teoretiske ramme består af 12 forskellige strategier, som de selvejende idrætsfaciliteter kan forfølge med en stigende eller faldende udnyttelsesgrad til følge. Der argumenteres for, at det er sandsynligt, at en idrætsfacilitet kan og vil vælge en eller flere af disse, og at valget af strategi(er) har indflydelse på udnyttelsesgraden. Artiklens mål er at præsentere plausible hypoteser, der kan anvendes i fremtidige empiriske studier om, hvordan aktivitetsniveauet kan øges via forskellige styringsmodeller. Dermed bidrager artiklen med indsigter, der kan danne grundlag for fremtidig forskning i samspillet mellem den offentlige sektor, idrætsfaciliteter og frivillige idrætsforeninger.

- *Artikel 2: Iversen, Evald (in review), "Introduction of a new method for measuring sports facility utilisation validated through the use of thermal cameras". 'Managing Sport and Leisure'.*

Denne artikel introducerer et nyt performance informationssystem, der er en metode som har til formål at måle udnyttelsesgraden i idrætsfaciliteter generelt og specielt i multifunktionelle sportshaller med en bane på 20 x 40 meter. Metoden har vist sin praktiske anvendelighed, da den medio 2015 allerede har været brugt til at analysere brugen af idrætsfaciliteter i 10 kommuner. Metoden adskiller sig fra andre performance informationssystemer, som i højere grad fokuserer på at registrere det overordnede aktivitetsniveau i faciliteten, hvilket for eksempel måles ved at registrere antallet af besøgende i faciliteten. Det nye performance informationssystem målrettet idrætsfaciliteter fokuserer på, hvad der finder sted i idrætsfaciliteten, og at beskrive aktiviteten detaljeret (antallet af aktive personer, typen af aktivitet, hvor stor en del af hallen der er i brug og intensitetsniveauet, organisationstypen, antallet af udeblevne og alders- og kønsfordelingen). Der argumenteres for, at jo mere præcise beskrivelser metoden tilbyder, jo bedre analyser og anbefalinger kan der gives til aktører såsom kommuner og idrætsfaciliteter, der gerne vil øge deres aktivitetsniveau. Valideringen ved brug af termisk kamera viser, at den manuelle metode har tendens til at overvurdere antallet af brugere og antallet af optagede tidsintervaller. Da den termiske metode registrerer færre variable, er det dog nødvendigt at bruge den manuelle undersøgelsesmetode, hvis man ønsker en mere detaljeret beskrivelse af aktiviteterne

- *Artikel 3: Iversen, Evald and Forsberg, Peter (2014), "Mål eller kaos? Muligheder og begrænsninger i at indføre 'performance management' i danske idrætsfaciliteter". 'Forum for idræt'.*

Denne artikel anvender den i artikel 2 beskrevne metode til at vurdere de mulige konsekvenser af at implementere performance management i form af resultatstyring i danske idrætsfaciliteter. Artiklen tager afsæt i undersøgelser af danske idrætshaller, der viser, at 25-30% af de tilgængelige tidsintervaller ikke er reserverede. Desuden dokumenteres det, at haller i gennemsnit ikke anvendes i omkring 25% af de tilfælde, hvor de ellers er reserveret. Der analyseres desuden på 3.455 aktivitetsregistreringer i 56 sportshaller i fem forskellige kommuner indsamlet i 2012-2014. Disse analyser viser, at antallet af aktive personer på banen, og hvor stor en del af banen, der benyttes, varierer betydeligt på tværs af forskellige aktiviteter. Derfor kan det overvejes at have flere end én aktivitet på banen i det samme tidsinterval. Endelig viser resultaterne, at hvis der gennemføres andre idrætsaktiviteter end de idrætsaktiviteter, der normalt gennemføres i idrætshallen, så falder

det fysiske intensitetsniveau. Dermed kan der være en konflikt mellem kortsigtede mål om at øge udnyttelsesgraden af idrætshallen og mere langsigtede mål om at forbedre befolkningens fysiske formåen.

- *Artikel 4: Iversen, E. (in review). 'Does size matter when public policy tools meet (the voluntary) reality in sport facilities?'. 'International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics'.*

Af den sidste artikel fremgår det, at styringsmodellen, hvor tilskuddet afhænger af udnyttelsesgraden, (NPM) ser ud til at resultere i et højere aktivitetsniveau sammenlignet med den tilskudsmodel, hvor tilskuddet ikke afhænger af udnyttelsesgrad (budget). I de selvejende idrætsfaciliteter i Faaborg-Midtfyn Kommune, der får tilskud afhængigt af deres udnyttelsesgrad, steg aktivitetsniveauet med 7,6%, mens idrætsfaciliteterne i Aalborg Kommune, der får tilskud uafhængigt af udnyttelsesgrad, oplevede et fald i aktivitetsniveau på 8,1%. Interviewene viste forskellige forklaringer på disse forskelle. Eksempelvis forsøgte idrætsfaciliteterne, der var underlagt den NPM-baserede model, i højere grad at indføre nye aktiviteter, hvilket dog for det meste skete i dialog med de lokale idrætsforeninger. Faciliteter underlagt budget-modellen fokuserede ikke på at skabe nye aktiviteter og idrætsforeningerne fokuserede primært på at videreudvikle deres egne aktiviteter. Betydningen af faciliteternes størrelse viste, at store idrætsfaciliteter har den økonomiske og menneskelige kapital til at agere mere strategisk. Økonomisk har de flere forskellige forretningsmuligheder, som de i mange tilfælde fokuserer mere på end mulighederne for at øge tilskuddet fra kommunen. Den større mængde af menneskelig kapital ses ved, at ledelsen i de store anlæg er bedre uddannet og/eller har en relevant erfaring fra det private erhvervsliv. Det gør, at de er i stand til at navigere i forhold til de kommunale styringsmodeller og maksimere udbyttet. Samtidig er de i stand til at have deres egne dagsordener og forfølge disse. Evnen til at navigere strategisk viser sig bl.a. ved, at de store faciliteter, der modtager tilskud afhængigt af udnyttelsesgraden, er fokuseret på at øge udnyttelsesgrad med henblik på at optimere tilskuddet. De større faciliteter, der er underlagt en styringsmodel uden kobling til udnyttelsesgraden, har fokus på at øge eksisterende idrætsforeningers aktiviteter, da dette legitimerer det kommunale tilskud. Endelig var de små faciliteter, men især de små faciliteter under budget modellen, fokuseret på at eksisterende brugere forblev tilfredse.

Diskussion af resultater

Ud over effekterne af NPM- og budget-styringsmodellerne, som blev påvist i artikel 4, blev også effekterne af governance-styringsmodellen analyseret. Imidlertid viste analysen, at governance-

modellen medførte en neutral udvikling i aktivitetsniveauet, og interviewene viste desuden, at effekterne af denne styringsmodel ikke blev som forventet. Få nye organisationer eller personer blev en del af den governance-styring, der skulle resultere i en stigende udnyttelsesgrad. Samtidig lykkes det heller ikke i implementeringsfasen af governance-styringsmodellen at få andre parter til at bidrage til en stigende udnyttelsesgrad. Årsagen til dette kan være, at det er for vanskeligt at implementere governance-strategier fra toppen, når strategierne baserer sig på motivation og samarbejde hos aktørerne i bunden. Derudover kan det diskuteres, hvorvidt bestyrelse og ledelse i de små faciliteter har de nødvendige kompetencer til at fuldføre de komplekse beslutnings- og kommunikationsprocesser, der kræves for at gennemføre det samarbejde, som er nødvendigt ifølge governance-tilgangen til styring.

De tre forskellige størrelser, idrætsfaciliteterne har, kunne kun registreres i analysen som to forskellige størrelser. Det havde ingen betydning, om en udendørs fodboldbane var en del af faciliteten eller ej, og derfor skelnes der i analysen kun mellem store og små faciliteter.

Distinktionen mellem små og store faciliteter viste sig at være yderst relevant, da det var muligt at vise forskellige reaktioner på styringsmodellerne, der synes at have betydning for udnyttelsesgraden på tværs af henholdsvis de store og de små faciliteter. Hovedårsagen til de registrerede forskelle vurderes især at være, at de store faciliteter i langt højere grad er i stand til at ansætte personale med ledelsesmæssig baggrund. Samme forhold synes også at være en af årsagerne til, at de store faciliteter i højere grad agerer strategisk i forhold til både kommune og andre forretningsmuligheder.

En anden årsag til forskelle i udnyttelsesgraden kan være styringsmodellernes troværdighed på lang sigt. Mens Faaborg-Midtfyn Kommune i 2015 skærer 10-15% af udgifterne til idrætsfaciliteter, sker der ikke en nedskæring inden for området i Aalborg Kommune. Desuden giver Aalborg Kommune gennemsnitligt 50 % mere i tilskud per time, der afholdes i faciliteten, hvilket også gør, at faciliteterne i Faaborg-Midtfyn Kommune kan opleve et større pres for at øge indtjeningen fra andre kilder. Disse forhold kan også være blandt årsagerne til, at idrætsfaciliteterne i de to kommuner ser forskelligt på behovet for at øge aktiviteten og tilpasse sig den pågældende tilskudsmodel. En anden mærkbar forskel, der kan udspringe af de nævnte forskelle, er desuden, at faciliteterne i Faaborg-Midtfyn Kommune stiller sig mere kritiske overfor kommunens rolle end tilfældet er i Aalborg Kommune.

Konklusion og perspektivering

Afhandlingens konklusion er dermed, at udnyttelsesgraden stiger, når selvejende idrætsfaciliteter udsættes for NPM-styringsmodellen, og at udnyttelsesgraden falder under budget-styringsmodellen. Under governance-styringsmodellen sker der hverken et fald eller en stigning i udnyttelsesgraden.

En tendens er desuden, at større idrætsfaciliteter i højere grad reagerer på de forskellige styringsmodeller, hvilket sandsynligvis skyldes at større idrætsfaciliteter har flere menneskelige og økonomiske ressourcer. Deres strategiske manøvre muligheder viser sig desuden at være større end forventet, og de har vist sig at være styret af mange andre strategiske agendaer end incitamenterne i de forskellige styringsmodeller.

Analysen peger endvidere på flere ikke-intenderede effekter. For det første synes der på tværs af de forskellige styringsmodeller at være en "glas-bund", hvilket betyder at styringsmodellen ikke trænger igennem til de udførende kræfter i idrætsforeningerne og dermed ikke får den fulde intenderede effekt. De fleste af de interviewede idrætsforeninger reagerer ganske enkelt ikke på de forskellige styringsmodeller. Det er særligt overraskende, at de ikke responderer på ændringerne i styringsmodellen i Faaborg-Midtfyn Kommune. På det strategiske niveau i bestyrelserne synes der dog at være forståelse for konsekvenserne af ændringerne i styringsmodellen, men denne forståelse resulterer ikke i ændringer på det konkrete, udførende niveau i idrætsforeningerne.

Afhandlingen rejser også teoretiske spørgsmål. For eksempel synes mange af de handlinger, som selvejende idrætshaller og idrætsforeninger udfører umiddelbart at være selviske, idet de i mange tilfælde fokuserer på eksisterende foreninger og brugere. Men ved nærmere analyse synes de snarere at have altruistiske motiver i forhold til deres foreninger og idrætshaller snarere end motiver rettet mod samfundet generelt. Den lokale forbindelse synes også vigtigt, hvilket understreges af, at flere af repræsentanterne fra de selvejende idrætshaller understreger væsentligheden af, at hallen er bygget ved et lokalt initiativ, og at et lokalt, frivilligt engagement fortsat spiller en væsentlig rolle. Tages historikken hos især de små idrætshaller med i de teoretiske overvejelser, synes det på den baggrund at være relevant at overveje, hvordan historisk institutionalisme kan supplere rationel og sociologisk institutionalisme i fremtidige analyser af feltet.

Yderligere en konklusion er, at hvis en selvejende institution som eksempelvis en idrætsfacilitet skal spille en rolle som en organisation, der er i stand til at levere nye, bedre og måske mere

effektive løsninger, må det overvejes, hvordan der opnås den bedste balance mellem at fokusere på nuværende brugere og at bruge kræfter på at tiltrække nye brugere. I dette tilfælde var særligt de mindre idrætsfaciliteternes bestyrelser domineret af eksisterende brugere, hvilket medførte et udpræget fokus på at udvikle forholdene for denne gruppe af eksisterende brugere.

Endelig fremsættes der en række anbefalinger til kommuner, der arbejder med at forbedre og udvikle styringsmodeller til idrætsfaciliteter med henblik på at øge udnyttelsesgraden. For det første anbefales det, at kommuner giver tilskud afhængigt af udnyttelsesgrad, idet dette øger udnyttelsesgraden. For det andet er det væsentligt, at kommunerne laver indsatser rettet mod at udvikle bestyrelsens og ledelsens kompetencer. Målet er, at de i højere grad kan balancere hensynet til en mere forretningsmæssig drift med fokus på at øge udnyttelsesgrad og hensynet til foreningernes formelle og/eller uformelle ejerskab af idrætsfaciliteterne. For det tredje anbefales det at differentiere tilskudsmodellerne under hensyntagen til idrætsfacilitetens størrelse, da de større faciliteter på grund af deres størrelse har flere muligheder for at skabe indtægter og en mere professionel bestyrelse og ledelse. Endelig kan kommuner, der ønsker at øge udnyttelsesgraden via tiltag af governance-karakter, med fordel overveje hvordan forskellige relevante brugergrupper kan tilgodeses. Dette skal gøres på en måde, så både de grupper, der er i faciliteterne i dag og andre relevante grupper, kan tiltrækkes på både kort og lang sigt. Hvis selvejende institutioner skal åbne sig for en bredere kreds af brugere, anbefales det i det hele taget, at kommuner understøtter en bredere repræsentation af brugere i faciliteten og i bestyrelsen, end det er tilfældet i dag.

På baggrund af konklusionerne anbefales det således, at kommunerne forsøger at ramme en balance mellem professionalisering og frivillighed. På den ene side er der gode grunde til, at idrætsfaciliteterne professionaliserer ledelsen og bestyrelsen med henblik på at øge udnyttelsesgraden. Men på den anden side er det nødvendigt at overveje, hvilke konsekvenser en sådan professionalisering vil have for de frivillige bidrag til driften af idrætsfaciliteter. Hvis de frivillige kræfter i og omkring idrætsfaciliteterne presses, kan det føre til et fald i frivillighed og dermed i udnyttelsesgraden på lang sigt. På kort sigt fører anbefalingen om at bruge en aktivitetsbaseret styringsmodel til en øget udnyttelsesgrad, uden at de frivillige kræfter i mærkbar udstrækning mister motivation. Således bibeholder hovedparten af de selvejende idrætsfaciliteter en stærk tilknytning til de frivillige foreninger, og foreningerne giver udtryk for, at de modtager en god behandling fra faciliteternes side.

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13 Appendices

13.1 Appendix 1 - Interviewguide 2012

Dimension / hypotese	Tematisk spørgsmål	Opfølgende spørgsmål
Indledende spørgsmål	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vil du fortælle lidt om dig selv, baggrund, tilknytning til lokalområdet mv. - Kan du fortælle lidt om, hvad din opgave er i forhold til din idrætsfacilitet? - Hvem tænker du har ansvaret for at skabe aktivitet i den idrætsfacilitet, du er tilknyttet? - Hvad er de vigtigste målsætninger for din idrætsfacilitet? - Hvordan relaterer de målsætninger sig til de kommunale målsætninger for idrætsfaciliteter? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kan du fortælle lidt om, hvad du tænker om den måde, som kommunen yder støtte til din idrætsfacilitet på?
Om mulighederne for at sikre mere aktivitet i idrætsfaciliteten?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvilke muligheder har du for at øge det offentlige tilskud til din idrætsfacilitet? - Hvem ser du særligt som de primære brugere af faciliteten? - Er der på det seneste gjort forsøg på at tiltrække nye brugergrupper til idrætsfaciliteten? - Hvad har betydning for, om I vil gøre en indsats for at tiltrække nye brugergrupper til faciliteten? - Er der lavet tiltag for at øge indtjeningen til faciliteten ud over at øge det direkte og indirekte kommunale tilskud? - Er der gjort forsøg på at tiltrække foreninger, som i dag er i andre idrætshaller? I hvilken grad har I mulighed for at tiltrække foreninger fra andre faciliteter? - Hvilken betydning har det, på hvilke tidspunkter foreningen kan få tider på? - Kan du forestille dig, hvordan det ville være at drive idrætshallen, hvis I fik tilskud ud fra: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - et helt fast tilskud - et tilskud, hvor kun en mindre del af 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Har du gjort noget for at øge det offentlige tilskud? - Hvad tror du der skal til, for at få flere idrætsforeninger til at bruge idrætsfaciliteten? - Hvad tror du der skal til, for at få flere ikke organiserede brugere til at bruge idrætsfaciliteten? - Hvad skulle der til, før at andre idrætsforeninger vil flytte deres aktiviteter til jeres idrætshal?

	indtjeningen kom fra de variable størrelser	
Om mulighederne for at optimere på driften (udgiftssiden)	- Hvilke overvejelser gør I jer om at arbejde med at nedbringe udgifterne til at drive idrætsfacilitet?	
Særligt til faciliteter, der har fået lavet en udviklingsplan	- I har fået lavet en udviklingsplan. Kan du fortælle lidt om, hvordan den kom til verdenen?	
Om indre / ydre motivation	- Jeg vil bede dig om at tænke tilbage på det seneste tidspunkt, hvor du har været mest henholdsvis mindst motiveret for at sikre mere aktivitet i idrætsfaciliteten. Hvad fik dig til at blive mest motiveret og hvad fik dig til at miste motivation?	
Om dialogen med lokale foreninger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvordan er dialogen med lokale foreninger? - Hvad har betydning for dialogen med lokale foreninger? - I hvilken grad er idrætsfaciliteten afhængig af et godt samarbejde med lokale idrætsforeninger? - Er der enkeltforeninger, som I har et særligt tæt samarbejde med? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvilke konsekvenser har det for aktivitetsniveauet i idrætshallen, hvordan dialogen med lokale foreninger er? - Hvilken relevans har det for jer at drøfte problemstillinger med foreninger?
Om dialogen med andre parter end foreninger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvilke andre lokale end lokale, folkeoplysende foreninger, er I i kontakt med? - Hvad har betydning for, hvilke andre lokale parter I er i kontakt med? - I hvilken grad er idrætsfaciliteten afhængig af et samarbejde med andre lokale parter? 	
Om dialogen med kommunen	- Hvordan oplever du dialogen med kommunen?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvad har betydning for, hvordan dialogen med kommunen er? - Hvad kan kommunen gøre for at understøtte de selvejende idrætsfaciliteter?
Om andre parters medansvar	- Oplever I, at andre end bestyrelsen og ledelsen af faciliteten tager et medansvar for, hvordan idrætsfaciliteten udvikler sig?	- Hvis ja, oplever I så at andre parter kommer med nye løsninger, som I ikke selv havde tænkt på?
Betydningen af variationen i støtte	- Hvis du skal vælge mellem på den ene side at have et støttesystem, der giver et fast støttebeløb årligt uanset omfanget af aktivitet i faciliteten på den ene side. Og på den anden side at modtage støtte afhængigt af, hvor mange foreninger der bruger idrætshallen – hvad ville du så foretrække?	- Hvad er konsekvensen af hhv. fast og variabel støtte?
Til ledelsen	- Hvad er vigtigst for dig i din relation til bestyrelsen af faciliteten?	

Til bestyrelsen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvad er vigtigst for dig i din relation til ledelsen af faciliteren? - Hvad er ledelsens væsentligste opgave? 	- Oplever du, at denne relation er under forandring?
Afsluttende spørgsmål	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vi har flere gange undervejs været inde på betydningen af facilitetens økonomi. Oplever du, at der er kommet en større bevidsthed om, hvordan facilitetens økonomi hænger sammen over den senere tid? - Hvad kunne kommunen gøre bedre/anderledes? - Noget som vi ikke har været inde på, som du tænker har relevans for undersøgelsen? det tidspunkt. 	Hvis ja, hvad betydning har denne nye erkendelse?

13.2 Appendix 2 - Interviewguide 2014

Opstart af interview:

- Faciliteter:
 - Åbent spørgsmål til ledelse og bestyrelse om, hvordan de selv har oplevet driften af faciliteten de seneste to år?
 - Hvordan har jeres aktivitetsniveau udviklet sig over de seneste par år?
 - Hvilken betydning af styringsmodellen haft for jeres facilitet de seneste to år?
 - Hvilken betydning har størrelsen af idrætsfaciliteten for mulighederne for at øge aktivitetsniveauet?
 - Tror du kommunen vil hjælpe jer, hvis I får udgifter, som I har svært ved at betale? Også ved et faldende aktivitetsniveau?
 - Hvordan fungerer samarbejdet mellem ledelse og bestyrelser?
 - Giv eksempler på, hvor I senest var enige og hvor I senest var uenige om noget om idrætshallens drift, forholdet til kommunen eller lignende?

- Foreninger:
 - Åbent spørgsmål til foreninger om, hvordan de har oplevet samarbejdet med faciliteten hen over de seneste to år.
 - Derefter en spejling af spørgsmålene stillet til faciliteter med henblik på at afdække, hvordan foreningerne oplever forandringerne i idrætsfaciliteten. Det er langt fra alle spørgsmål, der kan stilles som direkte spejlinger, hvorfor nedenstående spørgeguide skal gennemgås med henblik på at omformulere, så der kan spørges hvor det giver mening i forhold til foreningernes situation.

Spørgsmål udviklet på baggrund af NPM-strategier fra Iversen & Cuskelly (2015)

Strategi	Styringsmodel/teori	Operationalisering af strategi	Spørgsmål
Fællesspørgsmål	NPM – overordnede spørgsmål		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kan du give eksempler på, at idrætsforeningerne har engageret sig i at sikre øget tilskud? Hvilke foreninger? - Hvad vurderer du har indflydelse på, hvilken rolle de påtager sig? - Har du de seneste par år udført initiativer rettet mod at tiltrække aktivitet, som i dag er i andre haller? - Er andre haller kolleger eller konkurrenter?

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Har I ændret jeres krav til, at foreningerne leverer aktivitet i idrætsfaciliteten (mere, fylder ledig tid ud etc...?)
Z: Strategy 1: Focus on selling, marketing and attracting active customers (+)	NPM /knightish / rational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selvoplevet øget fokus på at sælge, markedsføre og tiltrække nye aktive kunder - Konkrete tiltag med fokus på dette og hvorfor disse tiltag? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvilke konkrete tiltag har I gjort for at få mere aktivitet i faciliteten. Hvorfor har I valgt disse tiltag? - Er der er sket ændringer i den måde I tænker på at få mere aktivitet i faciliteten på? Mere fokus på salg og marketing? - Hvilke overvejelser gør I jer, når I får nye brugere ind i faciliteten? Evt. om det har nogen betydning, om brugergrupperne er fysisk eller demokratisk (forenings) aktive. - Hvordan ser bestyrelsen ud i dag i forhold til for to år siden? Hvad skyldes evt. ændringer?
Z: Strategy 2: Focus on how to gain most income with smallest possible effort (+)	NPM/knavish / rational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selvoplevet vurdering af, hvad der gøres for at øge indtjeningen/tilskuddet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Er der eksempler på, hvor I har prioriteret aktiviteter I ved der giver tilskud eller indtjening højere end andre typer af aktiviteter som I også gerne vil have i faciliteten? - Hvilke overvejelser har I gjort jer i forhold til at øge indtjeningen eller tilskuddet? Er der forskel på, hvor meget arbejde der er ved at tiltrække forskellige indtægter? - Betyder det noget for, hvilke typer af aktiviteter, der foregår i faciliteten? - Hvilken betydning har de økonomiske incitamenten? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fx i forhold til fx at få flere grupper ind i hallen samtidig?
Z: Strategy 3: Focus on how to satisfy the city council, the VSOs and new user groups	NPM/knightish /normative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selvoplevet vurdering af, hvad forskellige brugergrupper tilfredshed betyder for faciliteten? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvilke tiltag har I gjort i forhold til at tilfredsstille forskellige brugergrupperes ønsker og behov - Hvad betyder forskellige brugergrupperes tilfredshed for jer? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kommunen?

(+)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tiltag foretaget for at tilfredsstille de forskellige brugergrupper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foreningerne? - Nye og andre brugergrupper? - Hvad betyder det for jer, hvad andre forventer af jer i forhold til at maksimere udnyttelsen af faciliteten? - Hvad oplever I, at (de forskellige) brugerne forventer af jer?
Z: Strategy 4: Focus on influencing the perception other actors has of the PNP sport facility (-)	NPM/knavish /normative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Selvom oplevet opfattelse af, hvad der gøres for at påvirke andres opfattelse af idrætsfaciliteten - Tiltag og initiativer rettet mod at påvirke opfattelsen andre har af idrætsfaciliteten 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Har I eksempler på, at I har gjort en indsats for at vise, at idrætsfaciliteten bruges meget? Hvilken/hvordan? - Oplever I at det er muligt at påvirke andres opfattelse af aktivitetsniveauet i faciliteten (fx brugere, kommune etc) - Hvordan fortæller I om aktivitetsniveauet i faciliteten til andre? Har I fokus på, hvor meget der er optaget eller hvor meget, der er ledigt? - Kan I gøre noget for at påvirke, hvor optaget idrætsfaciliteten virker over for brugerne, kommunen eller andre?

Spørgsmål udviklet på baggrund af governance-strategier fra Iversen & Cuskelly (2015)

Strategi	Styringsmodel/teori	Operationalisering af strategi	Spørgsmål
Fælles spørgsmål under netværksstyring		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Styring i netværk er mest effektiv, når der er tillid og ressourceafhængighed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Har arbejdet med udviklingsplanen medført forandringer? Hvilke? - Hvad er vigtigt for jer, når I samarbejder med andre aktører? - Hvilken betydning har bestyrelsen for, hvilke andre kontakter I knytter til det omkringliggende samfund? - I hvilken grad har du brug for et tæt samarbejde med andre aktører? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvilke er særligt vigtige? - Ressourcer? - Hvordan oplever I samspillet mellem det at skulle have en udviklingsplan, og så at der er sket andre ændringer i

			tilskudsmodellen samtidigt? Hvad har betydet mest?
Z: Strategy 5: Focus on collaborating with all possible user groups participating in the master plan to increase income (+)	Governance/knightish / rational	- En åbenhed for at samarbejde med andre og nye målgrupper, der er en del af udviklingsplanen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Har I oplevet, at udviklingsplanen har ført til at I er kommet i kontakt med nye samarbejdspartnere? - Har eventuelle kontakter til nye samarbejdspartnere via udviklingsplanen ført til, at der er tilført nye aktiviteter eller indtjening til idrætsfaciliteten? - Hvad har haft betydning for, hvilke nye samarbejdspartnere I tog kontakt til?
Z: Strategy 6: Focus on maximizing income by showing good will to new users but instead focus on existing users (-)	Governance/knavish/rational	- En umiddelbar åbenhed over for nye grupper, men når arbejdsgrupper i forbindelse med udviklingsplanen nedsættes, bliver det alligevel de dominerende brugergrupper, der dominerer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvad har I gjort for at få nye brugergrupper med i arbejdet med udviklingsplanen? - Har I haft held med det? Hvorfor/Hvorfor ikke? - Hvis held: Hvad er jeres fremtidige forventninger til samarbejdet med disse brugergrupper? - Hvad er det for nogen forhold der gør, at det er vanskeligt at udvide kredsen af personer, foreninger, firmaer og institutioner, der anvender faciliteten?
Z: Strategy 7: Focus on what the old 'appropriate' users expect and how to satisfy them (+)	Governance/knightish /normative	- Faciliteterne fastholdes i hidtidige netværk, men der er stærk fokus på at tilfredsstille deres ønsker og behov	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvem har I henvendt jer til i forbindelse med udviklingsplanen? Hvordan forventningsafstemmer I med brugere? - Hvordan finder I ud af, hvad der er vigtigst for jeres eksisterende brugere? - Hvad gør I for at tilfredsstille eksisterende brugeres ønsker og behov? - Gør I noget for at koordinere mellem forskellige foreninger og institutioners ønsker og behov for at øge aktivitetsniveauet? - Hvilken rolle spiller de forskellige idrætsforeninger i bestyrelsen? Hvilken rolle påtager de sig i forhold

			til hallens drift og udvikling?
Z: Strategy 8: Focus on what is expected from the old 'appropriate' users and how to make them expect less (-)	Governance/knavish/normative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faciliteterne fokuserer på eksisterende brugere, men synes også at de forventer for meget af faciliteten 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvilke forventninger har jeres brugere til jer? - Kan I leve op til disse forventninger? - Har I mulighed for at påvirke andres forventninger til jer? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Økonomi? - Antal brugere/længde af sæson mv.? - Hvordan oplever I de ønsker og krav, som de eksisterende brugere stiller? Stiller de store krav, passende krav eller er de beskedne?

Spørgsmål udviklet på baggrund af budget-strategier fra Iversen & Cuskelly (2015)

Strategi	Styringsmodel/teori	Operationalisering af strategi	Spørgsmål
Z: Strategy 9: Focus on new activities and users to the extent it can be done without harming existing users (+)	Budget/knavish/rational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Faciliteterne er grundlæggende drevet af at øge aktivitetsniveauet, men har også en bekymring i forhold til eksisterende brugergrupper 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvad gør I for at øge aktivitetsniveauet? - Hvem henvender I jer særligt til? - Gør I noget for at dokumentere, at der er megen aktivitet i faciliteten? Hvis ja, hvad. Hvis nej, hvorfor ikke? - Er det vigtigt for jer at dokumentere aktivitetsniveauet? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvad presser I retning af at det er væsentligt at dokumentere? - Hvad gør det mindre væsentligt? - Hvad tænker I om forholdet mellem gamle- og nye brugere?
Z: Strategy 10: Focus on manipulating measurement so the PNP sport facility seems more busy than what is	Budget/knavish/rational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvad gøres der for at sikre bedst mulig overensstemmelse med faktisk brug? - Handlinger i forbindelse med konstaterede uoverensstemmelser mellem faktisk og budgetteret brug 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Er der overensstemmelse mellem sæson/ugebookinger og den realiserede aktivitet? - Hvad er forskellen og hvad skyldes denne? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Kan den ændres? - Hvilke indsatser har I gjort for at

actually the case. (-)			<p>sikre fuld overensstemmelse?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke? - Gør I noget for at sikre, at de timer der er booket, faktisk også bruges til aktivitet? - Tænk på den sidste gang, du opdagede en uoverensstemmelse mellem booket og realiseret tid. Hvad gjorde du?
Z: Strategy 11: Focus on maximizing utilization by having a continuous dialogue with user groups already in the sport facility (+)	Budget/knightish/normative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvilke (om nogen) dialog føres der med brugergrupperne i faciliteten om at øge aktivitetsniveauet? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drøfter i omfanget af aktivitetsniveauet med brugerne? - Drøfter I, hvad de og I kan gøre for at påvirke dette? - Hvad skulle der til for at I ville indlede denne type af drøftelser?
Z: Strategy 12: Have a half-hearted dialogue with existing users and showing indifference to new users (-)	Budget/knavish/normative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Hvilke dialoger (om nogen) føres med nye brugergrupper? - Hvordan (hvis overhovedet) drøftes omfanget af aktivitetsniveau med eksisterende brugergrupper? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Har I nye brugergrupper i kikkerten? - Gør I noget for at opsøge nye brugergrupper? - Hvordan afvejer I hensynet til eksisterende brugergrupper og ønsket om at få nye brugergrupper ind?

13.3 Appendix 3 - List of persons interviewed

Interviewperson	Municipality	Date
Manager, Forum Faaborg	Faaborg-Midtfyn	28.08.2012
Member of Board, VSO, Forum Faaborg	Faaborg-Midtfyn	28.08.2012
Chairman of Board, Forum Faaborg	Faaborg-Midtfyn	28.08.2012
Chairman of Board, Midtfyns Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	29.08.2012
Manager, Midtfyns Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	29.08.2012
Manager, Broby Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	03.09.2012
Chairman of VSO Board, Broby Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	03.09.2012
Chairman of Board, Broby Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	03.09.2012
Member of Board, Rolfhallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	04.09.2012
Manager, Rolfhallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	04.09.2012
Manager, Svanningehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	04.09.2012
Chairman of VSO Board, Svanningehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	04.09.2012
Chairman of Board, Svanningehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	04.09.2012
Chairman of VSO Board, Midtfyns Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	04.09.2012
Manager, Espehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	05.09.2012
Chairman of Board, Espehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	05.09.2012
Chairman of Board, Kongerslev Idrætscenter	Aalborg	09.09.2012
Manager, Nørresundby Fritidscenter	Aalborg	10.09.2012
Chairman of VSO Board, Nørresundby Fritidscenter	Aalborg	10.09.2012
Chairman of Board, Mouhallen	Aalborg	10.09.2012
Chairman of VSO Board, Mouhallen	Aalborg	10.09.2012
Chairman of Board, Nørresundby Fritidscenter	Aalborg	10.09.2012
Chairman of VSO Board, Rolfhallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	02.10.2012
Chairman of VSO Board, Espehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	22.10.2012
Manager, Mouhallen	Aalborg	11.11.2012
Chairman of VSO Board, Kongerslev Idrætscenter	Aalborg	11.11.2012
Manager, Kongerslev Idrætscenter	Aalborg	11.11.2012
Manager, Midtfyns Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	18.08.2014
Manager, Espehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	18.08.2014
Manager, Forum Faaborg	Faaborg-Midtfyn	21.08.2014
Member of VSO Board, Forum Faaborg	Faaborg-Midtfyn	21.08.2014
Chairman of Board, Forum Faaborg	Faaborg-Midtfyn	21.08.2014
Manager, Broby Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	27.08.2014
Chairman of VSO Board, Broby Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	27.08.2014

Chairman of Board, Espehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	27.08.2014
Chairman of Board, Broby Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	28.08.2014
Chairman of VSO Board, Midtfyns Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	28.08.2014
Chairman of Board, Midtfyns Fritidscenter	Faaborg-Midtfyn	01.09.2014
Manager, Rolfhallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	01.09.2014
Chairman of VSO Board, Rolfhallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	01.09.2014
Member of Board, Rolfhallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	01.09.2014
Manager, Svanningehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	16.09.2014
Chairman of Board, Svanningehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	16.09.2014
Chairman of VSO Board, Svanningehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	16.09.2014
Chairman of VSO Board, Espehallen	Faaborg-Midtfyn	16.09.2014
Chairman of VSO Board, Nørresundby Fritidscenter	Aalborg	25.09.2014
Chairman of VSO Board, Mouhallen	Aalborg	26.09.2014
Chairman of Board, Mouhallen	Aalborg	26.09.2014
Manager, Mouhallen	Aalborg	26.09.2014
Chairman of Board, Kongerslev Idrætscenter	Aalborg	27.09.2014
Manager, Kongerslev Idrætscenter	Aalborg	27.09.2014
Manager, Nørresundby Fritidscenter	Aalborg	02.10.2014
Chairman of Board, Nørresundby Fritidscenter	Aalborg	02.10.2014
Chairman of VSO, Kongerslev Idrætscenter	Aalborg	02.10.2014