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Stephen Sirris

# Managers negotiating identities

Hybridizing professionalism and  
managerialism in faith-based health  
organizations and in religious  
organizations



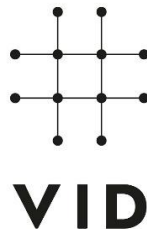
Managers negotiating identities.  
Hybridizing professionalism and managerialism  
in faith-based health organizations  
and in religious organizations.

*Stephen Sirris*

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# **An article-based thesis:**

## **Article I:**

Sirris, Stephen. Coherent and contextual identities and roles? Hybrid professional managers prioritizing of coexisting institutional logics. (Currently under second time review in *Scandinavian Journal of Management*).

## **Article II:**

Sirris, Stephen. (2019). "The pastors' dilemma" revisited. Religious leaders connecting the spiritual and organizational realms through conceptual work. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, 16(3), 290-313.

## **Article III:**

Sirris, Stephen and Byrkjeflot, Haldor. (2019). Realising calling through managers' identity work. Comparing themes of calling in faith-based and religious organisations. (Accepted by *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 32(2)).

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*Vi takker for kvar nyfødt dag da våre sansar opnar seg,  
for tankens glans, for hjerteslag og alle under på vår veg.*

Stephen Sirris, June 6, 2019



## Abstract

Who should manage professional organizations, and how should professional work be led? Which education, qualifications and competencies are needed to do so? These are questions that continue to be debated in healthcare, schools and higher education, social work, and faith-based and religious organizations. The very existence of such questions indicates that the institution of management in these professional contexts is changing. New public management reforms aimed at increasing efficiency through managerial control over professional work (O'Reilly & Reed, 2011). Professionalism is characterized by long-term academic training, socialization through work experience, autonomy, and discretion (Freidson, 2001).

Some organizations address these issues by placing professionals in managerial positions. Managers who lead co-professionals are essentially hybrid professional managers (Noordegraaf, 2007); they are considered “bilingual” and a bridge between the professional and managerial spheres. Examples of such managers include a teacher working as a school principal or a nurse managing a hospital ward. Managerial positions in such cases are dependent on specific professions. In contrast, profession-neutral managers include, for instance, a psychologist leading church staff or a person trained as an economist heading a social work organization.

This thesis focuses on hybrid professional managers' self-understanding in the context of their everyday work. In particular, I address the following question: *In a context of institutional change, how do managers negotiate their professional and managerial identities?* Situated within the domain of organization and management studies, this thesis adopts an institutional theory perspective. I study the meeting of professionalism and managerialism as intersecting institutional logics. Logics are “the rules of the game” that guide actions (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012). Inside organizations, individuals shape and modify the institutions of profession and management. I study such efforts as institutional work (Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2009).

By drawing on coexisting institutional logics and through empirical description, I aim to develop a theoretical framework that shows how identities are negotiated by managers. To achieve this goal, I investigate a faith-based hospital, and a diocese within the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Norway. Such organizations are considered understudied strongholds of traditions, permeated by ideology and safeguarded by professions (Tracey, Phillips, & Lounsbury, 2014). I use a qualitative research approach and an embedded, multiple case study (Stake, 2013) that provides rich and detailed knowledge of managers in their context.

As part of data collection, I interviewed nine middle managers in a hospital and nine deans who were leading priests and shadowed six of them for one workweek each. On the basis of the empirical material, I argue that organizational reforms represent institutional changes that affect the patterns of coexistence between professionalism and managerialism. These tensions trigger institutional work in which managers construct new configurations of professional and managerial identities. I analyze how this happens and whether the outcome of these negotiations is hybridization: combinations of phenomena that are usually distinct or an innovative blend with a novel outcome (Noordegraaf, 2015). My study shows that the hybrid outcome has three modes, outlined in each article, that managers use in negotiating professionalism and managerialism in their identity work.

Article 1 proposes the *identity-role salience framework*. Findings show that hybrid professional managers from both organizations are increasingly involved in managerial rather than professional work. For hospital managers, this work coheres with their strong managerial identity. Deans in the Church of Norway primarily identify as clergy, which represents a tension between their self-understanding and their new role as deans. Article 2 studies how deans attempt to bridge professionalism with managerialism by interpreting a work hour agreement (WHA) for clergy as a tool to improve professional work and as an administrative device. Drawing on observational material, this article analyzes a specific mode of negotiating professionalism and managerialism, defined as *conceptual work*. Article 3 explores the notion of *calling as identity work*. It examines what constitutes a calling for hospital managers and deans. Managers in the diaconal hospital primarily allude to modern meaning-making as calling, while the deans favor a classical religious notion of calling. Identity work serves to blur the dichotomy between the classical and modern notions via hybridizations.

These three modes of negotiating identities emanating from a combination of professionalism and managerialism answer the research question. This study explores the dynamics of how hybrid professional managers become more of managers and less of professionals.

## Sammendrag

Hvem skal lede profesjonelle organisasjoner og profesjonsutøvers arbeid? Hvilken utdanning og kompetanse kreves? Slike spørsmål fører ofte til debatter i helsevesenet, kirken, skoleverket, høyere utdanning og sosialt arbeid. New Public Management-reformer forsøkte å øke effektivitet ved å styrke lederes styring over profesjonelt arbeid (O'Reilly & Reed, 2011). Profesjonalisme kjennetegnes ved langvarig akademisk utdanning, sosialisering gjennom arbeidserfaring, autonomi og skjønnsutøvelse (Freidson, 2001).

Noen organisasjoner velger å løse slike spørsmål ved å plassere profesjonsutøvere i lederposisjoner. Er man selv profesjonsutøver og leder fagfeller, kalles man hybrid profesjonell leder (Noordegraaf, 2007). Slike hybrider er «tospråklige» og forventes å bygge broer mellom begge sfærer; profesjon og ledelse. Dette kan for eksempel være en lærer som arbeider som rektor ved en barneskole, eller en sykepleier som leder en sykehusavdeling. Lederstillingene er da avhengige av lederens egen profesjonsbakgrunn. Det finnes også ledere som er profesjonsnøytrale, eksempelvis en psykolog som leder en menighetsstab eller en økonom som leder sosialt arbeid.

Temaet i denne doktoravhandlingen er hybride profesjonelle lederes selvforståelse i det daglige arbeidet. Problemstillingen er: *I en kontekst av institusjonell endring, hvordan forhandler ledere sin profesjonsidentitet og lederidentitet?* Avhandlingen skrives innenfor disiplinen organisasjons- og ledelsesfag. Det teoretiske hovedperspektivet er institusjonell teori. Jeg studerer møtet mellom profesjon og ledelse som institusjonelle logikker (Thornton et al., 2012). I organisasjoner omformer og endrer individer institusjoner som profesjon og ledelse. Dette studerer jeg som institusjonelt arbeid (Lawrence et al., 2009).

Målet med studien er, på grunnlag av empiriske beskrivelser av ledere i kontekster kjennetegnet av sameksisterende profesjonslogikk og ledelseslogikk, å utvikle et teoretisk rammeverk for hvordan ledere forhandler identiteter. For å nå dette målet undersøkte jeg et diakonalt sykehus, samt et bispedømme i Den norske kirke. Slike organisasjoner hevdes å være lite utforskede, sterkt profesjonspregede og gjennomsyret av ideologi (Tracey et al., 2014). Som kvalitativ forsker valgte jeg en flercasestudie (Stake, 2013) som gav detaljert kunnskap om ledere i kontekst. Jeg intervjuet ni mellomledere i sykehuset og ni proster som leder prester. I tillegg «skygget» jeg seks av dem i en arbeidsuke hver, samt analyserte dokumenter.

Avhandlingen utfolder følgende argument: Reformen i organisasjoner representerer institusjonelle endringer som preger mønsteret av sameksistens mellom en profesjonslogikk og en ledelseslogikk. Spenninger utløser institusjonelt arbeid hvor lederne konstruerer nye

konfigurasjoner av profesjonsidentiteter og lederidentiteter. Jeg analyserer hvordan dette skjer i praksis og hvorvidt utfallet av disse forhandlingsprosessene er hybridisering. Hybridisering er kombinasjoner av fenomener som vanligvis finnes adskilt, eller det betegner innovative blandinger hvor utfallet er noe nytt (Noordegraaf, 2015).

Hybridiseringen vises i alle tre artiklene gjennom ulike forhandlingsmodus som ledere bruker i sitt identitetsarbeid. Artikkel 1 presenterer et *rammeverk for identiteters og rollers betydning*. Funnene viser at hybride profesjonelle ledere i begge organisasjoner i økende grad involveres i ledelse framfor profesjonelt arbeid. For sykehuslederne samsvarer utviklingen med deres tydelige lederidentitet. Prostene i Den norske kirke identifiserer seg som prester, noe som representerer en spenning mellom deres selvforståelse og den nye prosterollen.

Artikkel 2 undersøker hvordan proster forsøker å knytte profesjonslogikk og ledelseslogikk sammen når de fortolker en arbeidstidsavtale for prester. De forstår den både som et redskap for å forbedre profesjonelt arbeid og som et administrativt verktøy. Ved å trekke veksler på observasjonsmaterialet, analyserer jeg særlige måter prostene kombinerer profesjonslogikk og ledelseslogikk. Det beskriver jeg som *konseptuelt arbeid*.

Artikkel 3 omhandler *kall som identitetsarbeid*. Den utforsker ideen om kall blant sykehusledere og proster. Mens lederne i det diakonale sykehuset primært forteller om det moderne meningsskapende kallet, er det religiøse klassiske kallet tydelig tilstede hos prostene. Gjennom identitetsarbeid hybridiseres den etablerte dikotomien mellom et klassisk og et moderne kall.

I disse tre dynamiske moduser for å forhandle identitet utforsker min studie hvordan hybride profesjonelle ledere blir mer ledere og mindre profesjonsutøvere.

## 1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the rationale and relevance of my work. First, I introduce the field of study. Next, I present the aims, research questions, and contributions, before discussing the key concepts of this study: change, the institutional logics of professionalism and managerialism, and identity. Subsequently, the theoretical framework, the unit of analysis, and the research design are explained. Lastly, the chapter outlines the main elements of the research project as well as the overall structure of the dissertation.

### Field of study

The starting point of this study is the everyday work of managers. The study analyzes data grounded in managers' experiences. Managers' self-understanding (identity), expressed in self-referential statements, may not always equate with their tasks, responsibilities, and expectations. Such discrepancies may manifest as tensions especially when institutional changes occur. According to Micelotta et al. (2017), institutional change concerns how institutions, for example professions or management, are created, modified, or transformed.

#### 1.1.1 Empirical grounding

Management is highly important in times of change, since novel tasks and relations can lead individuals to reflect on who they are and what they can do (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2016). In general, changes represent instability and are followed by periods of complexity and demands of flexibility. Thus, managerial work is in flux, as new methods of operation manifest themselves in new tasks that require new competencies. When the contents of managerial work alter, the manager him/herself is affected. For example, external expectations articulated in work descriptions affect the managers' notions of themselves. As the turbulence and pace of organizational life increase, questions of identity become more salient—who am I, what do I stand for, and what should I prioritize?

This study accesses managers' reflections about identity surfacing in their ordinary work. Managers struggle with such questions, as illustrated in the excerpts from my empirical material. These excerpts originate in a context of changed equations between their professional anchoring and managerial responsibilities:

*I am the manager of this unit and have total responsibility. Above me is the department manager and above him the CEO. I am an employer and in charge of 60 persons. I am a technical facilitator who get other people to do their job in the system. I am in service, available for them. They do the core work. I do not have any clinical practice myself, which is a major change. Yet, I am as updated as they are, even if my*

*own profession rusts a bit. My overcrowded job is basically about making others perform. (Nurse, unit manager, diaconal hospital)*

*I am identified as a priest among the clergy. We are colleagues. We listen to each other and the best arguments win. I cannot command the priests or the parishes. I like facilitating the priests' meetings, education and theological themes. However, they ask me most about practicalities and church order. For them I am also the manager—the boss. Prioritizing is not easy... I must attend to everything that has to do with being an employer, following the rules. In practice, I am primarily the employer of the priests in the deanery. Yet, by heart I am a priest. (Clergy, dean, Church of Norway)*

The first quote is from a middle manager working in a faith-based hospital, and the second from a middle manager supervising priests in a church. The quotes display striking similarities and differences. The managers offer a basic description of their work. Starting with the phrase “I am...”, they list the core issues of managers; their self-understanding; and their work contents. These dimensions constitute the focal point of this thesis: the identities of hybrid professional managers.

The quotes also illustrate a duality as the managers situate themselves in two spheres: professional and managerial. They are trained professionals, honed by their education and work experience and in some cases, by their ongoing professional practice. Simultaneously, they are managers vested with formal positions within the organizational hierarchy. Middle managers are nested in their profession because they are professional themselves and close to their professional work. At the same, as members of the management, they exercise the employer's liability and implement decisions from the top management (Floyd & Wooldridge, 1997).

These managers' identities are cemented both as professionals and as managers. The above excerpts indicate a somewhat different emphasis between the two managerial categories, which may not just be a reflection of their individual preferences. I use these quotes as illustrations of the differences and similarities between the managers in the two case organizations. While the healthcare representative underlines a managerial identity, the church representative emphasizes a professional identity as a priest. The two managers signal a slightly different orientation, yet for both, work entails much administration stemming from the employer's liability. Both indicate that they are not completely at ease with increasingly management-oriented changes in their positions that trigger more work and challenging priorities. To acquire a richer understanding of these managerial experiences, I now address wider organizational and societal dynamics.

### 1.1.2 Background of the field of study

This section elaborates the problem area of my research study, beyond the individual excerpts listed above. Professions are ideal-typical, closed, collegial, self-regulated expert occupations (Abbott, 1988). They are described as exclusive identities, attained through qualifications, training, and socialization. Professions are a distinct way of organizing work, and professionals have been opposed to new ways of organizing that challenge their self-governance (Flynn, 1999; Mintzberg, 1979). Professionalism is plural, dynamic, ambiguous and contextualized. Autonomy, discretion, and trust characterize professional work (Molander & Terum, 2008). Collegiality and consensual decisions, with professional managers serving as first among equals, are indicators of professionalism. These are the elements I refer to by the term *professionalism* or a *professional logic* (Exworthy & Halford, 1999; Freidson, 2001).

Institutional logics, hereafter also called *logics*, “specify which issues to consider salient, which ends to pursue, which means to employ, and which standards to use to define success” (Smets, Jarzabkowski, Burke, & Spee, 2015:934). *Managerialism* or a *managerial logic* is composed of market elements and bureaucracy, often introduced in public and non-profit organizations through new public management (NPM) reforms (Lægreid & Christensen, 2011). The focus of managerialism is on efficiency and hierarchy by line management. Its indicators emphasize budgetary and managerial control (O’Reilly & Reed, 2011).

Over time, work life has witnessed a transition from traditional professional leadership toward an organizationally based management (Aldridge & Evetts, 2003; Evetts, 2009, 2011). NPM reforms have introduced a managerial logic into organizations traditionally governed by a professional logic.<sup>1</sup> Both the organizations I study have undergone similar reforms (Chapter 2) that frame tensions between professionals and organizations as a problem and respond to it by strengthening management (Micelotta et al., 2017). In these contexts, the original position of a leader’s work was grounded and practiced within professions. Professionals as leaders were criticized for favoring co-professionals, weak strategic development, and lacking a holistic organizational view (Askeland & Schmidt, 2016; Byrkjeflot & Kragh Jespersen, 2014; Ferlie, Fitzgerald, & Pettigrew, 1996; Pollitt, 1993).

Importantly, this thesis studies managers working in organizations that have experienced the basic institutional dynamics of strengthened management and altered

---

<sup>1</sup> A reform is an attempt of introducing a deep, structural, and intentional change into organizations or an entire sector by the government. It aims at achieving explicit political goals and solving societal problems (Christensen & Lægreid, 2011).

professionalism. On the basis of the two introductory quotes, I now bring some presuppositions to the forefront. When external guidelines or expectations toward professionals and managers change, I assume that this somehow affects an individual's identity. External expectations that serve as new work descriptions or neutralize managerial positions of profession constitute a pressure on managers' self-understanding. The quotes indicate that managers situated at the intersection of the professional and managerial logics, experience tensions, which manifest as dilemmas. For example, managers must choose to prioritize administrative or professional tasks. Their identities as professionals or managers are challenged, for instance when balancing trust in autonomous professionals with exercising managerial control. Tensions between self-perceptions and responsibilities may emerge as value conflicts. Professionals who have entered the management integrate or balance conflicting demands. Known as hybrid professional managers, they have been extensively studied in organizational and management literature (Noordegraaf, 2015). They are trained professionals holding an organizational managerial position and supervising professional work and colleagues (Ferlie et al., 1996). How hybrid professional managers relate to the logics of professionalism and managerialism is, according to me, an act of negotiating (Chapter 1.4).

To achieve my research aim of describing and theorizing how hybrid professional managers negotiate identities, I selected organizational settings where one's managerial work still relates closely to one's profession. I chose a religious and a healthcare organization: a diaconal hospital, and a diocese within the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Norway. These organizations can be described as professional hierarchies (Mintzberg, 1979) that over the last years have experienced profound changes and reforms emphasizing the crucial need for management (Chapter 2). Both are associated with old professions that have occupied powerful positions; however, lately, patterns of authority are changing (Askeland, 2015). Both organizations are rooted in Christian faith, practices, and ethos. These organizations have particularly values-laden professions, which potentially makes the introduction of managerialism challenging to cope with. The church has strong religious values built into the profession of clergy, and the ethos of medical physicians and nurses is evident in the hospital (Evetts, 2013; Pattison & Pill, 2004). In these settings, I am interested in examining how managers articulate and understand themselves and their work.

Managers in both these settings have faced similar institutional challenges, which in turn facilitates comparison. The rationale for comparison is intertwined with awareness about their work contexts. There is a call for comparative studies of managers or professionals



within the field of organizational studies (Scott, 2014), and in the sociology of professions (Molander & Terum, 2008). The comparative approach of my study is inspired by the work of Smets, Morris and Greenwood (2012), who highlighted the need for research in exploring how field-level logics are enacted in micro-level practices in different contexts. Pinheiro, Geschwind, Ramirez, & Vrangbæk (2016) called for comparative studies that are based on institutional theory. I follow their twofold argument. First, both organizations may be defined as human service organizations, characterized by professional and moral work (Hasenfeld, 2010). Second, both have distinctive traditions and are situated within environments of institutional pressures. There are differences between the two organizations in terms of size and number of employees, budget, technology, and hierarchies. The church is a network organization, yet in the pastoral line, it resembles a loosely knit professional bureaucracy.

NPM reforms promote the concept of management and call for more planning and reporting toward the creation of more effective organizations. This in turn has promoted a modernization of professions. The organizational ethos focuses and strengthens values such as transparency, responsibility, and accountability. Under unitary management, a formally appointed manager is responsible for the budget, personnel, tasks, and daily operations of a unit or department. In such settings, traditional professions experience decreased autonomy and are gradually understood as occupations. Professionals are integrated into the management, and hybrid professional managers are appointed to bridge the two logics (Noordegraaf, 2015).

Changing professionalism and managerialism marks the contexts in which identities are negotiated. Identity is the primary concept of this thesis. It is, however, connected to various other related concepts (Chapters 1.4 and 3.2.3). Firstly, identity concerns self-understanding and is regarded fluid since a person uses agency to form identity. Role is generally understood as the sum of expectations from others and is linked to organizational structure and constraints (Ashforth, 2001). Role is linked to behavior and tasks, while identity is more subjective. Regulations and reforms give rise to new roles, and they provide new understanding of what a manager should be and do. This may result in a separation of the ideas of profession and management for a manager. In this study, role is primarily an emic concept used by the participants. I use social identity as a related etic concept (Chapter 3.2.3). Professionals have mutual loyalty that is based on clinical core work. Managers supposedly have loyalty toward the formal organization. The situation described above underpins the question of how managers actually negotiate the dual identities that they assumedly integrate.

## 1.2 Aim, research questions, and contributions

My overall aim is to employ empirical description and the perspective of coexisting institutional logics to develop a theoretical framework that shows how identities are negotiated by hybrid professional managers. The contribution of the thesis to the existing literature is twofold. First, it offers empirical evidence of the ongoing institutional changes, in terms of profession and management in the studied organizations. Second, each article engages with and contributes to institutional theory by suggesting modes of negotiating where hybridization is an outcome of coexisting logics. The thesis develops conceptualizations and proposes a theoretical model (Swedberg, 2014). The salient features of this study are its comparative approach toward studying managers in two organizations and the use of interviews and shadowing. This work is an empirical study of highly professionalized and institutionalized faith-based and religious organizations. The research question guiding this study is: *In a context of institutional change, how do managers negotiate their professional and managerial identities?*

This work is an article-based dissertation consisting of three articles and an overarching synopsis. The first article is guided by the question *How do coexisting logics affect the coherence of identities and roles of hybrid professional middle managers in differing contexts?* Based on the institutional logic perspective (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012), the article compares how managers perceive themselves as professionals and managers, and how they understand their core tasks and responsibilities. The article employs Besharov and Smith's (2014) coexisting logic framework and discusses how dimensions of identity and role may be integrated.

The second article examines how church managers translate and implement a new work hour agreement (WHA) for the clergy. It addresses the following question: *What characterizes the institutional work performed by deans when implementing the WHA?* Professionalism and managerialism meet in this process, which requires managers to mediate and interpret. In other words, managers have to perform institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006), which is also understood as conceptual work. Overall, such changes affect the institution of priesthood and the clergy's transition from traditional calling into a more ordinary occupation.<sup>2</sup>

The third article raises the following questions: *What are the similarities and*

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<sup>2</sup> I understand institutions as “a relatively stable collection of rules and practices, embedded in structures of resources that make action possible (...) and structures of meaning that explain and justify behavior-roles, identities and belongings, common purposes, and causal and normative beliefs” (March & Olsen, 2008:691).

*differences between managers' understanding of their work as a calling in faith-based and religious organizations? How do they negotiate calling in their work?* Drawing on interviews, the article departs from the theory of identity (Pratt & Ravasi, 2016) that I relate to conceptualizations of the classical religious calling and the modern meaning-making calling (Duffy & Dik, 2013). Calling represents identity work (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003) as managers use reflexive efforts to deal with changes.

Together, these three articles study how hybrid professional managers respond to institutional changes when negotiating identities. Their responses can be seen as an ongoing identity work and a balancing act of work emanating from both logics of professionalism and managerialism. Such efforts are highlighted in the articles and analyzed as three modes of negotiating: *identity and role salience*, *conceptual work*, and *calling as identity work*. These three modes represent how the two logics of professionalism and managerialism interact.

### 1.3 Positioning the study in a context of institutional change

In this section, I relate changes at the societal macro level to the individual micro level in order to connect the logics to ongoing identity work. Changes represent potential challenges, and management is generally considered part of the solution to improve organizations (Yukl, 2013). Change is inherently about context, because events, actions, and situations bring about changes occurring in time and place. From the viewpoint of organizations, change occurs both in the external environment as cultural changes at a societal macro level and internally initiated and handled by managers.<sup>3</sup>

#### 1.3.1 Change as institutional alignment

According to Micelotta et al. (2017), institutional change concerns how institutions are created, modified, or transformed. In their framework, the *scope* of changes can be developmental or transformational, whereas the *pace* of change is either evolutionary or revolutionary. One of the four quadrants resulting from this framework is of particular interest to my project. This is because I assume that the changes in highly institutionalized organizations are evolutionary and developmental in nature. Micelotta et al. (2017:1897) refer to such changes as *institutional alignment*. Such changes do not result from exogenous shocks; rather they are characterized by slow pace and a gradual nature. In this thesis, I have conducted a fine-grained analysis of such changes in two case organizations. Vital to my thesis and a key issue within institutional alignment is “how actors experiencing complexity

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<sup>3</sup> For example, the dynamics of change consist of both exogenic events like reforms as well as emerging endogenous practices that change organizations from within (Mahoney & Thelen, 2009). This thesis aims at documenting experiences of institutional change that are crucial internally to organizations.

negotiate demands and maintain the balance between logics” (Micelotta et al., 2017:1897). Within this type of change, logics are not replaced as such; they are balanced and negotiated.

Thus, this thesis responds to the call of Micelotta et al. (2017:1899) for mapping how macro logics are understood at a micro level in a context of change. My approach is to interpret institutional change as a shift in logic or the replacement or strengthening of a logic as handled by managers. This allows me to theorize in all articles how identities are historically contingent (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011). The articles combine institutional analysis with micro-level perspectives by focusing on identities, practices, and reflections on work. The benefit of adopting a logics perspective to change is that it allows to account for behaviors and phenomena at various levels, connecting micro to macro. How managers position themselves is not a given, rather it depends on the managers’ inclinations and strategies *and* external factors such as expectations and environment. I consider neither identities nor roles to be static entities. Instead they serve as links between levels—in this case the individual, organization and the wider field logics in society.

### 1.3.2 Managers and their work in context

I seek to provide a better understanding of how managers negotiate identities stemming from coexisting logics. The managers in this study occupy organizational positions—roles that require them to be representatives of the organization, and not only themselves. They face a wide array of responsibilities and expectations from employees and superiors. Their job has constraints, yet they are agents in forming and constructing this work.

The term *management* lacks a universal definition and is broadly understood as a process of influencing others (Yukl, 2013).<sup>4</sup> I use the term manager, since the individuals I study de facto have a formal middle managerial position and perform the employer’s liability. In my view, management is better understood through empirical studies of managers rather than prescribing ideals and normative guidelines. This research project is inspired by the trajectory called managerial work behavior (MWB) (Tengblad, 2012), which includes the seminal works by Carlson (1951) and Mintzberg (1973). This research tradition challenges myths on managerial work by using observational studies and diary recordings of how managers actually use their time (Stewart, 1989). These researchers view managerial work as

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<sup>4</sup> I steer clear of the longstanding debate on the concepts management and leadership. A sharp division between them is rooted in an Anglo-American context and is evident in the writings of Selznick (1957) and Zaleznik (1992) who claim that management concerns doing things right, whereas leadership denotes doing the right things. Very often the case is that managers—or leaders—have to perform both sets of tasks (Mintzberg, 2009). I regard this as an analytical distinction, as these dimensions blur in their everyday work.

diverse, fragmented, and hectic in response to the current needs in the organization.<sup>5</sup>

I draw attention toward managerial work with MWB and, in turn, its use of observational study. Although my study is relevant to this tradition, it differs from MWB studies. A key point of difference is that MWB studies managers in situ but does not consider their context adequately. Context is “that which environs the object of our interest and helps by its relevance to explain it” (Scharfstein, 1989:1). My first point of criticism is that that MWB favors descriptions and neglects theorizing, which I now engage with in order to profile my own study. This critique is also articulated by Mintzberg (2009). Further, MWB examines individual managers rather than taking the organizational meso level or societal macro level into account. The contextual dimension and its significance for managerial practices are emphasized by Meier (2012; 2015), who studied clinical work in various hospital departments. She found that managerial practices are not similar across departments and tend to be influenced by the character of work in each specific context. A similar view has been shared by Willmott (2005), who critiques the “behavioral” side of management studies and asks for the institutional accounts. Institutional arrangements in and through which managers act should be researched instead of abstracting activities of individual managers. MWB studies are claimed to distinguish between the technical and political sides of elements in work. The latter contains social and relational dimensions as behavior is related to values and interests (Chapters 2 and 4).<sup>6</sup>

Work practice is defined as the “skilled accomplishments of agents and as an expression of the structural properties of systems of interaction” (Willmott, 2005:336). Focusing only on behavior may render the research neutral, decontextualized, and technical (Townley, 2005). Further, context has played a crucial role in the work of Askeland (2015) who studied managers in faith-based health organizations. Askeland suggests that being a manager is a composite of both generic and context-dependent factors.

My second point of criticism is that MWB studies fail to go beyond a description of managerial actions. It emphasizes activities and behavior and thus explicates the variation and main tasks of managerial work. Following Sveningsson and Alvesson (2016), I seek to attain

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<sup>5</sup> Managerial tasks are not necessarily clearly defined or tidily lined for performance. This behavioral and functional approach based on activities leads to various sets of role typologies (Mintzberg, 2009). Interpreting managerial work and activities in terms of roles was an approach used in the early works of Fayol (1949).

<sup>6</sup> Although Mintzberg (1973) did include four nested sets of variables: “environmental”, “job”, “person,” and “situational”, these are not clearly delineated. “Mintzberg’s methodology and conceptual framework effectively deny him the possibility of studying the historical and political processes that underpin, channel and provide rationales for the work that managers do” (Willmott, 2005:327). To come to terms with this problem, Willmott proposes structuration (Giddens, 1984) that allows for the consideration of institutional contexts (constraints or structures) and strategic efforts (agency) of individual managers.

a deeper understanding of management by studying identity. MWB studies mostly neglect managers' intentions, reflections, and interpretations, which are central to my approach.

#### 1.4 Theoretical framework

Identity is shaped by factors such as external role expectations, particular work context and situation, as well as internal factors like personality traits, biography, and management ideals (McAdams & McLean, 2013). Adopting a social constructivist perspective, I consider identity as negotiated. Identity is not a given; actors construct their own identity. Doing so is termed identity work (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). In line with Albert (1998), I view identity as continuous social construction of the self. The emphasis on self-awareness in identity processes is linked to the concept self-identity—the organized, stable narrative of the self (Giddens, 1991). Thus, identity is fluid and situated, yet not without direction. Individuals negotiate between the self and the external world especially through narratives that allow meaning-making. Discourses, or institutional logics, may be considered as social meaning systems that individuals may draw on both by choice and constraints (Czarniawska, 2002).

Negotiating calls for agency—the ability to shape the social world by changing conditions, relations, or distribution of resources (Scott, 2014). Actors can rely on numerous ways of combining, handling, balancing, or negotiating professionalism and managerialism. In alignment with institutional work, I consider this a process rather than a product. My preferred term is *negotiate*. This term highlights a social constructivist approach that is inherent to institutionalism (Chapter 3.1). *Negotiate* implies that the ideas are not fixed but fluid and a matter of mutual exchange. Importantly, I do not study intraorganizational negotiations between parties; instead, I focus on the dialectics in managers' individual self-understanding—how a manager experiences the draw of different logics.<sup>7</sup> The outcome of these negotiations is typically a combination of professional and managerial identities, which might be hybridizations.

Logics may bring with them an element of identity regulation or meaning-framing identity processes, which are discursive and impose constraints of social structures on roles, which may be subsumed under social identity. Ashforth (2001) claims that identification with a given role may complicate assuming and integrating other roles. In other words, logics, like professionalism and managerialism, or cultures, provide scripts or templates for individuals in

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<sup>7</sup> Further, negotiate implies interest-guided activities and even struggle and bargaining. Walton and McKersie (1991:3) define negotiations as “the deliberate interaction of two or more complex social units which are attempting to define or redefine the terms of their interdependence.” I consider roles more fixed and less negotiable.

their negotiating of identities (Watson, 2001). For example, hospital unitary management provides a script of what a manager should do. This script lays down the frames for the work and serves as a reference point for the manager in adjusting or challenging the script. The manager may variously identify with the script and also explore the maneuvering space. I follow Alvesson and Willmott (2002), who define identity negotiating as the interplay between self-identity, identity work, and identity regulation.

While the concept of identity here relates to individuals at the micro level, institutionalism captures the macro level. This theoretical perspective is well known in the discipline of management and organization studies. I draw on two main trajectories within this research strand: institutional logics (Thornton et al., 2012) and institutional work (Lawrence et al., 2009). I understand logics as coherent sets of guidelines for practices, beliefs, values, and meaning-making on a field level. Logics are revealed through language and practices, and manifested in symbols and materials (Reay & Jones, 2016). In this work, I focus on language specific to identity negotiating in order to capture the two logics of professionalism and managerialism. Yet, they blur in the identities of managers who are professionals themselves. The bridging concept is hybridization, which refers to a blurring or a novel combination of two entities that are normally distinct. This is especially relevant for the kind of organizations and managers that I study in this thesis. These have been studied as two distinct organizational logics and in terms of how identities are managed (Croft, Currie, & Lockett, 2015). This calls for context-specific research to explore how the constellations of logics play out (Fulop, 2012). Importantly, I refer to hybridization as the outcome of logic constellations and the managerial efforts in combining profession and management as negotiating.

In terms of scope, this thesis deals with how managers negotiate being professionals and managers by focusing on identities. It studies the interrelationship between logics, institutions, and identities (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Thornton et al., 2012). In alignment with most studies on identities, this study adopts a micro perspective (Chreim, Williams, & Hinings, 2007) as it attends to managers negotiating identities within organizations. This brings into focus meaning, actions, and interactions of organizational members (Zilber, 2002) and highlights a turn toward agency and individuals. A prevalent logic offers templates, while shifts indicate complexity and building blocks that actors may assemble and use. Responding to the call that macro and micro research should be integrated (Chreim et al., 2007), this study attempts to bridge levels of analysis by relating organizational managers' identities with logics. Institutional work adds a dynamic component.

Coexisting logics within the same organization typically lead to tensions. Managers in such organizations perform institutional work and create, maintain, or change institutions, which in this case refer to profession and management. Managers are faced with diverse expectations, cross-pressures, and tensions between job demands and ideals. I refer to this as institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011). As a qualitative researcher, I am eager to examine how managers negotiate their identities using—within constraints—such logics as cultural resources and a tool kit (Swidler, 1986). This implies that logics are not monolithic entities; rather managers selectively draw on them.

### 1.5 Unit of analysis and research design

The overall aim and research question have shaped the scope of my study. I study middle managers in two organizations to examine how they negotiate professionalism and managerialism. Since I am particularly interested in identity, the individual managers are important objects of investigation. However, I prioritize managerial groups over individual managers. Thus, gender, age, and other individual characteristics are backgrounded, whereas comparisons between the two managerial groups are foregrounded. Units of analysis can vary: it has been defined as “the social unit or the element in society that serves as the point of departure for the study” (Grønmo, 2004:79). Often this is a single individual or several collective actors. However, having an individual actor as a unit raises methodological questions about reductionism, in contrast to a more holistic systemic view (Matusov, 2007). To avoid this problem, I have chosen a case study method that, by definition, allows both details of individual actors and a holistic understanding of a phenomenon that takes into consideration the case context. In case studies, it is difficult to specify a single unit of analysis as the rationale for such studies is to examine something in its natural setting (Thomas, 2011).

At the meso level, organizational units are the contexts for the phenomenon. The core of the study at the micro level involves examining how managers as individual actors understand themselves and their work while interacting with other people in everyday practices. I theorize this as institutional work (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Field or societal-level institutional logics come into play at the macro level. These logics influence the meso level and influence everyday work. As I will elaborate in the theory chapter, I primarily study



managerial negotiating of these macro logics at the micro level.<sup>8</sup> Figure 1 shows the relation between the phenomenon, empirical material or data, and the unit of analysis.

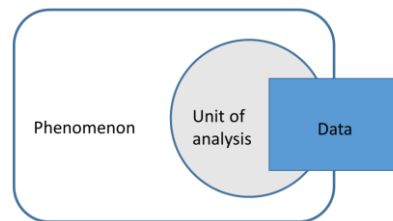


Figure 1: *Unit of analysis*

The phenomenon that the thesis investigates is managers negotiating identity. The study's main unit of analysis is hybrid professional middle managers' negotiating of professional and managerial identities in the two specific organizational contexts.<sup>9</sup> I have chosen a qualitative study providing in-depth descriptions of this phenomenon. The analyzed data consists of transcripts from interviews and field notes from observations. As I wanted to capture managerial practices in action, I employed an embedded, multiple case study approach. A *case* allows a researcher to focus on a few units and many dimensions.<sup>10</sup> I shadowed three managers in each organization for one workweek each, in addition to interviewing them, their top manager, coworkers, and colleagues. I also observed the interactions between these parties. This provided the empirical material to analyze their identities. The core empirical material in my study consists of interviews with 18 middle managers, informed by extensive observations of six of them. This approach provided rich and detailed data as well as a holistic understanding of these managers. Inspired by Nygaard (2015:11), I visualize the structure of the research project in Figure 2:

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<sup>8</sup> Matusov (2007:8) discusses how the unit of analysis may be differently defined but shaped by the purpose and material of the study. These units are positioned on various levels, from micro to macro. Each article thus has its own main unit of analysis as does this introduction and the contribution of the thesis.

<sup>9</sup> Some of the data fall outside the unit of analysis and the phenomenon. The phenomenon and the unit of analysis both surpass the material and constitute it. The unit of analysis has a theoretical component outside the data, which enables generalizations from the material to the phenomenon. I spell this out in the chapter 4.

<sup>10</sup> The rationale for choosing two organizations is to facilitate a comparison, as differing contexts may give different outcomes. Comparing allows for new insights and a better understanding of a given phenomenon (Felski & Friedman, 2013).

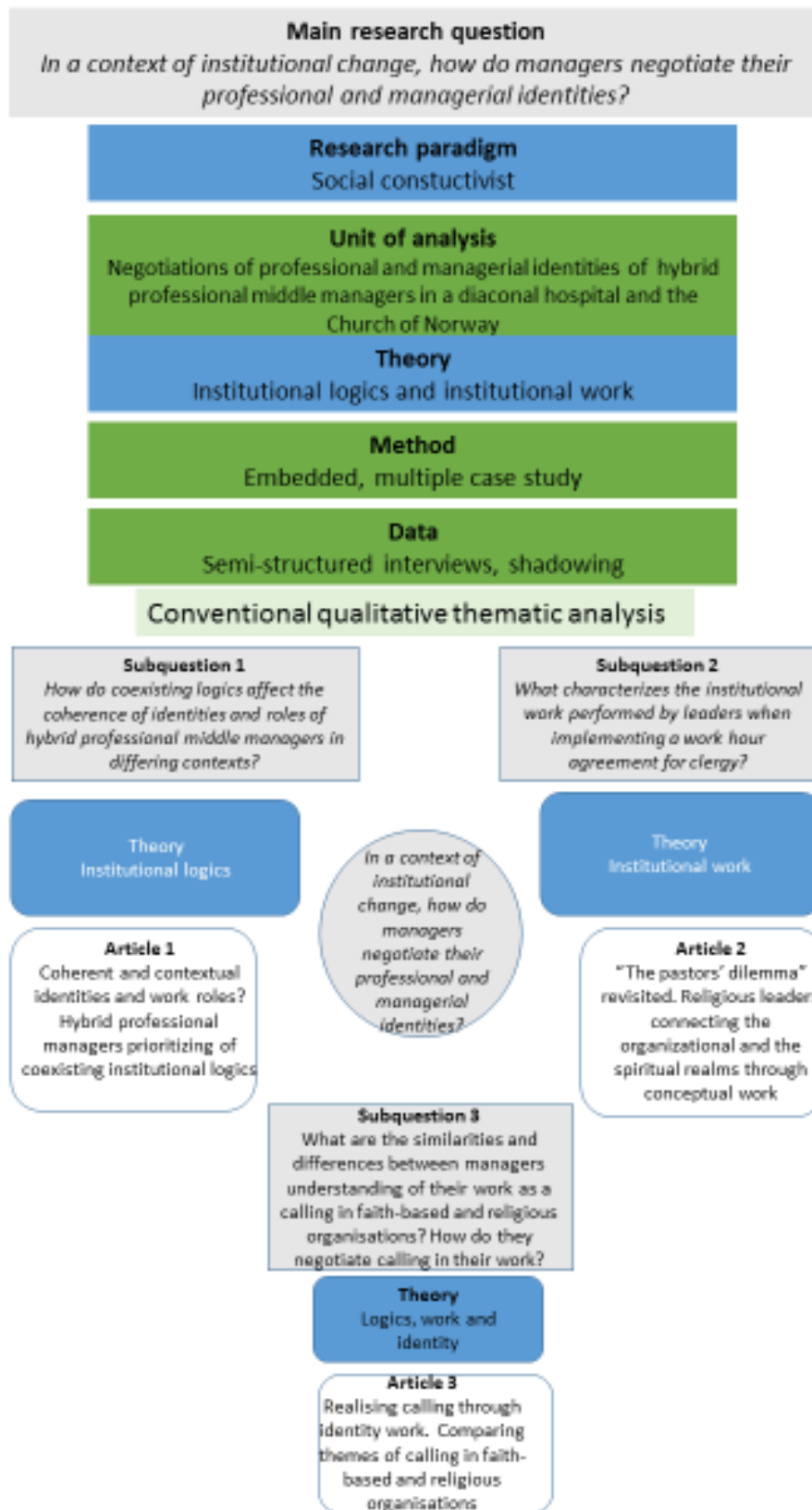


Figure 2: Visualization of the research project

## 1.6 Roadmap - structure of the thesis

In Chapter 2, I outline the research context of my study. I review existing literature on how professionalism and managerialism coexist and hybridize. Detailed descriptions explain how the organizational contexts and reforms that bring about institutional change have led to general cultural developments and the growth of the formal organization. Chapter 3 presents the main theoretical perspectives within institutional theory; institutional logics, and institutional work and relates these ideas to the concepts of identity and role. Chapter 4 details the methodology and research design. I explain why I consider an embedded and multiple case study particularly relevant for my purpose and describe my fieldwork, analysis, quality criteria, and ethics. In Chapter 5, I present the individual articles. Chapter 6 discusses how the main findings from the articles contribute to answering the overall research question. I highlight some underlying themes in the articles, in addition to explicating the overarching insights. It spells out the theoretical and methodological contributions of the study. Finally, the concluding Chapter 7 outlines practical implications. In this chapter, I also summarize the limitations of the study and suggest further research directions.

## 2 Research contexts and literature review

In this chapter, I substantiate the need for this thesis and articulate its scope, as specified in the aims and research question. This chapter highlights a gap in research by reviewing literature on the entanglement of professionalism and managerialism in my case organizations. This established knowledge of the empirical field provides a rationale for the thesis as a whole and justifies the specific contexts in which I conduct the study. First, I relate change to its contextual dimensions. After discussing professionalism, managerialism and their hybridizations, I outline the characteristics of faith-based and religious organizations. Since institutional changes may occur through reforms, I describe some central reforms that have affected my two case organizations. This chapter highlights the dual nature of the hospital as both a faith-based and a healthcare organization.

### 2.1 Specifying context and change

Table 1 provides an overview of the key contextual dimensions of this study and identifies the points in the study where they are explicitly presented.<sup>11</sup>

Table 1: *Contextual dimensions emphasized in this thesis*

<b>Contextual dimensions</b>	<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Described and discussed in this thesis</b>
<i>Organizational characteristics</i>	Structures Budget Culture Size	Each article Hospital: 2.4.1 Church: 2.4.2
<i>Professional characteristics</i>	Leading professional work Core work	Each article Hospital: 2.4.3 Church: 2.4.4
<i>Managerial characteristics</i>	Levels Authority	Hospital 2.4.1 Church 2.4.2
<i>Reforms</i>	Changing the constellation of professionalism and managerialism Temporality and pace	Each article Hospital 2.4.3 Church 2.4.2
<i>Values and ideological base</i>	Value consciousness Theology and faith-base Mission and goals	Articles 2.4
<i>Society, culture and field</i>	Logics and reforms	2.3 and 2.4

The specification in Table 1 helps avoid the drawback cited by McLaren and Durepos (2019:1) that management and organization scholars use context “as an unexplained catchall to understand a phenomenon in its broader environment.” All research is situated and relates to several contexts, like local, regional, national, organizational, or professional. Explanatory

<sup>11</sup> Not all changes are not introduced by reforms. Technological and cultural changes occur even without reforms (Chapter 6.2 and 6.3).

descriptors may be social, temporal, historical, political, economic, and market related. A researcher should explicate the relevant context for a specific study.

Like the majority of researchers within organization and management studies (Yukl, 2013), I find that change is central to the organization and management theory but is often viewed as a generic entity.<sup>12</sup> I follow du Gay and Vikkelsø (2012) who argue that change is an imprecise concept that needs specification as it is portrayed as an organizational imperative, based on the dual principles of *absolutism* and *abstraction*. The first denotes a belief that change is unavoidable and everywhere, as a state of existence. The latter refers to the underspecified nature of change, which is devoid of practical operationalization. This denotes change as an abstract term, situated high up on the conceptual ladder. It thus benefits from being “grounded empirically in detailed description of content, purpose and elements of change” (du Gay & Vikkelsø, 2012:121). I consider this a central contribution of the thesis. I find it necessary to empirically ground change, and study a clearly defined case within specific contexts (Chapter 4).<sup>13</sup> Du Gay and Vikkelsø (2012:133) argue that appropriate management can only be defined in relation to the purpose and core tasks of the organizations to be managed, which in turn connects change to the context:

When it comes to change, the differences between organizations – their distinctive missions, their varying obligations to differing constituencies, and their typical ways of specifying and addressing ethical questions, for instance – are as vital as their similarities. It is unlikely that they will experience “change” in an identical manner – as an abstract phenomenon – but rather as a particular matter of concern, with distinctive characteristics and practical implications related to the conduct of concrete aspects of their activities.

In my study, I have sought to avoid the pitfall of a generic view of change through “thick” and in-depth descriptions and a contextual grounding of change.

## 2.2 Professionalism and managerialism as ideal types

The concepts professionalism and managerialism are central institutional logics, which have been extensively studied as ideal types. Any hybridization-based phenomenon benefits from

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<sup>12</sup> This trend entails concepts like change, innovation, fluidity, and process, while older terms are in disuse, like bureaucracy, control, administration, authority, tasks, and distribution. This shift may also refer to the anthropomorphic turn, or the “people side”, within the discipline, concerned with affect, relations, emotions and culture (Schein, 2010), and sensemaking (Weick, 1995) rather than structures and core tasks. This shift is also characterized by the framing of organizing rather than organization and the focus on processes, evident through verbs rather than nouns. The strand of institutional work is an example of renewed attention to agency. I have attempted to improve the lack of precision surrounding change by situating the phenomenon under inquiry within a context. This precision presupposes awareness of different organizational contexts and enhances the bases of comparison, namely the uniqueness and the likeness between the organizations.

using ideal types as the starting point (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017:57; Thornton et al., 2012). Ideal types are a systematic gathering of elements that constitutes a model, which challenges empirical case-specific material (Swedberg, 2014). Weber writes that ideal types “serve as a harbor before you have learned to navigate in the vast sea of empirical facts” (Weber, 1949:104).<sup>14</sup> This understanding is useful to study a phenomenon through the dynamical analytical lenses of ideal types, continuum, and hybridization.<sup>15</sup>

In terms of professionalism, I follow Molander and Terum (2008:17) who interpret *professionalism* as an ideal type on the one hand and as a continuum on the other hand. This represents a necessary paradox. Historically, the term *professionalism* has been defined in several ways, and some definitions aim at clearly distinguishing professions from occupations (Freidson, 2001). Molander and Terum (2008:20) understand profession as a type of occupational organization of work. Instead of using fixed criteria or separating professions from non-professions, they placed occupations on a continuum of characteristics of professions. The strengthening of occupations in terms of these criteria expresses the process of professionalization, whereas a weakening denotes de-professionalization.

In the decades after World War II, managerialism substituted or complemented traditional leadership by professionals in most organizations (Byrkjeflot & Nygaard, 2018; Kalleberg, 1991). The traditional profession-based leadership that was challenged by managerialism may also be conceptualized as an ideal type. While profession-based leadership requires knowledge of the profession and emphasizes core tasks, skills, and training, management is a generic competence, applicable across contexts (Byrkjeflot 1997; 2002). Professional leadership is tied to the profession, and managerial positions or functions within this paradigm are derived from the collegium. Managerialism, on the contrary, is primarily concerned with the organization and aims at increasing its quality and cost efficiency, as well as providing services, reducing public costs, and improving managerial responsibility. Drawing on the work of Døving et al. (2016), I propose a table of two ideal types, illustrated by the institution of leadership within the church (Table 2). They are

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<sup>14</sup> An ideal type is a mental image emphasizing some core characteristics of a given phenomenon. Yet, an ideal type will contain most, but not all elements, of corresponding cases. Hence, ideal types are not images with photographic accuracy of reality. They give prominence to certain features. As such, ideal types are tools in structuring a complex reality with questions and hypotheses. They synthesize knowledge of a phenomenon and accentuate analytically what are perceived to be the key features.

<sup>15</sup> I consider ideal types as a relevant tool to grasp the central phenomenon of my study. Since reality in social studies is endlessly rich and contradictory, the ideal type must be clear and coherent. Hence, I use it as a heuristic tool, which may lead to the discovery of new aspects about the phenomenon. It is a means and never an end itself.

informed respectively by a managerial and a professional logic that may also be applicable in the hospital context.

Table 2: *Managerial leadership and professional leadership* (based on Sirris, 2018:28)

Aspects of ideal types	Managerial leadership	Professional leadership
<i>Organization</i>	Hierarchy	Collegium and professional hierarchy
<i>Relation to profession</i>	Neutral of profession	Determined by profession
<i>Employer's liability</i>	Yes	Rare
<i>Control</i>	Formal authority	Trust
<i>Form of leadership</i>	Directing	Convincing and taken for granted
<i>Full time</i>	Often	Seldom
<i>Manager roles</i>	Separate	Self-leadership
<i>Formalization</i>	Employed manager	Elected and appointed manager
<i>Credibility</i>	With managers and generalists	With professionals and knowledge workers
<i>Time perspective</i>	Long	Short
<i>Strength</i>	Overall organizational responsibility Clear position of accountability Power is explicit	Identification with employees, joint understanding Responsibility according to professional areas
<i>Weakness</i>	Distance to profession and core work	Part time manager, lack of joint overall strategy Power and hierarchy are implicit
<i>Key competencies</i>	Administrative and strategic	Relational, professional, and contextual
<i>Church of Norway</i>	Church warden, manager	Priest, cantor, deacon, catechist

NPM originated in the 1970s in an Anglo-American context of neo-liberalism (Hood, 1991) and has now been institutionalized (Hasselbladh & Bejerot, 2017). NPM reforms refer to a global wave of administrative reforms that influenced the policies of many countries after the 1980s. One of the many reasons that motivated the managerial reforms was the desire to have more efficient organizations and economic measures. NPM was built on two pillars. The first pillar was economic efficiency and a distrust of the bureaucratic welfare state. Under NPM, citizens were conceptualized as customers who had to be offered wider choices. Managerialism was the second pillar, which sharpened the divide between politicians and the administration.<sup>16</sup> I will detail this phenomenon further.

A political rationale led to the introduction of the reforms in Norway (Eliassen, 1990). Specifically, health organizations were seen as difficult to govern and constituted a democratic problem (Chapter 2.4). The organization was fragmented following

<sup>16</sup> Management by objectives was introduced, and organizational units and managers were to report on how their goals had been achieved. Although the post-NPM phase emphasizes cross-sectorial coordination and integration, NPM reforms created disintegration and fragmentation. The post-NPM phase intends to offer seamless services to citizens (Christensen & Læg Reid, 2010).

specializations, and it paid little attention to the overall unity and coordination that patients expect. From the perspective of public governance, NPM was seen as an appropriate tool to increase control and boost trust in managers and markets (From, 1990). Managerialism argues that all aspects within an organization should strive to achieve the targets and goals articulated by policy reformers (O'Reilly and Reed, 2012). Such reasons are central for understanding why NPM reforms were introduced in the healthcare sector in Norway. Emphasis on management implies decentralization of authority. It also implies the use of private-sector indicators such as goal and result monitoring, benchmarking, and activity-based financing (Hood, 1991). These efforts result in more autonomous units, characterized by rational planning and distribution of tasks. The authority of managers comes from their hierarchical position and the formalized distribution of power.<sup>17</sup>

### 2.3 Hybridizations in contexts

Hybridity may be studied in terms of how logics are combined (Kirkpatrick & Noordegraaf, 2015). However, Alvehus and Andersson (2018:94) claim that many studies “are case studies that provide little insight into the influence of institutional context on organizational fields.” Further, they claim that as the professional landscape evolves, studies of institutional processes are needed, as there is a strong trend toward hybridization. They argue, in line with Hood and Dixon (2015) that comparative studies have focused on outcomes more than institutional logics. My study is situated within the same national context. A key concern for my study is how hybridization affects the everyday work of hybrid professional managers.

Most professionals work in organizations with both professional and managerial logics, which are possibly in a state of flux with no clear boundaries between them. In organizations, professionals encounter a corporative logic with management and governance because work specialization necessitates coordination and cooperation (Evetts, 2009, 2011; Noordegraaf, 2011, 2015; Waring & Currie, 2009). While earlier research pointed to the dichotomous nature of professionals versus managers and organizations, recent researchers have focused on how both professionals and managers handle diverse logics in their daily practice (Blomgren & Waks, 2015). In my view, this approach may reveal new insights about how professional and organizational commitments are interwoven into managers' identities

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<sup>17</sup> Røvik (2007:146) claims that government is centralized, and influence is mostly indirect through formal structures and formalised procedures and routines. According to Pollitt (1993:2), management is a separate and distributed organizational function and one that plays the crucial role in planning, implementing, and measuring the necessary improvements in productivity. Administration is the craft to make the organization function. Management is a carrier of its own, and no professional knowledge of core work is needed. Managers are supposed to be loyal toward the organizational aims.



and roles.

Hybridity in organizations was initially described by Albert and Whetten (1985) and Powell (1987). It was mainly relevant in situations where the public sector borrowed functional elements for the private sector. Today, the term *hybrid* is used in various ways, and a common problem is its use to describe an organization or management that does not fit established notions. I use the concept to analyze how institutional logics develop and coexist (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). Byrkjeflot and Kragh Jespersen (2014:442) explain that hybrid management is seen “as a panacea to the problems relating to fragmentation as a consequence of NPM and as a means to move toward a more integrated and ‘joined-up’ public sector.”

Hybridity is a concept that highlights transitions within professionalism. Evetts (2010:407) distinguishes between occupational professions by focusing on “notions of partnership, collegiality, discretion and trust,” which changed into organizational professionalism that emphasizes “increasing levels of managerialism, bureaucracy, standardizations, assessment and performance review”. Hybrid professional managers are individuals with a professional background who have moved into formal managerial roles and exercise leadership within their own professional group (Kippist & Fitzgerald, 2009; McGivern, Currie, Ferlie, Fitzgerald, & Waring, 2015). They may contribute to the colonization of managerial priorities in professional practices (Ackroyd, Kirkpatrick, & Walker, 2007). For example, an empirical study of nurse hybrids (Croft et al., 2015) found that peers no longer considered them proper nurses although the hybrids were committed to their professional identity. Thus, it is important to study hybridizations in specific contexts, and I outline these phenomena in my two chosen research settings.

#### 2.4 Religious organizations and faith-based organizations

Much of religion is organized and lived within religious organizations (DiMaggio, 1998). According to Rochester and Torry (2010:115), congregations are prototypical religious organizations. They define *congregation* as “a group of people gathered for worship” and a *religious organization* as “a more or less structured association gathering regularly for worship.” Christian worship in a Lutheran context is characterized by a gathering to preach the Gospel and celebrate the Eucharist (Hegstad, 2009). Hinings and Raynard (2014) summarize that religious organizations are basically recognized and stable gatherings for religious purposes.<sup>18</sup> This also highlights the unique aspects of religious organizations: they

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<sup>18</sup> What characterizes religious organizations, according to Hinings and Raynard (2014), is the theological base providing values and meaning at the very center, the role of clergy in the intermediary position, and the volunteer base. Religious organizations are based on theological beliefs and gather for theological issues.

are simultaneously placed within a wider societal context. These organizations are inherently distinctive, yet also similar to others.<sup>19</sup> According to Hinings and Raynard (2014), religious organizations are increasingly marked by two features: *bureaucratization* and *professionalization*, which more or less reflects my distinction of managerialism and professionalism. The first feature concerns division of labor, hierarchy, and increasing level of rules and regulations, while the latter pertains to educational training and vocational commitment. Hinings and Raynard (2014) explain bureaucratization by pointing to the increasing scale of administration, and decentralizations doing the same. In addition, the long history of religious organizations contributes to a strong institutionalization of beliefs and practices.<sup>20</sup>

Faith-based organizations (FBOs) have been subjected to contrasting definitions. Religious communities and associations establish institutions to provide social and health services to their own members and other disadvantaged groups (Fokas, 2009). FBOs have a specific historical anchoring since they were formed to express the religious, moral, and social values of their founders (Jeavons, 1992; Lorentzen, 1990; Rothschild & Milofsky, 2006). They appear in many formats and are often situated at the intersections of various sectors. As organizations that integrate structural and cultural forms stemming from other sectors, they can be an example of hybridization (Billis, 2010).

In the Nordic context, the *welfare mix* refers to how providing citizens with a range of welfare state services is distributed across several organizations (Leis-Peters, 2014). The distinctive positioning of such organizations and their hybridity may facilitate coexisting logics. FBOs have attracted little attention within the field of management and organization studies (Boddie & Cnaan, 2006; Tracey et al., 2014). According to Rochester and Torry (2010:129), “faith-based organizations could be defined as bodies which had a structural connection to a religious organization but whose main purpose was not itself purely religious and that religious organizations were more or less structured associations which gathered regularly for worship.”<sup>21</sup> This explanation highlights two characteristics of FBOs: their

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<sup>19</sup> Beckford (1985) observed that the boundary between the sacred and the secular was affected, resulting in an erosion of distinctive features of religious organizations.

<sup>20</sup> According to Mintzberg (1979), there is a general movement from simple structures with strong charismatic elements into more complex structures of bureaucracy. In western Christianity, religion between the believer and the divine is formalized and routinized. The ubiquity of “organization” means that organizations become more alike, which is a form of de-contextualization, where unique features are toned down in favor of standardization.

<sup>21</sup> An alternative approach that does not take its starting point from any particular prototype was proposed by Jeavons (1994:58) who described religious service organizations as follows: “they usually distinguished by their values-expressive character (...). They are expected to provide a service, but they are also expected to honor, nurture, and promote specific moral and spiritual ideals as those ideals provide the particular inspiration for their

purpose is not purely religious, and they have structural connections to a religious organization.<sup>22</sup> Berger (2003:15) articulates how religious non-governmental organizations (RGNOs) represent “an unique hybrid of religious beliefs and sociopolitical activism at all levels of society. Differing from congregational and denominational structures, which tend to focus on the development of their membership, RGNOs seek to fulfill explicitly public missions.”

Sider and Unruh (2004) proposed a typology for ranking FBOs: from faith-permeated, faith-centered, faith-affiliated, faith-background to faith-secular. Jeavons (2004) criticized this categorization for its Western and narrow emphasis on cognitive faith, which he did not view as a more inclusive concept. Ebaugh, Pipes, Chafetz, and Daniels (2003) and Bielefeld and Cleveland (2013) proposed yet another taxonomy to classify FBOs and identify their religiosity. FBOs belong to various categories. They are manifestations of the social ministry and the responsibility of their affiliated faith-community (Hall, 2001). Importantly, there are key differences between the Anglo-American and Nordic traditions. In the Protestant Nordic countries, there is no clear dichotomy between civic society and the state (Askeland, 2015; Sivesind & Selle, 2010). Thus, I consider the hospital I study, a faith-based health organization (FBHO) with a diaconal self-understanding, as a values-based organization with a religious history (Askeland, Espedal, & Sirris, 2019). Against this backdrop, I now turn to my specific case organizations.

#### 2.4.1 The faith-based hospital as a research setting

To protect the anonymity of the hospital, I have withheld its name and refrained from providing a detailed description of the organization. The hospital in this study identifies as diaconal. As part of the growing, socially oriented lay people’s movement within the Church of Norway, the hospital was established in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It also served as a training institution for deacons. Diaconal institutions operated at the intersection of the church and an evolving public welfare system. They sought to articulate their identity during times of secularization and cultural changes in society (Aadland & Skjørshammer, 2012). As a result, they had less contact with the religious organizations than was originally the case (Johnsen, 2014). This hospital attempted to preserve a faith-based or non-profit profile within the wider

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service.” Later, Jeavons (1998) identified seven dimensions of religion in an organization: self-identity, selection of participants, sources of resources, goals, decision-making, power relations, and connections.

<sup>22</sup> RGNOs’ “identity and mission are self-consciously derived from the teachings of religious or spiritual traditions and which operates on a nonprofit, independent, voluntary basis to promote and realize collectively articulated ideas about the public good at the national or international level” (Berger, 2003:16).

context of health and welfare services. The following information has been retrieved from the webpages of the hospital: the hospital now has contracts with the public government for providing health services. It is financed by the Regional Health Authority. It serves as a general hospital for a catchment area of 140,000 inhabitants. It specializes in acute surgery and psychiatry, and serves as a national center for a particular medical area of expertise. It has 1300 full positions divided among 1700 employees. The yearly operational budget of the hospital is approximately 1.8 billion NOK. The diaconal tradition marks its identity, and this is evident in the policy documents that refer to the hospital as “pioneers in care for human beings in distress.”<sup>23</sup> The hospital has three managerial levels: the CEO, department managers, and unit managers. All managers have completed the internal managerial training program, and some have also completed external courses or hold degrees in management in addition to their professional training and specializations.

#### 2.4.2 The Church of Norway as a research setting

The Church of Norway was a state church until 2012. Catering to 69% of the population ([www.kirken.no](http://www.kirken.no)), it is the oldest and largest nationwide member organization. Its weakened ties to the state, through several reforms, led to the development of organizational features such as an increased emphasis on management. The church is a hybrid organization that maintains several logics because of its public characteristics and third-sector features (Askeland & Schmidt, 2016). These recent changes render it a fertile area of research, as organizational and management theory scholars have mostly neglected religious organizations (Sørensen, Spoelstra, Höpfl, & Critchley, 2012; Tracey, 2012; Tracey et al., 2014). Within its pastoral structure, the bishop leads the diocese, the dean leads the deanery, and the pastor leads the parish. This pastoral structure parallels the democratically elected structure at the organizational level, through which the diocesan council, the deanery council or joint parochial council, and the parish council contribute to leadership.

Albeit the clergy represent a classic profession, they have not been closely studied. Clergy have generally been regarded as eccentric in studies on professions (Abbott, 1988; Carr-Saunders & Wilson, 1933). Traditionally, the Norwegian clergy were a self-governed profession, working mostly independently in parishes within a very distributed ecclesial organization (Sirris, 2016). Several reforms have brought about changes within the profession

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<sup>23</sup> The vision is “Renewers in service for our neighbours”, and the slogan is “Engaged for human beings and in the belief that each human being has value as created in the eyes of God; creating a mutual community with God and fellow human beings.” The stated key objective of the hospital is to ensure that a patient receives the best possible treatment. The hospital has worked out a value code that is very explicit within the organization.

(Askeland & Schmidt, 2016). Twelve dioceses within the Church of Norway cover every region of the country. The bishop leads the diocese and employs the deans who execute the employers' liability on behalf of the bishop in their deanery, typically consisting of 15-25 priests. Because of the reforms, the deans have become distinct middle managers, which has somehow diminished the traditional autonomy of the clergy. The reforms aimed at facilitating better working conditions for the clergy, strengthening management through goal-setting, and decreasing rule-based governing. However, an evaluation of the reform showed a growing burden of administrative work for the deans (Stifoss-Hanssen et al., 2013). The position of a dean is not neutral of profession. Deans should be formally qualified as priests, and typically skilled parish priests apply for the post. Deans work as parish priests for 25-50% of their time and are thus not full-time managers. They are the managers of priests and have only informal leadership over other employees in the parishes.

The Church law of 1996 introduced managerialism by augmenting the role of the church wardens and entrusting them with the employer's liability of all positions in the parishes, except the clergy. The clergy are employed by the diocese council and lead by the bishop, who would delegate part of the liability to the local dean. This delegation was strengthened by the deanery reform in 2004 and by the work hour agreement (WHA) introduced in 2016 that regulated the clergy's work hours and increased the deans' control. The diocese in question is located around a larger Norwegian city and supervises over 9 deaneries and about 150 priests. To sum up, I intend to extend the previous studies on pastoral management, which have been largely descriptive and confined to initial theorizing (Askeland, 1998; 2000).

#### 2.4.3 Hospitals and the hybridization of professionalism and managerialism

A wealth of literature is available on the linkage between professionalism and managerialism within the health sector. Since this linkage is crucial for understanding the historical context as well as the present situation of my case organization, I will outline some key features that frame the hospital I study. This hospital is marked by the duality of being both a faith-based and a healthcare organization.

##### *2.4.3.1 Health-care organizations as professional bureaucracies*

Healthcare organizations are considered complex systems that are challenging to manage for reasons that include professionalism and managerialism (Scott, Ruef, Mendel, & Caronna, 2000). Mintzberg (1979) describes healthcare organizations as professional bureaucracies where clinical work is both performed and led by professionals. Hospitals are staffed with

about a hundred different professions (Byrkjeflot, 1997). Besides employees within the administration, finance, and engineering departments, the key professions are doctors and nurses engaged in clinical practice. Assumedly, every profession has some distinct ideas of how professional core work should be led (Abbott, 1988; Freidson, 1994). This may be conceptualized as different logics integrated into every profession and may result in tensions and cross-pressure. For example, the key difference between medical doctors and nurses is that the former focus on the treatment of patients, while the latter are concerned with care and nursing (Degeling & Carr, 2004; Degeling, Kennedy, & Hill, 2001). Doctors concentrate on diagnosis, causes, and treatment prospects, while nursing care begins with a patient's experience of illness (Fjeldbraaten, 2010). In this study, both nurses and doctors are participants. Both these professional groups are concerned with how they are led and by whom in terms of profession.

Glouberman and Mintzberg (2001) claim that four ideal typical worlds, activity-sets, mindsets, or logics coexist in healthcare, and they are difficult to integrate. Managers represent *control*, physicians *cure*, nurses *care*, and trustees represent *community*. Physicians work in the hospital but not *for* it as they are not strongly committed to the organization. Medical specialists intervene periodically with patients, and run the risk of becoming "professional chimneys" (Glouberman & Mintzberg, 2001:5). Medical interventions may be placed on a continuum from intrusive to interpretive: incursion (cutting), ingestion (giving medicine), manipulation (touching), and mediation (talking to patients). Medical science is the knowledge base of cure, and interpretive interventions may be regarded as unscientific. The status and preferences of physicians may be based on their incursion skills. In terms of identity, physicians may identify more with the incursion category. Nurses provide care continuously, run wards, and coordinate workflows. These tasks may lead them to identify better with the administration. Structural changes prompt identity challenges (Andersson, 2015). The logic of control is linked to rationality, strategy, and managerial practices marked by fragmentation. It calls for an administrative hierarchy.

Many attempts have been made to create a specialized healthcare management profession in Norway and elsewhere. Special courses and associations have been developed for the training and socialization of such managers. However, attempts to professionalize management in general have failed (Byrkjeflot & Nygaard, 2018) because of the lack of a scientific knowledge base, an education license, and other reasons. Managers can intervene in professionalism by controlling resources like budget and structures. The organizing principle

of the community is the board and governance structures.<sup>24</sup>

Managers are nested in a system and derive authority from it, while professionals are more like free agents (Andersson, 2015:91). The social identities of professionals and managers exhibit different characteristics. Nurses regard management as an alternative career (Byrkjeflot & Kragh Jespersen, 2014), and nursing is assumedly more congruent with managerial identities (Blomgren, 2003). There are admittedly differences between nurses and medical doctors; however, these differences are not within the scope of my study. I prioritize comparisons between the managerial groups in the two case organizations and downplay individual and professional differences. As I have discussed, it is easier for nurses to take on a managerial identity, whereas physicians identify more with their professions. A professional leader is one who has is responsible for a certain function and for the planning of work within the professional realm. Essentially, professionals focus on the quality of work (Scott, 2008). As described above, hybrid professional managers are seen as a solution to the problem—individuals who embody two logics in one person as a “two-way window” (Llewellyn, 2001).

#### *2.4.3.2 Development of increased managerialism in hospitals*

Traditionally, the dominating logic within hospitals has been clinical professional self-governance (Vrangbæk, 1999). Healthcare organizations have been governed by medical doctors with little political supervision. Described as “medicracy” (Berg, 1996), the medical control of health organizations safeguards work. Traditionally, hospitals in Norway were publicly owned by the counties that allowed the medical profession “to organize and run hospitals as they preferred” (Berg, 1996:440). They were organized in loosely coupled units, where the chief medical doctors were by large autonomous and occupied central positions (Berg, 1996).

The lack of management was by the 1970s seen a problem in healthcare (Degeling & Carr, 2004). As a result, gradual changes were introduced in the sector, mainly prompted by the NPM reforms (Byrkjeflot, 2005). From the 1980s, hospitals began attracting political attention. Cost and efficiency problems within hospitals were described governmental report (NOU, 1997) as a hospital crisis. Management was seen as the solution to better task coordination, and right-wing national government favored a more market-oriented health sector. In 1980, the Øie committee recommended that physicians should lead clinical units, which went against the traditional model of the head nurse and chief doctor jointly managing

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<sup>24</sup> The four worlds are disconnected, yet Glouberman and Mintzberg (2001:18) point out alliances. Nurses and managers have both an internal coalition and a clinical coalition with the doctors. The physicians have a status coalition with the community, and the community and managers have a containment coalition.

the department (NOU, 1997) and a tertiary unit of administrators. In 1997, 90% of the somatic departments still had a dual management structure (NOU, 1997). In 1996, the Steine committee was formed to review the organizing of hospitals, and in the following year, they recommended unitary management. Unitary management refers to the concept of holistic responsibility for an organizational unit, including all the unit's activities and employees, and not just those belonging to one's own profession. The dual management structure practiced until then was disapproved for being too complex and allowing one profession to lead others. Further, patients were considered customers coming to hospitals for full treatment, and not only for consulting specific professions (Torjesen, 2007). The Steine committee recommendations led to much debate in the healthcare community.

Nonetheless, in 2001, Norway introduced the Specialist Health Services Act under which professionals had to apply for positions that were neutral of profession (Gjerberg & Sorensen, 2006). The Act stated that managers should be assisted by medical counselors. Conflicts led to amendments to the act, and to avoid unitary management, hospitals appointed assisting managers and altered the size of the units. In a way, unitary management paved the way for nurses to enter management (Johansen and Gjerberg, 2009). Finally, as a consequence of the 2002 reform, 80 hospitals were transferred from the counties to the state, and mergers within five regional state enterprises reduced their number to four in 2007.<sup>25</sup>

In 1997, medical diagnoses were subjected to an activity-based financial system (DRG) (Torjesen et al., 2011) to counter criticisms of high costs, low transparency, and long waiting lists. DRG estimated treatment costs on the basis of diagnosis, treatment, gender, age and so on. Since then hospital budgets are financed with DRG coding and through block financing. Kjekshus and Bernstøm (2010) argue that this reform led to more managerial levels, with 71% of Norwegian hospitals having four levels, compared to 13% in 2001. These reforms strengthened the regulation and formalization of managerial roles, comparable to those in the National Health Service in the UK (Gray & Harrison, 2004).<sup>26</sup>

To summarize, NPM aimed at decentralizing management and providing greater autonomy at the organizational level, yet maintaining control and holding the managers and

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<sup>25</sup> After the reform in 2002, Norwegian hospitals had a division organization (Torjesen, Byrkjeflot, & Kjekshus, 2011), for example around a medical specialization as surgery or psychiatry. Departments could be divided into several units or sections. The normal levels were section, department, clinic, and director. The directors of the clinic and the staff function together, the manager reports to the director, and director reports to a board. The hospital in my study is organized into three managerial levels: CEO, department manager, and unit manager.

<sup>26</sup> Kitchener (2000) found that the role of the clinical director became bureaucratized. Kragh Jespersen (2005) in a study of Denmark hospitals found that doctors were occupied with clinical management. Nurses were occupied with professional development, personnel management, and daily operations.



boards accountable (Torjesen et al., 2011). The logic of professional self-governance promoted collegial authority and trust in the relationship between clients and employers. Professional practice was based on a set of fundamental values (Byrkjeflot, 2002). Historically, Norway has been salient for its close collaboration between the state and professions (Torjesen et al., 2011). The country has been called a reluctant reformer (Kamp, Klemsdal, & Gonäs, 2013; Lægneid & Christensen, 2011).

#### *2.4.3.3 Hybridization of professional and managerial identities in hospitals*

Østergren and Sahlin-Andersson (1995) use the term “separate worlds” to capture the difference and distance between core professional work and strategic managerial levels. To resolve any conflicts and discrepancies, hospitals used health personnel to mediate between levels and logics. This gave rise to hybrid professional managers (Kragh Jespersen, 2005; Llewellyn, 2001), who may be seen as a compromise between the pure ideal types of professionalism and managerialism. In the following sections, I explain how such hybridization is conceptualized.

Byrkjeflot and Kragh Jespersen (2014:452) find that “generally hybrid management seems to look like an uncertain truce between competing logics more than a replacement of some dominant professional logics with others.” They argue that a widespread de-professionalizing cannot be confirmed in empirical studies. However, Noordegraaf (2007:780) claims that the medical profession has been bureaucratized into occupational professions subject to organizational control. The process facilitated the transition from a pure medical profession into a hybrid profession within hospitals.

Byrkjeflot & Kragh Jespersen (2014) reviewed literature on hybridization and identified three combinations of managerial and professional roles in healthcare: (1) the clinical manager combined professional autonomy with a general managerial logic, (2) the commercialized manager combined professionalism with an enterprise logic, and (3) the neo-bureaucratic manager combined self-governance with a neo-bureaucratic logic. The researchers found that hybridity was used superficially, and they called for a clearer specification of the term (Byrkjeflot & Kragh Jespersen, 2014:441). Further, they noted that although scholars have investigated which roles and logics can be combined, they have largely ignored *how* this happens or what its outcomes are. The constellation of logics can indicate whether there has been logic replacement, segregation, or assimilation.

Numerato, Salvatore, and Fattore (2012) reviewed the impact of management on medical professionals in Western countries. They noted that typically governments seeking more effective and efficient healthcare services demanded accountability and transparency

and often introduced NPM reforms (Doolin, 2002; Hood, 1991; Leicht, Walter, Sainsaulieu, & Davies, 2009). This, in turn, led to the implementation of management systems in the form of standards, reports, incentives, guidelines, and auditing. Thus, professionals were colonized with accountability, transparency, evaluation, and managerial priorities (Numerato et al., 2012:629).

Managerialism represents a distinct ideology that uses symbols, codes, and language; it is characterized by rationalization and standardization (Pollitt, 1993). Healthcare professionals who internalize this logic may start to identify with it. Formal monitoring and control strengthen managerialism (Levay & Waks, 2009). Mo (2008) notes that a negotiating stance implies the existence of hybrid identities and professional acceptance of managerial responsibilities and part-time clinical work. She found that doctors adopt a holistic perspective yet emphasize professional priorities. On the other hand, nurses who exercise managerial authority in hybrid positions in clinical departments are less subject to a professional logic (Johansen & Gjerberg, 2009).

Hybrid roles can lead to role conflicts and trigger balancing acts between managerial and professional demands (Kitchener, 2002). A more opposing strategy is re-stratification, where professionals become managers in order to safeguard the profession and buffer themselves against pressure (Waring & Currie, 2009). With re-stratification, professionals are buffered from managerialism and neo-liberalism and possibly free to tend to their core work. To achieve this goal, some professionals willingly take on hybrid roles (Doolin, 2002; Kitchener, 2000). Others are reluctant and merely play with managerial identities (Iedema, Degeling, Braithwaite, & White, 2004; Llewellyn, 2001), or they blend the two roles and clearly identify as hybrids (Noordegraaf, 2007, 2011; Thomas & Linstead, 2002).

McGivern et al. (2015) studied how hybrid professionals assume hybrid roles and use identity work. Identity work is employed to manage tensions between personal, social, and professional identities (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006a) as well as professional roles and role transitions (Chreim et al., 2007; Ibarra, 1999). However, professionalism and managerialism may also be seen as complementary. McGivern et al. (2015) distinguished between incidental hybrids who buffer professionals and willing hybrids who are more inclined toward managerialism.

Overall, hybridization implies a negotiating stance, compatibility, and blurred boundaries. Professionalism and managerialism are competing institutional logics (Reay & Hinings, 2009) that offer alternative frames. Identity work is a form of institutional work because “identities describe the relationship between an actor and the field in which that actor

operates” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006:223). Institutions come before identity boundaries (Chreim et al., 2007). Changing logics may trigger identity developments and influence how people engage with their daily enactment of identities (Glynn, 2017).

Doctors engaged in managerial positions are distanced from pure professionalism (Noordegraaf, 2007), and such engagement separates practicing from non-practicing professionals (Causer et al., 1999). Numerato et al. (2012:637) note that professionalism and management are framed as contradictory in the work of actors. However, contextual and situated “analysis have concluded that interplay between professionalism and management results more often in coexistence, co-optation, mediation, negotiating, emerging and (strategic) adaptation rather than in clashes, hegemony and resistance.”

In conclusion, hybrid management is frequently cited in literature that describes the effects of NPM reforms (Berg & Byrkjeflot, 2010). While the combinations of hybrid management may be new, hybrid management itself is not a new concept. Its presence has been acknowledged since the end of the 1990s and in several sectors, including the public (Christensen & Lægreid, 2010), education, and healthcare (Teelken, Ferlie, & Dent, 2012). Ferlie et al. (1996) used the concept to describe a manager role that combined professional leadership with management.

#### 2.4.4 The Church of Norway and the hybridization of professionalism and managerialism

This section briefly discusses the key reforms and the structure of the Church of Norway, specifically highlighting the role of deans. Reforms are intended processes of change and a recent characteristic of the European Protestant churches (Askeland & Schmidt, 2016). Reforms represent a complex mix of external and internal forces. For example, they may be triggered by declining member rates, lowered participation, decrease in finances, new modes of works and activities, and recruitment problems. Evolving organizational and management issues may also lead to reforms. The society within which the churches are placed may also undergo cultural changes (Furseth, 2015).<sup>27</sup> For example, churches are increasingly perceived as organizations that provide services (Karle, 2015).

The Church Law of 1996 sparked renewed management interest in the Church of Norway (Askeland, 1998). The lay managerial position of the church warden is relevant at the municipal level, while the parishes form the joint parochial council, which discharges

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<sup>27</sup> In the Norwegian context, one can find empirical research on churches that employ sociological approaches as well as research that follows traditional theological approaches (Hegstad, 2009). This relation may be problematized in ecclesiology. In principle, this does not hinder the study of the church as an organization. This is also a tradition in Norway (Askeland & Schmidt, 2016).

administrative duties and the employer's liability on behalf of the parishes, church buildings, and cemeteries. All the church staff are employed by this council except the clergy, which is employed through the diocese by the Church of Norway. The work of priests is decentralized and is performed in the local parishes as autonomous work. Their work has been regulated by the liturgy of ordination, service instructions, and the liturgies of the church (Sirris, 2016).

#### *2.4.4.1 From professional self-governance to increased managerialism in the church*

The pace of reforms witnessed in the Church of Norway has been high, and concerns church-state relations, democracy, liturgy, and Christian education. Schmidt (2016) believes that recent Norwegian church reforms have been inspired by NPM. First, the deanery reform restructured the local ministry. The aim of the reform was to enhance flexibility in the clergy, increase leadership, promote collaboration and specialization in work, and improve working conditions. The reform was called the "New directive on the employment of deans and changes in employment procedures for the clergy" (Askeland, 2016). A circular from the Ministry of Culture directed the church to appoint the dean as a manager and promote collaboration. The deanery was made the district of employment instead of the local parish. The clergy were granted supervision rights, further education opportunities, options to pursue courses, and better working conditions. The deanery reform subtly centralized leadership as local ministers still maintained their attachment with the parish. The deans represent a middle level between the parish and diocese.

#### *2.4.4.2 Hybridization of professional and managerial identities in the church*

Huse's (1998) survey, commissioned by the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs, identified that the dean was perceived as a representative of the bishop. Huse (1998:141) developed the following typology of deans' managerial roles: 1) the strategist focused on strategy, representing the bishop, with minor clergy work; 2) the independent dean was neutral and mainly worked as a priest with a low profile; 3) the clerical dean was perceived as pastors with a few managerial duties; and 4) the dutiful dean performed most of the functions without any special profile. Askeland (2015:97) found the typology to be useful though underdeveloped. The typology was proposed before the deanery reform, when the deans were not very visible as managers. Local projects of service districts showed positive outcomes. Few in the church wanted to return to the previous structure as they now had a better climate and were motivated by the strengthened role of and better access to the dean.

The deanery reform was evaluated in 2013 (Stifoss-Hanssen et al., 2013). 516 participants completed a survey. In three dioceses, group interviews were conducted at

various levels in the ecclesial organization. Three roles of the dean were identified: spiritual, integrative, and administrative. The clergy noted that the deans played less of a spiritual role and behaved more like managers with administrative duties. However, the deans themselves did not view this as problematic. This evaluation led to the twofold categorization of theological and functional pastoral leadership (Askeland, 2016:111):

Table 3: *Categorization of deans' leadership*

<b>Theological conceptualization</b>	<b>Functional conceptualization</b>
Leading by word and sacraments	Leading through clerical and worship services
Holistic responsibility of the life of the congregations based on ordination	Strategies, objectives, and planning for congregational life
Building the congregation (“oikodomene”)	Cooperation with the councils to strengthen holistic approaches
Teaching and leading a life in faith	Relation: see, listen, and follow-up
Supervision of the spiritual condition of the congregation and coworkers	Contributing to consistency and stability

Askeland (2016) concluded that the deanery reform strengthened the managerial role though the survey respondents were unsure whether it was a positive outcome. The reform expanded the administrative dimension and decreased the need for pastoral leadership. This led to changes in the balance of managerialism and professionalism. Finally, Askeland highlighted the need to “investigate the ways professional managers integrate professional and organizational rationality, integrating these parallel rationalities into a new, hybrid leadership role” (Askeland, 2016:115).

I (2018) studied the deans to understand their transition from professional leadership into a more managerial role. My study contributes new empirical material, collected after the role of the dean changed through the deanery reform and the Work Hour Agreement (WHA) in 2016. I use the competence concept as an analytical tool and propose a model of general management and professional leadership of clergy.

The service instruction specifies the deans’ mandate for the clergy and the council structure in various levels.<sup>28</sup> Accordingly, the deans have hierarchical functions toward the clergy and professional obligations toward others in the network. Traditionally, leadership in this context was professional not managerial. Management emphasizes generic competence, transferable to various context—professional skills and training are less important (Chapter

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<sup>28</sup> The deans have employer’s liability (§ 4) for the clergy that work in the deanery (§1). The paragraphs say that the dean is obligated to execute the goals and strategies of the diocese and church. The dean is supposed to motivate the clergy to fulfill their work and distribute the sacraments, supervise and stimulates to increased competences. Toward the other employees in the local church, who are led by the church warden on a municipal level, the dean is expected to contribute to cooperation and coordination (§ 3).

1.3 and 2.2).<sup>29</sup> The expectations toward deans are broad: they have to gain holistic managerial competence, safeguard the profession seriously, and perform employer's liability (Sirris, 2018).

## 2.5 Roadmap

The question of negotiating professionalism and managerialism is an empirical issue experienced in organizations. This literature review not only provides an overview of how the institutions of profession and management are changing but also highlights the need for a better understanding how hybrid professional managers negotiate their identities in these specific contexts. I follow the works of Noordegraf (2015) Evetts (2011) who observed a growing trend toward organizational professionalism. It is preconditioned by a managerial logic that challenges and partly integrates professional coordination, authority, and values (Siebert, Bushfield, Martin, & Howieson, 2018). Kirkpatrick and Noordegraaf (2015) note that professionals may seek the legitimacy provided by managerialism. Alvehus and Andersson (2018) refer to this logic entanglement as a paradox. They claim it increases complexity as one logic does not replace another but has an additive effect. However, managerial structures may be decoupled from core professional work (Meyer & Rowan, 1977).

Several reforms have strengthened managerialism, and this study examines how this has influenced the identities and roles of managers. Professional autonomy remains strong because of the resistance toward managerial efforts seeking to change core work practices (Alvehus, 2018). This argument indicates which theory is appropriate for my study. In the next chapter, I outline how managers' negotiating their identities can be better understood through institutional theory.

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<sup>29</sup> Leadership within the professions maintains that the managers should be competent professional themselves, know the craft and the skills characterizing the profession (Goodall, 2012; Muzio & Kirkpatrick, 2011). Managers and workers belong to and participate within the same community of practice from which they derive their identity. In the Norwegian context, the ideals of professional leadership are still strong (Byrkjeflot, 2002).

### 3 Theoretical framework

This chapter positions my study within its theoretical framework, the analytical lens of institutional theory, and the identity concept. I present its two main trajectories: logics and work. I then clarify the concepts of identity and role before relating them to institutionalism.

#### 3.1 Institutional theory

The term *institution* is understood differently according to contexts and disciplines. Within the domain of organization and management studies, the conventional view holds that institutions are patterns of conduct containing enduring elements in social life that affect actors' behavior and thoughts (Scott, 2014).<sup>30</sup> Institutions are formal and informal rules, shared meanings, and guidelines for actions and interactions (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1997). In this study, the key institutions are profession and management, for example priesthood and hospital unitary management. Such institutions are informed by macro-level logics and orders (Thornton et al., 2012). In what follows, I address the relations between institutions, logics, and orders.

The seminal work of Berger and Luckmann (1966) described institutions as socially constructed, resulting from the human need to create patterns and meaning through actions. The process of institutionalization occurs when certain social relations and actions are taken for granted and externalized, which may lead to objectification and reified forms. For instance, people adjust to expectations and what is considered a normal and accepted way of behavior. Such patterns and cultural norms are learned and reproduced, sometimes for generations. Consequently, knowledge is produced through language and interactions. Berger and Luckmann's (1966) sociology of knowledge contributes to the institutional perspective. Institutionalism, or its cognate institutional theory, is socially constructed truth, which provides researchers with analytical frameworks to capture and explain given phenomena. In my view, its value as theory depends on its usefulness.

Thornton and Ocasio (2008:121) note that institutional theory lacks coherence. It is not a unified stream but a collection of sub-streams. However, Scott (2004:408) identifies some key unifying features:

Institutional arguments exhibit a lean common core of assumptions: 1) institutions are governance structures, embodying rules for social conduct, 2) groups and organizations conforming to these rules are accorded legitimacy, a condition contributing to their survival, 3) institutions are characterized by inertia, a tendency to

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<sup>30</sup> Institutionalism is characterized by a normative aspect—by its emphasis on institutions as systems with a normative foundation based on common values and beliefs (Scott 2004:410). This aligns with the cultural turn experienced in many disciplines toward the 1980s (Schein, 2010).

resist change, and 4) history matters, in the sense that the past institutional structures constrain and channel new arrangements.

Institutional theories address connections between organizations and the contexts in which they operate. This is evident in the *classical old institutionalism* described in Selznick's (1957) groundbreaking study on organizations in relation to their environment. Selznick's approach took distinctive historical and organizational features into account. For him, institutionalizing meant a process of value-infusion by which the organization developed a character. He argued that this is what distinguishes an institution from a mere technical and instrumental organization. This trajectory is a theory of how organizations change organically.

In the 1970s, much scholarly attention was directed toward a novel perspective on institutionalized organizations. Similar to Selznick's approach, it differed from mainstream organization theory that viewed organizations as well-structured rational tools to achieve goals. This *classical new institutionalism* emphasized cultural heterogeneity that affects the work of organizations and disregarded the rational actor as a myth (Scott, 2014). This view encouraged scholars to the study of the role of environments and organizations at the field-level. For example, focused on culture and cognition, Meyer and Rowan (1977) described isomorphism—organizational similarity as an expression of conformism and legitimacy-seeking processes.<sup>31</sup> Classical old and new institutionalisms are thus theories of slightly different phenomena. However, they share core terminology.

Since the 1990s scholars have variously attempted to integrate the two perspectives. For example, Friedland and Alford (1991) developed institutionalism further by proposing a metatheory. They pointed to the plurality of institutional orders on a societal level that influence institutionalization: family, religion, capitalism, bureaucracy, and democracy. This multilevel conceptual approach, developed to investigate the connections between society, organizations, and individuals, is highly relevant to my thesis. Friedland and Alford (1991:251) understood institutions as activity patterns rooted in material and symbolic practices that both shape and are shaped by individual and collective actors. At the same time, they structure and provide meaning to their lives. The above-mentioned orders have a logic that manifests itself in actors' languages and identity as resources to be used at will. It is important to note that institutional orders through logics may be used and manipulated strategically by individuals.

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<sup>31</sup> This form of institutionalism focuses on structural and cultural aspects and the environments where pressures make organizations conform. This stream of research mainly focuses on institutional forces at a societal macro-level. The notion of isomorphism was addressed by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) who explained the coercive, normative, and mimetic factors underlying the field-level of organizations.



Most studies do not clearly explain the relation between *order* and *logic* and use them interchangeably (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017).<sup>32</sup> In my view, scholars justly criticize the somewhat confusing polyvalence of institutionalism and its umbrella terms (Haveman & David, 2008). Further, definitions are lacking or are often unspecific (David & Bitektine, 2009). Alvesson, Hallett, and Spicer (2019:9) note how institutional theory may become an all-encompassing metatheory or a brand since “it is not a singular theory, but rather a confederation of loosely coupled theories.” I counter this criticism by specifying the contents of key terms and operationalizing them with regard to identity work and role.

### 3.1.1 Institutional logics

The notion of logics was introduced by Friedland and Alford (1991) and is presently very expansive. This trajectory is fundamental in my study since it conceptualizes professionalism and managerialism as two distinct ideal typical logics. Using ideal types as approach is known in qualitative studies that aim to capture logics (Reay & Jones, 2016) and helps to explore the relations between them. The specific content of professional and managerial logics I have detailed previously. The logics perspective is not primarily concerned with isomorphism, rather it concentrates on the impact of logics on organizations and individuals (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012). It shares commonalities with old institutionalism. Logics bridge the macro-level elements with micro processes (Micelotta et al., 2017). This is central to my study since it examines how identities and roles are nested within logics.

Expanding on the work of Friedland and Alford (1991), Thornton and Ocasio (1999:804) defined logics as “the socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality.” This definition of logics is very broad. In fact, it resembles the above-cited understanding of an institution. Logics at a meta-level of values, norms, and symbols are more abstract social structures than institutions (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017:54). Whereas institutions are stable, reconfigurations of logics facilitate changes in actors’ practices (Andersson & Liff, 2018:73). Logics reflect the view on institutions as structural, normative and symbolic. This understanding is proposed by Scott (2004; 2014) who suggests that

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<sup>32</sup> Society was explained as an inter-institutional system, characterized by plurality and complexity. The authors (Alford & Friedland, 1985) later proposed the concept that institutional logics denoted contradictory practices and beliefs. As I have argued (1.3.1), the logics perspective is useful to explain institutional change (Micelotta et al., 2017; Scott, 2014).

institutions consist of cultured cognitive, normative, and regulative elements that provide stability and meaning to social life. In this respect, institutions are organized purposive procedures. The regulative pillar refers to rules, while the normative refers to values and the moral aspects of social life expressed in roles. The cognitive refers to interpretations that is used to understand identity and meaning.<sup>33</sup>

Freidson (2001) depicts logics as contradictory by illustrating how an ideal typical pure professional logic is pressured by bureaucracy and market. Such research focuses the introduction of a new logic into a field previously dominated by a professional logic. This stream of research, prevalent since the 1990s, is also called “change and complexity” institutionalism (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017) and is relevant to my study. This is because it links classical old and new institutionalism and seeks to understand how pluralism is handled within organizations. Coexisting logics, as I have argued, inhibit the potential for agency and change (Micelotta et al., 2017) because of the friction between them. In this work, I study empirical expressions of such coexistence. However, the distinction between these structures is not very clear in the routine work of professionals who mostly work in organizations that are governed by managers. Researchers have long observed the coming together of these realms and conceptualized the phenomenon as a hybridized professionalism (Blomgren & Waks, 2015). Within this framework, heterogeneity increases as professionals themselves assume managerial responsibilities (Noordegraaf, 2015). For instance, deans who are by definition both part-time clergy and part-time managers, satisfy the criterion of hybrid professional managers.

Logics may be blended or segregated, and any combination depends on availability and the actor’s knowledge of logics. They may also be hybridized. In their everyday life, managers in organizations engage in situations and problems that call for action. Beliefs, norms, and institutions guide these actions. This may be understood as institutional logics—as coherent sets of guidelines informing patterns of actions. In my study, this view is important as the managers adhere to two different logics.

A central concept within the logics perspective that I explicitly draw on is the notion of plural logics within organizations (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Glynn, 2000; Lok, 2010;

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<sup>33</sup>Logics are a framework for analysis of interrelationships between institutions, individuals, and organizations. Logics determine which issues and problems are salient and which answers and solutions are given (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). They provide schemata of interpretations and connect inherently to practice, providing guidelines for action and enabling actors to create meaning. As described, the logics perspective originated as a field-level concept. Recently, more studies have been undertaken in organizations at this analytical level (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Pache & Santos, 2010a) where multiple logics coexist (Reay & Hinings, 2009). Early studies propose how logics replace one another (Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2005), how they are segregated (Purdy & Gray, 2009), how they blend (Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005), or are assimilated (Murray, 2010). Various ideas have been proposed for how actors engage in the constellations of logics. Reay and Hining's (2009) study used competition and cooperation, while McGivern et al., (2015) discussed hybridization. I depart from the micro level, as have several other studies (Arman, Liff, & Wikström, 2014; Bévort & Suddaby, 2016; Blomgren & Waks, 2015; McPherson & Sauder, 2013; Pache & Santos, 2010b). Overall, these studies show the resurgence of interest in institutional logics as employed by actors. Another example is Lindberg's (2014) study on actors as carriers of logics.

These studies show how actors can use minor or major elements from another logic in the pursuit of their own goals. They illustrate the agency of individuals when reconfiguring logics. The reasons are usually strategic, and actors are pragmatic and solution-oriented when combining dimensions of different logics. McPherson and Sauder (2013) show how actors can "hijack" other logics, and they call for further studies of how such processes occur. The coexistence of managerial and professional logics in healthcare have been previously studied. The explanations for coexistence include mediation (Waring & Currie, 2009), hierarchization (Arman et al., 2014), sensemaking (Bévort & Suddaby, 2016), re-interpretation (Reay, Goodrick, Waldorff, & Casebeer, 2017), and co-optation (Andersson & Liff, 2018).

To sum up, institutional theory presents a multilevel approach. Starting from the field level, logics are understood to precede actions. The logics framework connects the levels by placing individuals in the context of organizations and society. It provides the tools to analyze how identities are embedded in wider belief systems that both enable and constrain them (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008:103). It is important to note that individuals do not only respond to logics as recipients, they also participate in shaping logics as actors. Actors are carriers of logics and function as representatives for them and voice them (Greenwood et al., 2011; Pache & Santos, 2010) This act of construction is particularly evident in institutional work (Lawrence et al., 2009), to which I now turn.

### 3.1.2 Institutional work

Classical new institutionalism has been criticized for the neglect of agency and strategy (Scott 2014), as it focuses on the field-level and wider cultural pressures affecting organizations. Agency plays a key role in coexisting logics, for example as institutional bricolage (Binder, 2007; McPherson & Sauder, 2013). The literature on institutional work also emphasizes agency through an interactive and dynamic approach (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Interestingly, agency does not contradict the logics perspective, which is also concerned with dynamics at the micro level as experienced by actors (Thornton et al., 2012:179). Both are useful in my study because I am interested in how actors negotiate between the logics. This aligns with a constructivist approach and with the available insights on embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009). I consider the managers in my study as having partial autonomy. Institutional work moves from nouns to verbs through the efforts of actors. Besides this notion of agency, the second key element of institutional work is the focus on practices and how actors shape institutions. Institutional work represents middle-range institutions as it studies how beliefs, rules, and values affect organizations (Hempel, Lawrence, & Tracey, 2017).<sup>34</sup>

Institutional change may be studied as institutional work. Institutional entrepreneurship emphasized the role of strong actors (DiMaggio, 1988) and sometimes as “hypermuscular supermen” instead of “cultural dopes” (Suddaby, 2010:15). However, institutional work is mainly concerned with everyday ongoing action. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006:215) defined it as “the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions.” These denote the three broad categories of institutional work. Institutional work highlights the reflexivity of actors who are competent and possess practical skills. Lawrence and Suddaby (2006:219) also underlined the practice perspective and noted another important point: institutions are constituted by the conscious actions of actors.<sup>35</sup>

The relation between logics and work is not without controversies (Blomgren & Waks, 2015; Micelotta et al., 2017; Zilber, 2013). As noted above, they are two distinct schools that serve as frameworks for analyzing institutional dynamics. Both attempt to bridge the gap between structure and agency. Based on the above arguments of differences and similarities, some scholars are in favour of integrating the two streams, whereas others are critical and view them as figure and ground (Zilber, 2013). I chose to follow the logics framework proposed by Thornton et al. (2012), which studies work and meanings in alignment with the institutional work perspective. Thornton et al. (2012) sought to integrate the central ideas of institutional work into their overall framework. Thus, the two streams converged. In my

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<sup>34</sup> Following Schatzki, Knorr-Cetina, and von Savigny (2001:2) practices represent “embodied, materially mediated arrays of human activity centrally organized around shared practical understanding.”

<sup>35</sup> Lawrence and Suddaby (2006:238) underscore that often an institution changes gradually by conceptualizing itself in novel ways, yet recognizable to others: “Actors appear to disrupt institutions primarily by redefining, re-categorizing, reconfiguring, abstracting, problematizing and, generally, manipulating the social and symbolic boundaries that constitute institutions.”

articles, I use logics in the first article and work in the second as figure and ground, respectively. This chapter so far shows clear areas of overlap, and my study draws on both perspectives. I agree with Hampel et al. (2017:34) who call the divide “artificial.” Writing from an institutional perspective with an affinity for embedded and partly constrained agency, I find that a heavy emphasis on agency may convey an overly rationalistic and simplistic view of actors as intentional.<sup>36</sup>

### 3.2 Theoretical perspectives on identity and role

I use identity as an overarching theoretical concept. It is related to social identity and role, which I use more as an emic concept. Identity is fundamental to social life and a central theme within many academic disciplines, including the social sciences, arts, humanities, psychology, and philosophy.<sup>37</sup> The literature on identity is vast, and instead of reviewing the entire field, I focus on the aspects relevant to my study. Identity has been researched at organizational, professional, social, and individual levels and in relation to these levels.

*Organizational* identity comprises aspects of the organization that members perceive to be central, distinctive, and enduring (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994). Organizations can be considered to have multiple identities when different notions exist of what is central, distinctive, and enduring (Pratt & Foreman, 2000:20). *Professional identity* denotes the professional self-concept based on the relatively stable and enduring set of attributes, beliefs, values, and experiences that influence how individuals see themselves in a professional role (Ibarra, 1999:765; Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Some researchers hold that *managerial* identity is constituted by negotiating professional identity (Ibarra, 1999; Khapova, Arthur, Slay, & Smith, 2011; Spehar, Frich, & Kjekshus, 2012) and organizational identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2004; Pratt & Ravasi, 2016). Of course, managerial identity extends beyond this area of negotiation (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2016). It could analogically be defined as the managerial self-concept.

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<sup>36</sup>A common core in institutional theory is according to Lincoln (1995:1147) “the tendency for social structures and processes to acquire meaning and stability in their own right rather than as instrumental tools for the achievement of specialized ends.” This tension inhabits the concepts of identity and role, and I seek to balance them.

<sup>37</sup> Identity is a key issue within management and organization studies (Pratt & Ravasi, 2016). Journals such as *Organization* (2008), *Human Relations* (2009) and *Scandinavian Journal of Management* (2012) have dedicated special issues to this theme. Reviews on identity are available in sociological and psychological literature (Callero, 2003; Cerulo, 1997; Howard, 2000). In management and organization works, studies on identity are described as disconnected (Alvesson, Lee Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008).

### 3.2.1 The identity construct

The theoretical grounding of the identity construct that I follow is symbolic interactionism, which has been divided into two trajectories after Mead (1934). Blumer, representing the Chicago school, foregrounds interpretive research (Snow, 2001). The Iowa school relies on quantitative research and is represented by Kuhn (1964). Mead, as interpreted by Blumer, holds that the self is created through interactions. In other words, there is a continuous negotiation with the external world as well as within an individual. According to Mead, the self consists of “I” and “me”. “I” is the more dynamic and changeable side, whereas “me” is the social self and serves as a social memory. The generalized others represent the social group we identify with and from which we derive the expectations that enable us to create the self. Identity is crafted in relation to contexts (Gergen, 1991). I hold that identity is constructed and negotiated in social interaction. Meanings or self-conceptions emanate from social groups and membership in groups, that is social identities resembling the role concept.

Overall, identity refers to various meanings attached to a person by themselves and others (Gecas, 1982), it connects different experiences, and reduces fragmentation in feelings and thinking. Social identities refer to understandings of selves as members of social categories, such as gender or nationality; personal identity is notions of our unique features; and role identity pertains to how an actor identifies with a given role. One’s role identity is formed by external expectations and signifies a position within a given social system, such as a brother or teacher.<sup>38</sup> Additionally, character traits displayed and attributed based on conduct are conceptualized as personal identities (Ashford, 2016; Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989).<sup>39</sup>

### 3.2.2 Identity work

The linkages between professionalism and managerialism as coexisting logics have been interpreted in various ways. Some perceive a conflict or struggle (Dunn & Jones, 2010), while others hold that organizations may contain different logics without any tensions (Goodrick & Reay, 2011; Reay & Hinings, 2009). This situation of coexisting logics may trigger questions of identity. Given that social contexts and organizations are pluralistic and dynamic, it is

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<sup>38</sup> This points to what March (1994) calls the logic of appropriateness, which is also rooted in symbolic interactionism. Managers ask themselves three questions: what kind of situation is this, what kind of person am I, and what do a person as I do in this situation? These are questions of recognition, identity, and rules; they connect identity with actions.

<sup>39</sup> The identity construct serves as an analytical bridge between the individual and society, and the meaning attached reflexively to selves is often in the form of narratives. Scholars agree that identities are multiple and mutable (Goffman, 1959; Mead, 1934), yet coexist and integrate experiences into a unity—a composite of aspects rather than a monolith. It has long been claimed in psychological research that individuals have a repertoire that is active when entering roles within contexts. There is a dynamic relation between identities and roles with reciprocal influences. An assigned social identity or role may lead the incumbent of the role to develop an identity around it (Markus & Wurf, 1987).

likely that identity is destabilized. Over the years, the view on identities has moved away from fixed to more processual (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999; Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). This in turn has led to ongoing (re)constructions of identity, which is also known as identity work.

The term identity work is mostly used at an individual level and has been defined by Snow and Anderson (1987:1348) as “range of activities that individuals engage in to create, present, and sustain personal identities that are congruent with and supportive of the self-concept.” This definition aligns with the recent turn to work in institutionalism (Chapter 3.1.2). Identity work has also been understood as a type of institutional work (Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010). Enacting identities have been studied to understand how actors draw on and translate institutional logics (Lok, 2010). It is important to stress that identity work may sometimes be institutional work, but not always. Identity work involves “people being engaged in forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness” (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003:1165).

In the context of my study, identity work relates to institutional work precisely because actors negotiate “constructions” like their profession and what it means to be a manager. This suggests that identity work is a continuous agentic effort. It may be understood as an active reconstruction of basic assumptions about professional or even managerial identity, which in turn changes institutional logics (Lok, 2010). Identity work involves working with institutional pressures (Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006).<sup>40</sup>

Brown (2015) reviewed 300 studies on identity work published in business and management journal. Some insights that are relevant to my study are briefly discussed here. The growing interest in identity is the result of societal changes, fluid modernity (Bauman, 1998), and transitions into roles (Ibarra, 1999). Traditional ways of defining oneself in terms of gender, rank, and religion have eroded and been replaced by individual freedom and constructions. This change has prompted a body of research on negotiations and building of identities, including professional, work-related, and organizational (Coupland & Brown, 2012). Identity work is also relevant to ontology and epistemology (Pratt & Ravasi, 2016), as it considers identity to be workable and a matter of choice. Watson (2008:129) understands identity work to involve “mutually constitutive processes, whereby people strive to shape a

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<sup>40</sup> Identity work is key to understand how individuals relate to macro-level logics (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002). Identity denotes interrelated ways of constructing self, for example central life interest, coherence, distinctiveness, direction, positive value, and self-awareness (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002:8). Work involves personal and social significance (Ashforth & Pratt, 2003) and relates to identity and identification.

relatively coherent and distinctive notion of personal self-identity and struggle to come to terms with and, within limits, to influence the various social identities which pertain” to them in their various milieus. Brown (2015:28) calls for more studies on contexts as identity workspaces and seeks insights into how identity work is enacted within particular contexts and organizations. Identity claims are based on images that signal how someone views himself or herself and hopes to be viewed by others.

This continuous negotiating is what I understand as identity work. Identity work presupposes reflexivity and occurs in contextual instability where actors must craft an identity (Beech, 2008; Carroll & Levy, 2008; Carroll, Levy, & Richmond, 2008; Sveningsson & Larsson, 2006).<sup>41</sup>

Processes of negotiation have received little empirical attention within organization and management studies (Helfen & Sydow, 2013). The repertoire of identities and identity work is made salient by discussion of different roles and contexts. Typically, identity work is sparked by changes or role transitions such as professionals entering management, which often surfaces in managerial narratives. Within organizations, individuals have multiple conceptualizations about themselves and the organization (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). In her study of role transitions, Ibarra found three mechanisms of socialization: 1) observing role models to identify potential identities, 2) experimenting with provisional selves, and 3) evaluating experiments against internal standards and external feedback (1999:764).

Given my interest in managers, I briefly discuss their efforts at identity regulation, which is a form of organizational control (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002) inside selves. Identity regulation refers to intentional efforts of social practices in processes of identity constructing and reconstructing.<sup>42</sup> It is claimed that people use narratives to accomplish their identity goals. Successful stories generate feelings of authenticity and are validated by the audience. I support the view of Ibarra and Barbulescu (2010:137) who define narrative identity work as social efforts to craft self-narratives that meet a person’s identity aims. Discourse is a linguistic recourse that allows users to insert themselves into relations and contexts and is thus related to agency. Framing work as a discourse relates to actions and identity; the agency of

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<sup>41</sup> The forms of such work are visible and materialized, such as dress, office, and objects as well as cognitive strategies such as ideological framing and narratives. People engage in identity work to claim, revise, and alter various identities (Kreiner et al., 2006a; Pratt et al., 2006).

<sup>42</sup> Corporate identity is the perceived core characteristics of the organization. Managers manage multiple conceptualizations about organizational identity (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). Employees are supposed to identify with the leadership discourse within an organization. This sustains feelings of authenticity despite changes. Identity within organizations may be understood as managed; for instance, employee identities can be seen as a form of normative organizational control (Barley & Kunda, 1992; Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006b). The strategies of control include symbols, personnel, and separation of groups.



managers and their ongoing construction of social worlds and phenomena; and meaning-making and building of identities by the use of language or discourse (Deetz, 2003). The use of interviews in my study reflects this approach.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.2.3 Identities and roles

Identities are twofold, serving both as separating marks that differentiate from others, and they also connect them to groups. Identification with a known category provides legitimacy externally, yet an organization also craves to appear unique and attractive. In this study, identity, social identity, and roles are key concepts and distinct from one another. Roles and identities have been linked in various ways as they share the same conceptual history. A role may be understood as resources consisting of “bundles of norms and expectations” (Leung, Zietsma, & Peredo, 2014). The sum of expectations from others adds up to the role. While identity is portrayed as internal, consisting of “internalized meanings and expectations associated with a role,” here, a role is viewed as functionalistic—“an external attribute and is linked to social positions within the social structure” (Stryker & Burke, 2000:289). In my view, this conceptualization is too dichotomized and needs to be nuanced.

Biddle (1986) sheds light on the two main perspectives related to role. The functional perspective considers behaviors of individuals in positions within social systems, whereas the organizational one focuses on how persons accept and enact roles in formal organizations. Both approaches assume predictability and stability. The functional view was prominent in Norwegian studies on church leadership (Chapter 2) as this leadership departs from formal descriptions of work tasks and responsibilities introduced in organizations through reforms. Instead, symbolic interactionism is preferred to understand role as a meaningful social construction.

With time, roles have been criticized for being too static and resistant to creativity and changes (Järventie-Thesleff & Tienari, 2016). Since identity in the recent years is conceptualized as fluid and plural, the notion of role seems more fixed as it is associated with a priori positions in organizations. Roles may range on a continuum from being improvised to scripted. Kunda (1992) cites Goffman and understands role as explicit and systematically enforced prescriptions for how organizational members should think and feel about themselves and their work.

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<sup>43</sup> Ibarra defines narrative identity work as “social efforts to craft self-narratives that meet a person’s identity aims” (2010:137). Narratives have been investigated in macro work-role transitions, passages between roles in organizations, occupations, and professions (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010). Such transitions make authenticity and social validation salient. Authenticity implies integrity of self and behavior within and across situations (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 1998).

A role can suggest a formal position guided by work descriptions. The role concept aligns with the regulative and normative pillars of institutions (Scott, 2014). Professional and managerial roles may be understood as scripted (Barley & Tolbert, 1997:98), where scripts are defined as “observable, recurrent activities, and patterns of interaction characteristic of a particular setting.” Identity work may be understood as how individuals relate to role scripts. The underlying issue is if and how logics give consequences to behavior, how they materialize, and which tasks and responsibilities emanate from each logic.

Observing behavior cannot be equated with studying identity. In the earlier sections, I have explained how reforms have introduced new expectations toward managers and how this leads to changed social identities or roles. This is the evident link to the institutional logic perspective.<sup>44</sup> While there exists rich literature on identity, as reviewed below, role has either been used as an empirical concept, as I do, or it has been taken for granted or neglected. Generally, it is omitted as an analytical concept because it is considered static and representative of structure instead of agency (Alvesson et al., 2008:22). When organizations change, roles often change with them: individuals assume new positions and experience transitions and may need to handle multiple roles (Askeland, 1998). Simpson and Carroll (2008) suggest that role identity contains values, goals, behaviors, and beliefs that are connected to a given role which may be enacted. A person may define himself in alignment with the role or not.<sup>45</sup>

Role transition denotes movement between roles and allows for changes. Newer roles may be strategic responses to inter-institutional (Greenwood et al., 2011) or intra-institutional (Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006) complexity. According to Berger and Luckman (1966), roles represent institutional orders. Roles are “powerful sources of standardization and order, eliminating transaction cost by facilitating routine, scripted interactions and serving to reproduce existing macro structures” (DiMaggio, 1991:81). Job titles, on the other hand, are identity badges (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999) that represent the responsibilities, knowledge, skills, abilities, and characteristics of their holders (Grant, Berg, & Cable, 2014). Alvesson et

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<sup>44</sup> Hampel et al. (2017:13) in their review claim that professional roles are a common object of institutional work. These changes are constraints that frame the work of managers and affect how they prioritize, what they focus on and regard as central and indispensable, and what they delegate. Such elements indicate how logics frame social identities and role expectations.

<sup>45</sup> Simpson and Carroll (2008:43) show an affinity to social interactionism and understand role as “a vehicle that mediates and negotiates the meanings constructed in relational interactions, while itself being subject to ongoing reconstruction in these relational processes.” Thus, roles are means of translations since roles are not exclusively linked to a social position. Instead they are seen as a boundary object, functioning like open containers to be filled with meaning, in line with the symbolic interactionist view (Järventie-Thesleff & Tienari, 2016:240).

al. (2008:15) claim that identity work “describes the ongoing mental activity that an individual undertakes in constructing an understanding of self that is coherent, distinct and positively valued.” Alvesson and Willmott (2002) argue that people engage in identity work with some consequences for role, as identity work bridges self-identities and wider discourses or logics. Such work may entail adjusting one’s identity to a known role (Kreiner et al., 2006a).<sup>46</sup> For example, a study on the Swedish private sector (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2016:147) showed how managerial work is a means of realizing potential, expressing ideals, and a way of expressing identity. Sveningsson and Alvesson (2016:76) found a discrepancy between what managers actually do and how they portray their managerial work. These managers do a considerable amount administrative and operational work, which does not match who they claim to be. This, according to the researchers, reflects a type of management that is heavily into leadership, views coaching as an ideal, and emphasizes relations over tasks. The study shows that management is not only about doing but an interconnection of intentions, agendas, role, and identity.

To sum up, identity is a broad theoretical concept that encompasses social identity and role identity. Yet, social identity is related to the concept of role, which is used by the managers in this study. I find it useful to lean on a functional understanding of role since my study is positioned within a reform context in organizations with formal and regulated managerial positions, including constraint and structure. My stance is that identity work is carried out partly to comply with role requirements and partly to challenge and change any given role. This hypothetically indicates, in turn, that roles and identities may co-evolve (Brown, 2015; Järventie-Thesleff & Tienari, 2016; Simpson & Carroll, 2008). Within the institutional logics and work perspectives, they are two sides of the same coin. Under classical new institutionalism, this would not be the case as formal structure and institutional structure are decoupled (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). In organizations, this process is characterized by how role incumbents attach meanings and work on coming to terms with multiple roles.

### 3.3 Institutional theory and identity

My study deals with individual responses to logics. Of particular interest is how identity is related to agency and constraints. Studies of hybrid professional managers and identity are

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<sup>46</sup> Power (2007:83) regards roles as communication devices indicating priorities, problems and the organizational mandate, with accountability included. Titles bring about new identities and capacities for actions (Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006). Roles “can be considered separate units that deal with particular logics that fragment an organization into various mindsets, practices and processes” (Svejenova & Alvarez, 2017:140). Role labels represent shared typifications (DiMaggio 1991:81). Identity claims are made for specific roles.

particularly relevant because the participants are professionals in managerial positions within the organization. A basic assumption is that they must relate to multiple logics. Focusing on identity will help me clarify how the managers regard themselves as professionals and managers (Khapova et al., 2011). The point of departure is: Who do they think they are and claim to be? It has been assumed that identification with a certain logic will lead individuals to prioritize that particular logic (Johansen 2010; Pache and Santos, 2013), which addresses the relation between identity and role. However, some studies claim that managerial identification with a logic does not necessarily lend prominence to that logic in their tasks (Døving et al., 2016). Like institutions, identity is also a multilevel construct. Logics manifest themselves in routines, structures, practices, and identities (Thornton et al., 2012). Identity may be subsumed under logics, which “represent frames of reference that condition actors’ choices for sensemaking, the vocabulary they use to motivate actions, and their sense of self and identity” (Thornton et al., 2012:2).<sup>47</sup>

March and Olsen (1983; 2010) also linked logics to identity as a component of institutional order. In pluralistic societies, one assumes multiple roles and identities. Both individuals and organizations have coping mechanisms for living with the potential stress of multiple identities, such as compartmentalization, decoupling (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Pache & Santos, 2013; Weick, 1995), and segregating (Hannan & Freeman, 1993). Scott (2014) claims that logics provide an organizing principle in the field, which in turn gives purpose, unity, and a sense of identity. Individuals have many identities, as explained in social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), and may identify with particular roles (Stryker & Burke, 2000).<sup>48</sup>

Logics are clearly related to identity, primarily through identification institutions such as organizations or professions. A collective identity is defined as “the cognitive, normative, and emotional connection experience by members of a social group because of their perceived common status with other members of the social group” (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008:111). When such identities are institutionalized, distinctive logics are developed, which may be competing (Reay & Hinings, 2009). Identity is “a key categorical element of institutional logics” (Thornton et al., 2012:180). Townley (1997) studied professional identities in UK

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<sup>47</sup> Institutional logics are hence an analytical tool to come to terms with complex empirical material and explore how hybrid professional leaders within organizations enact and are affected by logics in terms of identity. Within management and organization studies, identity has been studied in various ways—in relation to managers, professionals, and organizations.

<sup>48</sup> There are various levels and categories of identities: profession, manager, gender, nationality, geography. Role identities are socially defined in relation to others, manager, leaders, and volunteers. Identity claims lead to identity verification, where claims by an actor are confirmed by others (Burke & Stets, 1999).

universities, while Thornton and Ocasio (1999) researched logics and common identity of industry players. Rao, Monin, and Durand (2005) saw nouvelle cuisine as an identity movement. Logics guide actions in specific situations, while identity focuses on the issue of who we are.

### 3.4 Roadmap

In this chapter, I have argued that institutional theory is well suited for this study. I explore professionalism and managerialism as coexisting institutional logics. This chapter presents the theoretical underpinnings of the project as well as its conceptual apparatus. The concepts are complex, and institutionalism risks being an unspecified language for insiders. I have attempted to avoid this pitfall by defining, discussing, and relating concepts. Taking a serious view of institutionalism requires engaging with complexity. Further, I have emphasized how identity and the related concepts—social identity and role—relate to institutional theory. In essence, this chapter provides the rationale for my use of identity work and the perspectives of institutional logics and work. The next chapter will place the study within a meta-theoretical paradigm, account for the research design, and describe how I realized this qualitative study.

## 4 Methodology and research design

The aim of this chapter is to describe and discuss the qualitative research process used in this study. The main aspects of a research *design* are goals and questions, concepts and analytical tools, data, findings, and conclusions (Kalleberg, 1996). Moreover, the research design specifies how these elements are linked to form a coherent whole, which is also called the “chain of evidence” or methodological congruence (Creswell, 2007). By using the concept of *methodology*, I outline the research process and reflect on the choices and principles guiding the study. Through *methods*, I explain how data are collected and analyzed (Schwandt, Lincoln, & Guba, 2007).

The structure of the chapter is as follows. First, I describe the use of case study as a research strategy and reflect on the comparison approach. Then I consider the philosophy of science within my study before detailing the sampling strategy. After outlining how I entered the field and identified data, I reflect on my role as researcher. This is followed by a description of the analytic process, and finally, I define the quality criteria for the research and present the research ethics.

### 4.1 Research design – an embedded, multiple case study

I characterize this study as an embedded, multiple case study. The choice of the methods is guided by the overall research question: *In a context of institutional change, how do managers negotiate their professional and managerial identities?* My study addresses managers’ identities in everyday organizational life. Given the scope of this research, I chose a qualitative approach that gives prominence to participants’ meaning-making and expectations of behavior. Qualitative studies seek to understand the meanings and interpretations that individuals or groups ascribe to phenomena. This aligns with the explorative aspect of my research project, as qualitative studies are especially suited to studying lesser known phenomena. The previous literature reviews (Chapter 2) show this applies to my field of study.

#### 4.1.1 Case study

Research questions and aim inform the choice of design and methods. My study specifically focuses on identities within the micro processes of managerial work, which presupposes an immediate access to the context and actions that are illuminated by actors’ own interpretations. Through rich descriptions I want to gain a thorough understanding of the phenomenon in question, with the overall aim of theorizing. I consider a case study adequate since this kind of qualitative approach offers an in-depth analysis of a given phenomenon,

situated and framed in time and place. Such an approach highlights a multitude of dimensions of a given unit. The study is performed in live settings and natural environments (Gerring, 2007).

There is no singular, unified definition of a case. In the following sections, I will go into some detail to explicate the nature of this research project as a case study. This means iterating between established theoretical perspectives and my particular approach. A common denominator is the recognition that a case study is neither a method nor a technique; rather it is a focus. It aims at understanding something in detail. A specific case is chosen because it is a good example of a social or a theoretical phenomenon and a fertile context for examining it. Creswell (2007:73) highlights some central features of case studies:

A qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), and reports a case descriptions and case-based themes.

A case may be an activity, a process, an individual, or a group (I study two categories of managers). A distinguishing feature of case studies is their embeddedness or context. It is difficult to separate the phenomenon from its natural setting (Andersen, 2013:31), and this presents a challenge of case boundaries. Anticipating this issue, I defined limitations at an early stage, and my initial understanding of hybrid professional managers is grounded in theory. I have also narrowed the focus of my study, which in turn has influenced the study timeframes and scope. These factors support the choice of a case study for examining contextual factors, especially within two organizations. Yin (2009) underlines that case studies provide an understanding of complex social phenomena and are marked by being intensive rather than extensive. In my case, I was keen on understanding the dynamics present within each organizational setting.

Case study designs typically combine different methods of data collection. A case and its context may be considered as clearly defined or bounded entity or a system (Stake, 2005). Because a case is embedded in its environment, the relation with the environment is also taken into account (Flyvbjerg, 2006).<sup>49</sup> Ragin and Becker (1992) explain that a case is a verifiable empirical defined unit, or a theoretical concept construed by the researcher. Wieviorka (1992:15) argues that a case consist of two entities: a practical historical unit and

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<sup>49</sup> This in turn permits case studies to be related to other research strategies as ethnography, which is the art and science of describing a group or a culture (Fetterman, 2010). Case studies are inspired by ethnography's multi-methodical approach based on direct observation of the study phenomenon (Silverman, 2011:53).

an analytical frame; the case and what it is a case of; or an example and a theme. Such “casing” is according to Ragin and Becker (1992:218) a clarification of what the case represents theoretically. This fits well with my dual research interest: providing descriptions of the phenomenon I am interested in and theorizing on it. However, it is not always clear from the outset what the study is a case of. Vaughan (1992:180) notes that “a case becomes the opportunity to consider knowledge about how it is both specific to and representative of a larger phenomenon.” Cases illustrate the focus of the researcher’s interest. In this study, the focus is on the identities of hybrid professional managers studied in terms of the main unit of analysis: their negotiating of professionalism and managerialism in the midst of their everyday work.

My paradigmatic affiliation is interpretive and moderately social constructivist. I aim at theorizing by developing abstract and general concepts that are used to describe and understand the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Case studies are useful in exploratory research with a theorizing scope (Eisenhardt, 1989; Flyvbjerg, 2006; Gerring, 2007; Stake, 2005). As noted, case studies may be classified in a number of ways. As in most qualitative studies, they say something about *how* something happens and is experienced rather than providing explanations of causality. I have a theorizing aim, which is different from mere testing of theory on the basis of hypotheses. Building of concepts is a step toward theorizing and generalization and contains explanatory potential (Swedberg, 2014). Case studies are known to contribute toward this end via new insights and ideas (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

Case studies may have a positivist approach, as suggested by Yin (2009), or an interpretive approach as noted by Stake (2005). Cases are selected because they are unique, or they challenge established theory. Such selections aim at analytical generalizations by theoretical sampling or strategic sampling (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Extreme cases are atypical—they deviate from conventional wisdom and are assumed to give access to rich information. My case organizations are of this character because of their highly professionalized and institutionalized nature as values-laden organizations (Chapter 2). While my approach is primarily descriptive and exploratory, its explanatory potential stems from the theorizing aim. My multiple case study shows a theoretical interest because it goes beyond a single case.

As I will outline later, the initial strategy of data collection was shadowing and interviewing three middle managers within each organization. In this respect, each of the managers could be considered a case. However, in this study, the three deans together constitute one case and the three hospital leaders constitute another case (Flyvbjerg, 2006; Yin, 2009). I wanted to compare the two groups of managers in the organizations and not



individuals. This makes my study an embedded, multiple case study, which is assumed to provide more generalizable and robust theory than a single case (Martin & Eisenhardt, 2010). The sample will be described later (Chapter 4.4).<sup>50</sup> To sum up, this study is best understood as an embedded, multiple case study. Case studies are an ambiguous concept and present a danger of data overload, which can be countered by analytical simplifying. This will be discussed in the next section on comparison, which contributes to sharpen the analytical gaze of this study.

#### 4.1.2 Comparison

I chose two organizations as the contexts to explore one distinct phenomenon: negotiation of identities. Here, I will spell out the rationale for comparison. The overall aim with comparison is to better understand a phenomenon. In this study, I use it instrumentally and not as an end in itself, because my aim is to theorize. Similarities and differences between hospital leaders and church leaders are mapped in terms of how they negotiate professional and managerial identities. In general, comparison is a basic and unavoidable cognitive activity. In mainstream academic research, comparison is a precondition for developing concepts and categories as well as for analyzing, systematizing, and interpreting (Felski & Friedman, 2013). Meaning is construed by contrasting, and identity construction is partly an outcome of comparing oneself with others (Pratt & Ravasi, 2016). In this scholarly endeavor, I have attempted to strike a balance between highlighting the unique in every case and standardizing data collection to allow comparison. Comparison sheds new light on aspects that one takes for granted. Two or more phenomena or fields make it possible to detect characteristic features, similarities, and differences. Comparisons shine the spotlight on uniqueness or commonalities. In this study, empirical variations are linked to theoretical relevance. This is important for my research aim.

Freiberger (2018:288) explains how two units to be compared (*comparandas*) must be selected, and the third element of comparison (*tertium comparationis*) is “the aspect in view of which the units will be compared.” Certain aspects may be common across several cases. The researcher must reason why the cases chosen are interesting and worthy of comparison. I

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<sup>50</sup> The number and counting of cases are well known matters of dispute described in literature. For example, Ragin and Becker (1992:225) point out that “small-N qualitative research is most often at the forefront of theoretical development. When N’s are large, there are few opportunities for revising a casing. At the start of the analysis, cases are decomposed into variables, and almost the entire dialogue of ideas and evidence occurs through variables.” The number of cases selected may be related to the continuum of description and theorizing: “Whereas in an instrumental case study, with only one case being studied, there is still interest in the case itself, with the multiple case study, the focus is unequivocally on the phenomenon of which the case is an example: the focus is on the object” (Thomas, 2011:141).

explain this when describing the sample.<sup>51</sup> Freiburger (2018) explains that a unit, *comparanda*, or cases have both empirical and theoretical properties, ranging on a continuum. In this study, I understand managerial practices as behaviors and actions—what leaders do, with intentions, meaning, and values ascribed to them. Moreover, management is a very complex phenomenon to compare across two contexts, and not in the least because of the term’s polyvalence (Yukl, 2013). Respecting the uniqueness of each case, I find it important to analyze and compare particular components and dimensions.

Each article in this dissertation operationalizes or captures given characteristics that are of particular interest—not the phenomenon in its entirety, but its own units of analysis. Social dynamics as management are complex, yet I aim at identifying and comparing theoretically salient and strategic factors to gain new knowledge. For example, management is a general concept, so every study must delimit its scope. Freiburger (2018:296) agrees that “determining comparandas is a process with many variables.” This means that comparing is not a neutral or objective activity, but one that is situated and intended (Lincoln & Grottanelli, 2012:121). In this study, comparing serves my theoretical interest of exploring how leaders relate professionalism and managerialism in their work.

Comparing involves considering and ranging. It has a longstanding tradition within the history of religion and has, of late, come into discredit for being imperialistic and morphological (Stausberg, 2013). Comparing presupposes a normative standing against which one measures or considers something else.<sup>52</sup> Scholars prioritized the tendency to theorize rather than providing thick descriptions (Van der Veer, 2016). Basically, two main types of comparison involve *generalizing*—seeking to identify patterns in social life with universal validity—and *individualization*—focusing on exploring differences and uniqueness in various societies.

This study examines whether universal categories, such as leadership, can be compared across historical and cultural contexts. And is hybrid professional management identical in two different contexts? Assuming that it is not, systematic comparisons are needed to unravel the phenomenon. In a postmodern context, emphasizing the particular and the unique is important; variation plays a more important role, and hence, comparative studies may also highlight differences (Brynum, 2014:343). Also, in case studies, it is crucial to gain

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<sup>51</sup> This resembles Ragin and Becker’s (1992:8) concept of *casing*, since a case is a case or example of something.

<sup>52</sup> Comparison raises several epistemological questions, like the relation between universalism, relativism, and centrism. According to Felski and Friedman (2013:36), the Western ethnocentric perspective served as a benchmark for research until the 1970s. Such essentialism situated and shaped by the West emphasized general laws and failed to focus on each culture’s particularity.

thorough knowledge of each case (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014; Stake, 2005). How can a researcher actually know that what appears as two similar phenomena are expressions of the same? I have sought to work abductively when faced with such challenges. This calls for maintaining a distance from both universalism and endless particularity and parochialism by reflecting on categorization (Van der Veer, 2016:148).

Making comparison demands a language to describe and analyze that slices through various settings. The understandings and interpretations of the participants have thus been crucial in this study—prioritizing an emic perspective in the data analysis. This thoroughness has resulted in a rich dataset that captures the perspectives of the participants.

However, as the one making the comparisons, I should admit to certain realities. Comparisons have a theorizing effect, through abstraction and removal of details, and a generalizing effect, by the incorporation of other related phenomena. In doing so, I have transformed the messy details into pure categories, which may go against thick descriptions. I have reduced the number of dimensions and focused on the key concepts in the articles: identity, roles, and calling.<sup>53</sup> To sum up, I do not regard comparison as a specific method; rather it is a dimension in the research design that informs data collection and analysis. Comparison is a heuristic device that helped me gain new insights and destabilized aspects I took for granted.

How did I make the comparisons? To understand comparison, a phenomenon must be categorized into distinct elements. The ideal type (Weber, 1949) which I have discussed previously (Chapter 2.2), is a key concept. It does not mirror reality but is an analytical model, emphasizing and exaggerating certain qualities that a researcher may find characteristic. Such homogenizing of heterogenic material is common in qualitative studies. Because reality is endlessly rich and contradictory, ideal types are meant to offer clarity. They are the means, not the ends. This study compares to illuminate given phenomenon: identities of hybrid professional middle managers. Given that contextual factors are important, findings from this study are valid within limited areas. According to Stausberg (2013:33), such studies provide middle-range theories.

In some ways comparison has been helpful in defining the scope of this project

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<sup>53</sup> By abstracting through theorizing, comparisons de-contextualize, de-historize, and de-territorialize (Felski & Friedman, 2013:36). This is also a reason for me to consider this an embedded case study with multiple units of analysis nested within each other. Being true to the empirical material and working analytically is a balancing act. To face this challenge, it is important to have solid knowledge of the context of research. This was ensured through extensive fieldwork and a 360-degree study of the middle managers. That is, I studied actors one level above and below them: their top managers and their subordinates. I have continuously reflected on the casing of the empirical material—what parts of the rich material represent.

better—or fulfilling the function of *tertium comparionis*. I have chosen key data and categories that appear particularly interesting to compare in light of the research question.<sup>54</sup> Comparing involves acknowledging that a phenomenon is embedded in diverse contexts and is better understood in its original context and when juxtaposed with another context. I have chosen a moderate comparative approach, following Lincoln and Grottanelli (2012:123), who recommend a limited number of *comparandas*, to analyze both similarities and differences, and understood each phenomenon in its context. For example, the focus can be studying the phenomenon as such in its own context or comparing how the phenomenon is embedded in its own context. The first approach refers to an empirical contribution with descriptions of contexts emphasizing morphology, while the other is theorizing: what may we know of mechanisms for hybridization beyond the individual cases.<sup>55</sup>

#### 4.2 Philosophy of science

Researchers, informed by philosophy of science, carry many presuppositions into their research. My study is positioned within a qualitative interpretive paradigm, and the research design is an embedded, multiple case study. In this section, I will attempt to relate issues of philosophy to the design of this thesis. The key concepts here are ontology (what is real?) and epistemology (how do we know what we know?). This is referred to as the paradigm or theory 1 level (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). *Ontology* is the “reality status” of the subject of study and consists of basic assumptions about the social world—the worldviews and assumptions in which researchers operate in their search for new knowledge (Schwandt et al., 2007:190). *Epistemology*, the “knowability,” denotes various notions of how to attain knowledge of the world through research. Epistemology refers to the process of thought between what we know and what we see—the relation between the researcher and what is researched (Lincoln, Lynham, & Guba, 2011).

As follows from Chapter 3.1, institutional theory is associated with a social constructivist view of science (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). Ontology within this perspective is fundamentally relativistic. In other words, realities exist in plural mental constructions that

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<sup>54</sup> Can all things be compared? Freiburger (2018:299) claims that there are no epistemological arguments against comparing two units, despite overwhelming differences. The central question is whether such a comparison is meaningful or useful. This depends on the *tertium*, which is the quality or property that both *comparandas* have in common. Freiburger (2018:300) explains, “the researcher’s cultural background, academic training, personal and scholarly interest, as well as his or her individual decisions begin to shape the conjunction of *comparandas* and *tertium* long before the researcher designs the actual study.”

<sup>55</sup> Comparing need not be morphological; it may also be structural, functional, or phenomenological (Brynum, 2014:368). My intention with a comparative design is to identify theoretically interesting cases in time and space.

are social and based on experience, rather than as an objective external reality independent of subjects. Yet, even if reality and truth is constructed locally and specifically by individuals, there exists a collective dimension formed by a consensus of what is real, useful, and meaningful. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:197) summarize it thus: “we believe that a goodly portion of social phenomena consists of the meaning-making activities of groups and individuals around those phenomena.”

Within a constructivist paradigm, epistemology is transactional and subjectivist because the researcher is a co-creator (Guba, 1990:27). Production of knowledge in this study resulted from interactions between the participants and me as researcher. We constructed the findings, leaving a crucial role for interpretation through language. I have explicated that I was interested in how the participants negotiated profession and management. This aligns with the fact that a constructivist view on science is rooted in hermeneutics and phenomenology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005:202). Central to hermeneutics is the belief that meaning-making is a fundamental human activity and that investigating the participants’ multitude of meanings leads to understanding. This strand emphasizes understanding, interpretations, and plurality of meanings, which warrants considering interviews as primary source of data. In this present study, how participants construct and make sense of their work is a key concern.<sup>56</sup>

A seminal work in this relation to meaning-making is *The Social Construction of Reality* (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) (Chapter 3.1). The book describes how individuals seek to understand the world and develop subjective meaning through experience. Drawing on the insights in the book, I have attempted to embrace the complexity instead of reducing the contents of meaning. Acknowledging the importance of participants’ perspectives, I have kept the study open and posed general questions. This allows participants to extract meaning, especially in the interviews. The present study is focused on what managers say and do in their natural setting. Meaning is negotiated; it is not seen as reflecting any objective reality, even if it seems so for the participants (Crotty, 1998). Qualitative approaches derive themes and patterns from texts. Limits are important, like focusing on a single concept or phenomenon. Accordingly, I had to develop an open semi-structured interview guide that

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<sup>56</sup> Historically, a qualitative interpretative approach was a reaction to positivism and the ideal of natural sciences that pointed to differences between physical objects and social phenomena. Social reality is in constant change, and there are several different worldviews. Researchers must, according to this array of thought, seek to grasp how people interpret (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

focused on the information and reflections I sought.<sup>57</sup>

In summary, case studies using comparison differ considerably from the explorative and descriptive approaches as well as from the theoretically motivated testing of hypotheses (Yin, 2009). The aim of the present constructivist study is both to study a phenomenon and to develop general insights. When deciding what to compare, the researcher selects elements that resemble the analytical selection of dimensions constituting a model (Andersen, 2013:96). Case studies enable researchers to find the general in the particular. Data provide meaning to theory and not vice versa. This is suggestive of a bottom-up route, where developing theory and theorizing are central.<sup>58</sup> In the present study, the micro level is the key level of analysis, leading from the particular to the general. In social science, a good case is considered to contain theoretical implications (Andersen, 2013).

#### 4.3 Sampling strategies

The aim with this qualitative study is to attain rich, in-depth knowledge on negotiations of identities. All qualitative sampling is strategic and purposive in the sense that participants offer details that are relevant to the research question (Miles et al., 2014). In this study, the target group or population is middle managers; top managers and subordinates are excluded. The target group is employed in a hospital and in the Church of Norway, which is divided into dioceses. The *comparandas* are thus groups of hospital managers and deans. The units of investigation are nine managers each within two organizations. The definition of focus is aided by the theoretical perspectives, and key concepts are hybrid professional managers and identity.

In my view, case selection consists of three levels. First, I have already justified the case as an example of a problem to be explored (Chapters 1 and 2). In this study, I selected two sector organizations because both are highly professionalized and institutionalized. These fundamental similarities aside, there are several differences that make them eligible for comparison (Chapter 1.1.2), especially the speed of reforms and change witnessed. In heavily values-laden organizations such as these, the introduction of a new logic tends to create

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<sup>57</sup> Berger and Luckmann (1966) describe the process of typifying by categorizing or labelling. This is accompanied by a process of objectifying, where a given meaning is presented in tangible expressions like items, symbols, and language. Institutionalization occurs through habitualization where something is taken for granted (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). What is taken for granted does not necessarily surface in interviews and narratives. Getting to know the participants and their life-worlds by shadowing them provided in-depth knowledge of their assumptions and their implicit perspectives about taken-for-granted issues. These were relevant to the topic of this study.

<sup>58</sup> This is different from the extended case method where macro-level theories are tested at a micro-level, implying a top-down perspective, with the aim of refining theory (Burawoy, 1998).

tensions. Levels two and three concern to the selection of data sources. Accordingly, I explain why I chose this particular hospital and diocese, and third, why these particular managers. Purposive sampling was used to select managers within the case for answering the research question. I now explain why these two specific organizations were chosen and then how the sample of managers was determined.

In-depth details about the two organizations cannot be divulged as it would amount to violating the code of anonymity. While one of the organizations is the Church of Norway, details of the specific diocese have been withheld. I have explained earlier (Chapter 2.3) why these two settings are fertile grounds to explore hybridizations of identities. Third-sector organizations are generally under-researched in terms of hybridization, and I wanted to study faith-based or religious organizations. The Church of Norway consist of 12 dioceses with 7-12 deaneries, each led by a bishop. As I was interested in studying deans as middle managers, all of these dioceses were in principle eligible. The decisive factor was finding a diocese where the deans had room for the managerial dimension of their work and were not consumed by their part-time work as parish priests. That is, I had to find a diocese with no recruitment problems so that the deans did not have to fill up vacancies. This is a well-known problem for deans, though less frequent in the urban areas.

I e-mailed two dioceses with information about the study and asked them to participate (Appendix 8). One of them replied positively, while the other failed to reply despite a reminder. Because I was permitted to conduct the study in the first diocese, I made an appointment to meet with the bishop, the diocesan director, and two other leaders at the diocesan administration in January 2016. My supervisor and I presented the study and talked about the sample. The HR director at the diocese served as my contact person, and the study was discussed at the next meeting of the deans to obtain their approval. Once they approved, I presented the study proposal at the subsequent meeting and discussed the sample with the HR director. I wanted a sample marked by variation, and found that a week of shadowing is quite much. I could not expect that all would be comfortable with a person following them around for such an extensive period.

Within the sample, I wanted variety to avoid any bias. My aim was not to compare individual managers but a group of managers in each of the two organizations. I wanted to ensure that the composition of each group reflected the key differences within the population. The inclusion criteria were as follows: the deans should preferably belong to different age groups, and they should have preferably held their positions for different durations. This was important to capture their experiences with the reforms and the institutionalization of the role

as dean. I also included both genders, though this is of no analytical significance in this study. In terms of deaneries, I wanted to enlist those with different demographics, numbers of members, and located in urban or rural regions. The reason for seeking variety was to avoid any bias toward a singular type of context. I also asked the diocesan leaders to nominate deans who appeared different in terms of theology and management style, but I did not specify this further. In my view, the final strategic sample (of three candidates) captured maximum variation in terms of the mentioned criteria.

Two of the first three deans I approached declined: one had a particularly difficult family situation, and the other had a very hectic work schedule. They explicitly communicated that a week of shadowing would be too demanding for them. I then approached two other deans on the list who agreed to meet with me and discuss the participation requirements. I met with each dean in his or her office for an hour of conversation. It was important for me to provide thorough information. I safeguarded ethical consideration, and they signed a consent document (Appendix 9). I also showed them that the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) had approved the study (Appendix 6). The details of the deans I interviewed are presented in the following table.

Table 4: *Details of the participating church leaders*

<i>Name</i>	<b>Thomas</b>	<b>Ann</b>	<b>John</b>
<i>Age</i>	67	54	50
<i>Tenure (years)</i>	19	6	2
<i>Demography</i>	Urban	Rural	Combined
<i>Number of employees</i>	25	11	23

As with the diocese, I had to recruit one hospital for the study. Because I wanted to study a faith-based or diaconal hospital, my population was limited to just three hospitals in Norway. One of them was located very far from where I lived, and the other was already enrolled in an ongoing PhD project on management. This left me with only one eligible candidate. I assumed that gaining access to a hospital would be more demanding than that with the diocese because of the nature of the work and the proximity to sensitive patient information. I approached the hospital in the same way as the diocese. I sent an e-mail with information about the study to the hospital CEO and asked to meet him along with my supervisor (Appendix 8). We met in December 2015, and the CEO and the HR director expressed interest in the project. They had run a management program for the hospital leaders for some



years, and a few of my colleagues had been involved. At the meeting, we discussed the sample. The hospital had two levels of middle managers between the CEO and the professionals: department managers and unit managers. The hospital followed unitary management, and both the middle managerial levels had total responsibility within their areas. The four-level hospital structure did not equate the ecclesial three-level structure. We agreed that both levels of managers should be sampled, which yielded a population of 11 department managers and about 90 unit managers. The HR director offered some suggestions about whom to approach. I mentioned the same inclusion criteria: both genders, different age groups, different wards, and managers exhibited broadly different management styles. The HR director approached different wards to ensure a varied sample, e-mailing both somatic and psychiatric departments. The department managers were asked to recommend individuals who could participate in the study.

At first, five middle managers representing different wards were asked to participate. One of them declined without reason, and a second declined after gathering more information. I met with the remaining three individually, and they signed the consent agreement (Appendix 9). The final sample details are given below.

Table 5: *Details of participating hospital leaders*

<i>Name</i>	<b>Tor</b>	<b>Kari</b>	<b>Knut</b>
<i>Level</i>	Department manager	Unit manager	Unit manager
<i>Age</i>	68	55	43
<i>Tenure (years)</i>	15	9	3
<i>Field</i>	Psychiatry	Surgery	Medicine
<i>Profession</i>	Physician	Nurse	Nurse
<i>Number of employees</i>	85	33	21

As indicated earlier, I did not want a homogenous sample; at the individual level, I sought variety to strengthen the representativeness of the managers. The selected managers constituted a broad sample. I consider the sample as information-centered, which implies that the selection was based on expectations of their information strength (Malterud, Siersma, & Guassora, 2016). The two organizations in my study are varied in themselves given their different sizes, organizational structures, budgets, and use of unitary management. I have already identified the similarities that make a comparison between the two useful and meaningful. The sampling was strategic and at the same time convenient and coincidental.

These criteria are not mutually exclusive.

While the sample size was dependent on availability within two organizations, I wanted more than one manager from each. Having three managers in each organization allowed for greater variation and a broader basis. Participant consent helped me arrive at this number. I was confident at the time of the sampling that shadowing six managers would be sufficient within the frames of a PhD thesis, especially since it was to be followed by one-on-one interviews. Given that my case study was explorative, I favored more empirical material than less. Sample recruitment was a fairly smooth process, and both the organizations and the managers seemed engaged and interested in the research.

My aim was to develop in-depth, rich, and varied knowledge empirically—as a basis for theorizing (Patton, 2015). A sample that is broad enough and varied to cover a social category ensures representativeness (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2009). Another sample principle is quality: if the information strength is good, the amount of empirical material needed is less (discussed below). The sample described above was for the observational part of the study. In addition, I wanted to interview a broader sample of middle managers. All nine deans in the diocese accepted to be interviewed as did the diocesan administration. In each deanery, I conducted a 360-degree interview of the clergy, including the levels above and below. In the hospital, I also interviewed the managers above and 2-3 of the subordinates.

#### 4.3.1 Information strength of the sample

Information strength is a useful concept in relation to sampling and sample size. The higher this is, the lower the number of participants needed and vice versa. Malterud, Siersma, and Guassora (2016) discussed information strength in interview studies and pointed to five dimensions. The first concerns the aim of the study—whether it is narrow or broad. A broad aim requires a larger sample than the former. The present study is explorative, and the population of middle managers is high. Overall, the aim of this study is moderate given that the research question is complex yet operationalized in the articles.

The second dimension is whether the sample has dense or sparse specificity. My sample had relevant knowledge and experiences that were highly specific, which aligns with the strategic selection described above. The theme of the study was highly relevant to them as they themselves were hybrid professional managers. The third parameter considers if the theory applied is established or not. A theoretically backed study calls for a smaller sample size. This study, I believe, is moderately supported by theory. As discussed in Chapter 2, while much is known about the research theme, it is not without gaps. Moreover, I did not expect the managers to have specific knowledge of the theoretical basis of the study. I

expected them to provide rich accounts, which would need to be condensed in terms of meaning and abstraction.

My assumption that managers are generally well articulated and talkative was confirmed, and relates to the fourth dimension; strong or weak quality of dialogue. Poor interviews need a larger sample. In my view, the quality of dialogue in this study was high. The interviewees provided a vast amount of empirical material. The fifth dimension is analytic strategy. Malterud et al. (2016:4) remarked that “an exploratory cross-case analysis requires more participants to offer sufficient information power compared with a project heading for in-depth analysis of narratives or discourse details from a few, selected participants.” Given that six managers were the key participants in this study, it may be described as a multiple case. The aim was to study negotiations of identities by hybrid professional managers. Collecting data is time consuming, and the researcher may use resources that turn out not to be relevant for the study. The researcher may even lose the overview resulting in a superficial analysis. Writing an article-based thesis has clear limits, and not all data is applied. The actual selection of data utilized in the thesis was determined by the aims and research questions of the articles as well as the overall goals of the thesis.

To sum up, I find that the sample in my study had high information power. The data were adequate within the frames of a PhD project and appropriate to answer the research questions. From the outset, the core data strategy was shadowing the six middle managers for one week each and interviewing them as well as their leaders and subordinates. The preliminary aim was to acquire an in-depth understanding of these managers. On entering the field and observing interactions, I had the opportunity to conduct additional interviews. This additional material was not necessary and was excluded from this project. Some data sources were prioritized over others, and writing articles based on the data was a strong determinant in providing a clear scope.

So far, I have described how the sample originated from an approach favoring observation. Yet, the articles mostly draw on interviews. Importantly, the interviews were informed by observations. By shadowing managers, I gathered detailed knowledge of their work and gained their trust. On the basis of my observations and conversations, I probed for more details. The quality of interviews benefitted strongly from the shadowing. In the development of my study, I foreground interviews because self-understanding and identity are expressed verbally, and not through actions and activities. The comparative approach also delimited the frames of the articles. Within a constructivist paradigm, where knowledge is dependent on situations, a study is not supposed to render all “facts” (Alvesson & Skoldberg,

2009). This detail is of crucial importance to the project: it helped identify the direction for the sampling, as explained above.

The identity trajectory in the material that surfaced during the initial open coding (see below) led me to focus on the interview data. I tried to combine observational data with interview data; however, this proved problematic because of the scope of the article genre. Because the project was already two dimensional—comparing managers within two organizational contexts—it did not seem prudent to crowd the articles with more levels. The table below provides an overview of the data included in each article. The interviews with 18 leaders (9 in each organization) constitute the core data. Six leaders in each organization were interviewed once. The remaining three managers in each organization were shadowed for one workweek each and interviewed twice. Thus, in each organization I conducted 12 interviews across 9 leaders.

Table 6: *Data included in the articles*

	<b>Article 1</b>	<b>Article 2</b>	<b>Article 3</b>
<i>Comparative</i>	Yes	No	Yes
<i>Interviews</i>	9 church leaders (12 interviews, 220 pages of transcription)  9 hospital leaders (12 interviews, 180 pages of transcription)	9 church leaders (12 interviews, 220 pages of transcriptions)  3 group interviews with a total of 25 priests (65 pages of transcription)  8 diocesan leaders; bishop, director, and staff leaders (8 interviews, 110 pages of transcription)	9 church leaders (12 interviews, 220 pages of transcription)  9 hospital leaders (12 interviews, 180 pages of transcriptions)
<i>Shadowing</i>	No	3 deans shadowed for one workweek each  5 days observation of deans' meeting (320 pages of fieldnotes)	No
<i>Documents</i>	Managerial program documents	Minutes of deanery meetings  Strategy plan and policy documents of the diocese (180 pages)	No

#### 4.4 Entering the field and data production

In this section, I describe the process of conducting interviews and observations.

##### 4.4.1 Interviews

The interview data with middle managers is the primary data source of this study. Interviews follow a certain structure and purpose and seek to understand the world—and any given phenomenon—from the viewpoint of the informants (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:21).

According to Kvale and Brinkmann (2009:31), interviews are well suited to an interpretive and constructivist paradigm, with phenomenological descriptions of consciousness and life worlds, hermeneutic interpretations of the meaning of texts, and the postmodern emphasis on the social construction of knowledge. These dimensions made this specific mode of data collection very relevant to my research interest since I wanted access to the informants' intentions and meanings and their interpretations of experiences in the context of management. The research interview produces knowledge.<sup>59</sup>

Clarifying complex phenomena through language can sometimes be a challenge. Interviews provide direct access to interpretations as well as indirect information. They are retrospective, and the production of knowledge in interviews is contextual, narrative, pragmatic, and relational (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009:37). Further, because I shadowed some of the managers, I was better equipped to understand the issues they discussed in the interviews. I also observed the respondents interacting with their subordinates and top managers. This helped develop a critical distance from their interview opinions. This is an example of how observations and interviews with persons surrounding the managers helped me interpret the responses.

While I was aided by semi-structured interview guide, as the project progressed, I became more flexible with the themes. The interviews began with open questions about a normal workweek, tasks, and responsibilities. I also asked questions on relations and levels of management and specifically on profession and management. Slightly different guides were developed before entering the field, and some minor adjustments were made. I tweaked the guides according to the managerial levels (Appendix 7). All the interviews were conducted in Norwegian either in the office or in a meeting room at the participants' workplace. They were recorded and transcribed verbatim by me. In the case of the six shadowed managers, I interviewed each of them prior to the week of shadowing and at the end or shortly after the observation week. All the interviewees were open and eager to talk about their experiences and views. The six middle managers who agreed to be observed seemed interested in the project and were willing to share information. The managers who were only interviewed were slightly less forthcoming.

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<sup>59</sup> Epistemologically, I do not view this in the positivistic sense, which suggests that knowledge as objective "facts" is ready to be discovered. On the contrary, interviews are not neutral, and knowledge is established in this process. This makes interpretation complex, since many factors are involved in an interview (Alvesson, 2010:76). The hermeneutics of suspicion should guide the use of these data. Managers may want to present themselves in the best possible light by giving answers that are perceived to be appropriate or desired.

#### 4.4.2 Shadowing

Observational data is the secondary source of data in this project. Observation grants direct access to actions and interactions. Although the use of observational data is not common in management research (Bryman, 2004), a clear exception is studies on managerial work behavior, as described in Chapter 1.3.2 (Tengblad, 2012). Broadly, studies can be placed on a continuum ranging from participant to passive observation (Fangen, 2010). Shadowing is a type of participant observation (Czarniawska, 2007) and involves following a person around as they perform their daily work. A semi-structured method (Askeland, Blomander, & Aasen, 2015), it offers proximity as well as the chance to ask questions and engage in small conversations. However, it is a time-consuming method of data collection, especially given that managers are busy and have hectic work days.

Czarniawska (2007) discusses how structured an observation should be. To start with, I used a document to track time, activity, participants, place, and contents (Appendix 4). When I observed meetings, I made more or less full records of the conversation, in addition to noting my observations and impressions. In addition to recording the mentioned fixed measures, I made many extra notes. Taking notes during observation was helpful and made my presence less obtrusive: I seemed occupied instead of passive bystander watching others interact. The benefit of observation is that one can capture what people say and do in a context that is not structured by the researcher and uncover their interpretations of events.<sup>60</sup>

#### 4.4.3 Documents

The role of documents in this study is not prominent as they were mostly used as background information. I studied the official documents of each organization, including minutes from leader meetings, information on the internet, and strategy and policy reports. In the hospital, I was granted access to the intranet, which contained the documents available to the employees. The documents captured expectations from leaders of the organization and were therefore relevant to my study on managerial practices. I read them before, during, and after fieldwork to strengthen my knowledge of these organizations.

#### 4.5 Role of the researcher

Within a social constructivist paradigm, I, as a researcher, participate in the production of knowledge. In this section, I describe my educational background and elaborate on my role in

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<sup>60</sup> Emphasizing collective action (Wadel, 1991), this draws on an anthropological tradition from Malinowski and also on the Chicago school. Generally, sociologists often have a more explicated theoretical focus than anthropologists (Fangen, 2010:31). I consider that this study leans toward a sociological approach because of its theoretical positioning.

this project. A research project is situated within a particular institutional context. My university in Norway has a longstanding tradition of training health and social workers. I work part-time at the university's master's program that offers a specialization in values-based leadership (Aadland & Askeland, 2017) and attracts students from health and social fields as well as from FBOs and religious organizations. The institution is owned by a faith-based trust. The PhD program is within the cross-disciplinary realm of "diakonia, values and professional practice," and most PhD projects are empirical. These factors frame the present project and elucidate its profile.

I am professionally qualified theologian and parish priest, and I have a particular research interest in the third-sector and in faith-based and religious organizations. Apart from my master's thesis on values-based leadership, I have published many articles on these organizations (Sirris, 2014, 2015a, 2015b, 2016, 2017, 2018). As a former employee of the Church of Norway, I am well acquainted with its structure and the work of deans. In fact, before re-entering academia, I worked as an administrative manager in a deanery. The Church of Norway has a limited number of deans (106) and clergy (2500). As an insider, I know and have access to the individuals occupying several positions.

On the other hand, my knowledge of healthcare is limited. I neither have relevant qualifications nor work experience in the sector. Thus, my knowledge of and relation to the sectors featured in this study are asymmetric. To balance this discrepancy within the frames of a case study, I leaned toward collecting more data than less during the fieldwork phase. In the church setting, I sought to overcome my own prejudices by spending adequate time on the field. Having a comparative project was in fact of great help. Comparisons between the organizations were inevitable from the very start of the project, and this sensitized me to the uniqueness of the church organization in a new way that would not have been possible without comparing. At the time of conducting the study, I had been distanced from the clergy position for two years.

To compensate my lack of knowledge about healthcare, I read research literature on hospitals and attended classes and wrote exams on health law and health economy. I also read extensively on hospital organization and management to prepare for the fieldwork. I sampled more than the necessary number of managers to gain in-depth knowledge and understanding. The 360-degree design afforded me multiple perspectives on the same managers, issues, and events.

My prior employment with the diocese over a three-year period two years prior to the fieldwork and their knowledge of me definitely played a role in my being permitted to

conduct the study. I knew the three deans that I shadowed, though my former employer was not among them. In the case of the hospital, I had not met any of the managers I shadowed or interviewed. That they were familiar with my university worked in my favor.

During the fieldwork, it was important to inform the people I met about the project beforehand. Before I began shadowing, I obtained a list of the clergy staff working in each deanery. I sent out a short notice about the project and simultaneously invited them to a focus group interview at a specific time and place. I did the same when entering the hospital fieldwork (Appendix 10). When I shadowed the middle managers, they typically introduced me to the people they interacted with. As I followed the managers, I made notes on a sheet of paper (Appendix 4) if I was away from a desk, but during meetings or while in office, I used my laptop to take field notes. If I was alone with the managers, I would ask questions, but I was careful not to interfere more than necessary. I had asked the managers to talk me through their work as they went about completing their daily tasks. In some cases, the managers initiated conversations and seemed eager to talk about their job and share their reflections. I shared a good rapport with all the six managers, and they seemed comfortable with my presence. Though I wanted to shadow them for a week, the period was reduced to 5 days—not always in the same week—because of external meetings, travel, and other engagements. To help me acquire a realistic picture of their work and gain good insights, the managers facilitated my observation of a wide range of activities.

I was excluded from activities only on two occasions: when a dean had counselling conversation with a parishioner and when the same dean was discussing a conflict with two priests. My field role resembled that of an interested apprentice rather than inspector or controller. After the observations, I asked the six managers how my presence had affected their work and interactions. Most said that it did not make any difference. This can be partly attributed to the very nature of managerial work, which is hectic and fragmented. When something happens, managers and employees must attend to it. Things may not be postponed in media res. Some hospital managers speculated that a stranger's (my) presence in the office may have deterred a few employees from knocking on their office doors. I solicited such reflections to better understand the researcher effect. Overall, the managers felt that most people behaved as they normally would, and my presence did not change anything.

In both organizations, the managers are involved in many meetings and are surrounded by people most of the time. I was but one of those many people. To attract less attention, in the hospital, I wore a white coat, which signaled that I was an employee and not a civilian



visitor. This was done at the suggestion of the managers. When in the surgery department, I wore the uniform of the surgery nurses.

#### 4.6 Analytical strategy

Analysis is a core research activity that aims at reducing data and distilling findings from empirical material (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative data analysis is an ongoing process inherent to the design. Case studies pose additional challenges: “analyzing data is the heart of building theory from case studies, but it is both the most difficult and the least codified part of the process” (Eisenhardt, 1989:539). There is no single approach to analysis. A challenge I faced initially has been echoed by Eisenhardt and Graebner (2007:29): “Presenting a relatively complete and unbroken narrative of each case is infeasible for multiple-case research, particularly as the number of cases increase.” In this study, the collected data provided an extremely rich dataset, which could not be fully utilized within three articles. The article genre calls for data that is clear and convincing, almost with a neo-positivistic singularity. However, fitting rich empirical data and theory-building into this mold is a challenge. A typical qualitative study that recognizes variation and complexity in social life runs the risk of being too broad and fragmented.

Alvesson (2010:48) urged scholars to balance openness in the initial phases with the reduced scope in the later stages: “It is sometimes the case that it is not until the empirical study is finished (...) that the researcher has enough knowledge to be able to define and specify what s/he has really studied or would like to study.” In my study, the overall aim and research questions have remained unchanged throughout the process, even though the wording has altered. The initial openness was ensured through a rather extensive process of open coding, rooted in grounded theory, and then axial coding, where the codes were related.

I used the software program NVivo for completing both the steps. All the data were analyzed via conventional content analysis using codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Several codes were consolidated into categories and themes. Though time-consuming, it gave me a broad overview of the material. After ensuring some temporal distance from the fieldwork, I used NVivo (autumn 2016) to deepen my knowledge of the material and identify topics for articles and trajectories that are of special interest. The NVivo coding yielded 83 nodes for the church material and 94 for the hospital data. This work may be labeled open, but it was not neutral; it was informed by my research interest. This work is basically inductive and lets the data speak and reveal patterns, yet it is theoretically informed through my framing of the project and research interest.

I used *Gioia-trees* (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013) and tables as tools for processing the response data into codes, categories, and themes. Appendix 5 shows an example of this from Article 1. In this approach, data are impregnated by theory, which aligns with a social constructivist approach. The researcher contributes to creating reality, which is termed as *bricolage* by Denzin and Lincoln (2005). I consider my study an act of reconstructing reality, not only depicting it. This method is critical of empiricism as I hold that empirical data is constructed and in need of interpretations. This calls for what Alvesson and Sköldbberg (2009:79) term *reflexivity*, interpretation of interpretations and critical considerations. Allowing time for the coding process enabled me to consider the material in light of the research questions and develop theoretical relations within the data.

A case study allows scholars to study various dynamics at different levels and provides a detailed understanding of these levels. In this study, data analysis was conducted with certain broad focus points. The first was tasks, responsibilities, and roles of the managers. All the participants were asked to describe their work, work routines, and an average week. This yielded rich narratives of the managers' own work, insights into the work of colleagues, tasks that differed between actors, and avenues of interaction. After identifying similarities and differences between the two organizations, I used pattern matching as an analytical method. I compared empirical data patterns and matched them to theory (Yin, 2009) to strengthen the comparison. Thus, I developed an in-depth description of the phenomenon and discussed it in light of theory and extant research. I also used cross-case synthesis by extracting data from the cases on the basis of identical code categories. The inquiry was highly iterative and recursive between data and theory, which aligned with a flexible research design.

Another point of focus was identity and the self-understanding perspectives on being a professional and a manager. I obtained insights on these two aspects independently as well as on their blurring. This also comprised the meso level as the interviewees talked about the conditions of working in their specific organization.

In addition to open coding (Appendix 5) of data, I wrote narrative summaries of each interview and observation week. This helped me identify important patterns at an overarching level. I also used the query function to search for key concepts like *identity*, *role*, *profession*, *strategy*, and *calling*. Realizing that the material could serve as the basis of a large number of articles, I decided to revise my research questions and the overall profile of the thesis. This is an abductive process linking theory and empirical material (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009:4). It combines induction, or generalizing from singular cases, and deduction, which involves

applying general laws to singular cases. While data serves as the starting point of the process, theoretical notions are not rejected; rather a dialectic relation exists between the two. Abduction is unavoidable in research—an interplay between inspection of material and inspiration from theoretical ideas. A combination of inductive and deductive strategies, such as starting with a clear theoretical framework that is open to revision and supplementing, is ideal. It allows for adjusting the research *in media res*, which is a hallmark of qualitative studies (Stake, 2005). This permits sensitivity to patterns in the material and relating them to theory. The analytical steps are described in each article.

#### 4.7 Quality criteria

To further discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the study, I reflect on the concepts central to the quality of research. Such criteria are conceptualized somewhat differently within quantitative research, which aims at statistical generalization and focuses on validity and reliability (Alvesson & Sköldbberg, 2009). Validity and reliability can also be discussed from a qualitative perspective. I will first discuss these concepts before discussing my study in light of the taxonomy proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Validity refers to coherence between the research question and data when drawing conclusions. It examines if the empirical material actually addresses the research question. The researcher effect, researcher role, and data sources are all part of this process. Validity, in a broad sense, concerns truth, accuracy, and strength (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:291). It evaluates if the methods are suited to study the object.<sup>61</sup>

Reliability refers to the consistency and trustworthiness of the findings (Bryman 2012:46). It is often discussed in relation to the replicability of the study by another researcher. This is not only dependent on the researcher but also on the design, which is supported by the data (Silverman 2011:367). Reliability examines if the approach is consistent between several researchers and their projects. The observations in this study contributed to its reliability. The interviews and observations were, in my view, truthful and honest and not influenced by what the participants thought I would like to see or hear. Further, the anonymity granted to the participants strengthened the trust between them and me as researcher.

The concepts of reliability and validity are developed within a quantitative paradigm (Bryman, 2004). Lincoln and Guba argue that reliability and validity are marked by a

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<sup>61</sup> Conceptual validity examines whether we measure what we think we measure. Thus, validity reflects quality in the craft of doing research and should be continuously upheld. Validity can be seen a quality control step in all phases of the study. Miles, Huberman and Saldaña (2014) emphasize that there are no definitive rules for how to establish validity in qualitative research. However, the relevant dimensions are the role of researcher, triangulation, extreme cases, repeat, member check, biases, accurate transcriptions, and logical interpretations.

positivistic perspective based on naïve realism. As I have explained (Chapter 4.2), the constructivist paradigm has a relativist ontology and subjectivist epistemology (Denzin and Lincoln 2005:24). Hence, I use additional criteria to ascertain the quality of this research. *Credibility*, according to Lincoln and Guba (1985:301-316) is a key concept, and various factors contribute to it: prolonged engagement, persistent observation, triangulation, peer debriefing, negative case analysis, referential adequacy, and member checking. First, prolonged engagement refers to spending adequate time on the field to promote understanding and mutual trust between the participants and the researcher so that the latter may be aware of any preconceptions. I have previously described the intensity of my interactions with the participants. Shadowing allowed me to clarify misunderstandings and ask questions when needed. Second, persistent observation is needed for acquiring in-depth knowledge, and it challenges the researcher to take a closer look and reflect over what might at first appear uninteresting. In this study, reflections were facilitated by the writing of field notes and memos, both during the fieldwork and after it, in an effort to summarize and analyze.

Third, triangulation refers to plurality of sources, methods, and theories (Lincoln and Guba 1985:305). I combined interviews with shadowing for specific reasons. Interviews are necessary to understand self-identities and social identities whereas shadowing offers insights into behavior and tasks. It helps examine the alignment between identities, behavior, and task structure. I also used document studies to understand formal structures and the impact of rules and regulations. Importantly, the combination of shadowing and 360-degree interviews prevented any myopic findings.

Fourth, peer debriefing refers to insights into the research offered by peers. This was primarily achieved by presenting papers to my supervisors and at various conferences and PhD courses. Thus, I was exposed to various perspectives on my research. Fifth, negative case analysis refers to continuous revision and evaluating one's understanding as a retrospective exercise. It addresses situations in which a researcher may develop or even change his/her original understanding during the research process. In this study, I experienced this with the trajectories to follow when comparing the two case organizations. Sixth, referential adequacy refers to seeking opinions on raw data from others. I discussed and showed a fair portion of my data to my main supervisor. I was careful to anonymize the data to safeguard participant confidentiality.

Seventh, member check refers to sharing of data and findings with the participants. This was not done in this study, except with the six shadowed managers who received transcripts of their first interview before I conducted the second. I was not asked for any

corrections, though some did find it strange to see their own words in print, especially as they had not spoken coherently. The second interview was an opportunity for them to clarify their perspectives and fill out any gaps. I believe this contributed to a more holistic understanding of the phenomenon.

Instead of generalizability, case studies should be evaluated for their transferability, dependability and confirmability (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). On the subject of transferability, Lincoln and Guba (1985) argue that a qualitative study may have transferability if its findings are relevant in other contexts. However, this must be determined by other researchers and practitioners who may eventually find something applicable to their own setting. To aid this process, I have provided thorough and thick descriptions that peers can judge for themselves. Qualitative studies are not statistically representative, as shown in the sample. However, they allow the possibility of analytical generalization provided a researcher considers the dimensions compared in one study are relevant to their own work. It is important to note that particularity, and not generalization, is the aim of qualitative research. Transferability is re-contextualization realized by placing theorizing in another or larger context. Theoretical generalization is the transfer of interpretations (Miles et al., 2014).<sup>62</sup> Transferability assesses whether the findings have meaning outside the researched context—external reliability.<sup>63</sup> The knowledge established is socially and historically contextualized.

Dependability as a quality criterion pertains to consistency and how the findings align with others' research interests and positions. As described earlier, I have sought to illuminate such factors in the above account and submitted the papers for peer review. Finally, confirmability replaces objectivity and refers to data that are grounded on empirical material and not mere constructions of the researcher. To achieve this, a researcher should reconstruct my analysis of the empirical material and reach the same conclusions. However, shadowing and my exposure to substantial organizational data provided me with some tacit knowledge that cannot be fully accounted for. This contributed to my understanding of the fields and the managers and organizations therein. This is basically matter of transparency.

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<sup>62</sup> Case studies often aim for more than mere descriptions such as knowledge relevant outside the case – a purpose of transferability (Andersen, 2013). Yin (2014) elaborates on how case studies may have a deductive side by testing out hypotheses on several units. I regard case studies as supplier of new ideas that may be tested in quantitative studies, which often function as “departments of revision” (Andersen, 2013:14). Most often, case studies are qualitative, historical, and complex rather than statistical and causal.

<sup>63</sup> Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2014) mention three indicators of transferability of conclusions: (1) if the sample is described in such a manner that comparisons in other settings are possible; (2) if the sample is sufficiently varied to be applied in other settings; and (3) whether representatives from other populations would find the results consistent with their own experiences.

Reflexivity suggests that research should elicit several interpretations in order to produce rich and varied results. Thus, it rejects one-dimensionality in favor of plurality and rich data.<sup>64</sup> For example, in interviews and observations, a researcher interacts with subjects, and specific representations are produced.<sup>65</sup> In such cases, the researcher is after facts, meaning, or discourse. This study is situated at the intersection of the first two and emphasizes on the meaning-making dimension of managers. Reflexivity, here, is the process where the researcher reflects on his role as a researcher (Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2009). It calls for transparency and outlining the process and one's own perspectives. Any researcher engaging with the participants may develop sympathy for them and their views. To guard against this, I spoke to a number of actors around each manager. The interpersonal relations between the managers and the actors were good, and I chose not to judge them or offer my own views. If the managers asked for my opinions, I refrained.

The criteria for good qualitative research are somewhat overlapping, as reflected in the discussion above. Together they bring reflexivity and transparency to the fore and highlight strengths and weaknesses in my research project.

#### 4.8 Ethics

Qualitative studies are characterized by their proximity to participants and the close involvement of the researcher. Ethics in a constructivist paradigm focuses on the interactions and relations between the researcher and the participants, as well as the effect of researcher. I notified the Norwegian Centre of Research Data (Norsk senter for forskningsdata) about the study, and they approved it in December 2015, before I started the fieldwork (Appendix 6). I followed all the ethical guidelines relevant to such research as specified by The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committee ([www.etikkom.no](http://www.etikkom.no)). Firstly, all the participants received information about the project both orally and in writing. Participation was voluntarily, and informed consent was obtained from all the participants.

Second, to ensure confidentiality, I anonymized the data and did not divulge the names

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<sup>64</sup> “Reflexivity operates with a metatheoretical structure that guides an interplay between producing interpretations and challenging them. Reflexivity includes opening up the phenomenon through exploring more than one set of meaning and acknowledging ambiguity in the phenomena addressed and the line(s) of inquiry favoured. Reflexivity means a bridging of the gap between epistemological concerns and method” (Alvesson 2010:7).

<sup>65</sup> This must not be taken at face value, which would be a naïve approach. In contrast, issues should be seen from various angles (Alvesson, 2010:108). There may be inconsistencies between what people say they do and what they actually do. Combination of methods is an attempt to come to terms with such discrepancy. In fact, combining interviews with observations is considered a strength (Alvesson, 2010:126). Some interviews may be focused on the contents of a particular issue, neo-positivism, meaning, romanticism, or with language, or localism (Silverman, 2011).

of the organizations or the managers. However, given the small size of the population, it is likely that some readers may know these organizations. But because this study does not express any controversial or sensitive statements or information, organizational-level may not be strictly necessary. During my fieldwork, these matters did not pose a problem probably because they had been explicitly clarified at the outset. Confidentiality also calls for respecting the privacy of the participants and not being intrusive. This was not always possible when I shadowed the six managers for a week. For instance, when the managers made personal phone calls, I usually left the room, or they went elsewhere. Because managers' interactions with others were also relevant to the study, I was not excluded from any exchanges, barring two activities mentioned above. The participants were also informed about their right to withdraw from the study without providing any reasons. The quotations cited in the study cannot be traced back to the sources.

The third ethical principle relevant to this study is the consequences of participation. I found that the managers enjoyed talking about their work and showed interest. Some also told me they were motivated to contribute to the project because the topic of hybrid professional managers was relevant to them.

#### 4.9 Roadmap

This chapter described *how* this research project was conducted. I have described a wide range of research considerations—from the study's underpinnings in the philosophy of science to details of the sampled participants and handling of the empirical material. Choices were made at every stage of the research process, and they were informed by practical considerations as well as carefully vetted theory. Throughout these efforts, I have sought to enhance and maintain the consistency and quality of the research, as explained above. In the next chapter, I present the articles that contain the main findings of this research project. It is preceded by a section on the analysis of research data.

## 5 Presentation of the articles

This chapter summarizes three articles, each of which answers a distinct research question. All the articles are based on the case study detailed in the previous chapter. Article 1 and 3 draw on interviews and comparisons between hospital and church managers. Article 2 is based on observational data obtained from the church context. Article 1 employs institutional logics and studies professionalism and managerialism in relation to identity. Article 2 analyzes how deans perform a specific form of institutional work—conceptual work—by negotiating professionalism and managerialism. Article 3 focuses mainly on identity work by examining how notions of calling mediate between professionalism and managerialism.

### 5.1 Article 1

Sirris, Stephen. Coherent and contextual identities and roles? Hybrid professional managers prioritizing of coexisting institutional logics. (In second time review in *Scandinavian Journal of Management*).

This article explores managerial responses to coexisting institutional logics. It examines whether the logic managers identify with is the same as that prioritized in their role. Although the logic perspective originated at the field level, we see a growing interest in using this lens for viewing intraorganizational settings. The logics perspective functions as an integrative framework for various levels, accounting for change, behavior, actors, and phenomena (Micelotta et al., 2017). Tensions are likely to arise in organizations with conflicting demands situated in a complex institutional environment and at the receiving end of pressure from various stakeholders (Greenwood et al., 2011). I understand hybridity as a response to such conflicting logics, offering a broad repertoire of identities and roles by which managers are informed. The managers may develop dual professional and managerial identities and roles. In this article, the study of hybridity considers contextual factors and managerial agency (Micelotta et al., 2017).

Whereas identity is internal, consisting of “internalized meanings and expectations associated with a role,” a role is viewed functionally as “an external attribute and is linked to social positions within the social structure” (Stryker & Burke, 2000:289). The study contributes to knowledge about how institutional logics coexist within organizations by exploring and providing a theoretical framework of hybrid professional managers’ priorities of a professional and managerial logic in their identities and work roles. Using data from interviews with hybrid professional managers in two contexts—a healthcare setting and a religious organization—this article compares the concepts of *primary* and *secondary identities*



and roles. The research question guiding is: *How do coexisting logics affect the coherence of identities and roles of hybrid professional middle managers in differing contexts?*

I build on and extend the integrative framework of hybridity, provided by Besharov and Smith (2014), to explain how the nature and constellations of coexisting logics relate to managerial priorities. Findings show that logic constructions differ according to the organizational context. I develop the theoretical concepts *primary* and *secondary identity* and *primary* and *secondary role*, which reflect whether the managers prioritize professionalism or managerialism. Hospital managers in this study are foremost organizational managers in terms of both identity and role. A professional logic informs the church managers' identity, yet they prioritize a managerial logic in their role as employers. The article proposes a contextual model of the identities and roles of hybrid professional managers, within the framework of coexisting logics. I call this the identity and role salience framework.

In both contexts, I find that the participants tend to prioritize the managerial role. In short, employer's liability trumps profession. They cannot avoid performing core managerial tasks, despite identifying as professionals. Recently, the functions of middle managers in both contexts have increased, which curbs their professional role. This development mirrors a general societal change where work legislation is growing and regulating the rights and duties in work life. Being an employer is comprehensive and time consuming. This shift represents a strengthening of the regulative pillar of the institution of management (Scott, 2014).

The managerial responses to coexisting logics may better be understood as prioritizing by managers with agency and within constraints. A key insight is that hybrid professional middle managers prioritize *both* managerial and professional logics in their identities or roles, according to their organizational contexts. In the case of hospital managers, their primary identity coheres with their primary role, both aligned with a managerial logic. This is facilitated by the institutionalization of unitary management. They foreground management, characterized by interplaying logics, for improving their organization and also by challenging professionalism. In contrast, the church managers seek to improve their organization by nurturing professionalism.

## 5.2 Article 2

Sirris, Stephen. "The pastors' dilemma" revisited. Religious leaders connecting the spiritual and organizational realms through conceptual work. *Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion*, 2019, 16(3), 290-313.

This article builds on a stream of research in religious leadership concerned with roles

of the clergy, who are expected to offer both professional and organizational contributions. They are by nature spiritual managers; in addition, they may also be appointed as formal organizational managers. This dual nature of clergy responsibilities has been widely noted (Blizzard, 1956). Yet, organization and management theory scholars have mostly neglected religious organizations in their studies (Tracey et al., 2014).

This article explores how deans in the Church of Norway, traditionally characterized by weak managerial control and strong professional autonomy (Askeland, 2016), use the ambiguity of a reform and negotiate between spiritual and organizational responsibilities. Drawing on observational data, this article analyzes how deans as religious leaders and organizational managers implement a clergy reform—the Work Hour Agreement (WHA), which is an organizational procedure that regulates priests' work hours to 35,5 for 5 days a week. I ground this article in the perspectives of the middle managers who seek to conceptualize and understand the new situation and find solutions to the challenges raised by the WHA. This article aims at examining how deans perform conceptual work when interpreting the WHA by bridging their spiritual (professional) and organizational (managerial) responsibilities. I interpret the WHA as a meeting between the logics of professionalism and managerialism.

In this context, the taken-for-granted assumptions and ideas of what clergy (ought to) do in their work constitute the institution of clergy work. When changes are introduced by a reform, the institution is contested. How such processes occur is studied within institutional work, and it is defined as a wide category of purposive action aimed at “creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions” (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006:216).

Against this backdrop, I investigate deans' strategic responses to the WHA and ask the following question: *What characterizes the institutional work performed by deans when implementing the WHA?* I analyze extracts of observational material and interviews that exemplify their efforts to balance the spiritual and organizational demands, which is termed as *conceptual work*. I define this as the reflexive, legitimizing, and integrative efforts initiated by managers to recast the relationality of the logics at stake. Such work originates in ambiguity and aims, through interactions, at institutionalizing the reform. These partially overlapping phases reflect a conceptualizing of pastoral ministry in a slightly novel manner. They highlight how traditional calling is *also* understood in terms of a modern occupation (Percy, 2006). Through such efforts, managers reframe an administrative reform into a professional strategy and seek to conceptualize the institution of clergy as both a traditional calling and an organizational profession (Noordegraaf, 2015). The article contributes by theorizing, through

systematic analyses, on the strategic efforts of religious managers at a micro level within organizations. Thus, it expands our understanding of various types of institutional work and shows how managers mediate between differing demands in their daily work.

The deans conceptualize the pastors variously as autonomous and constrained professionals, while the WHA highlights their employee dimension. Along with increased managerial control, the deans seek internal organizational legitimacy. The “pastors’ dilemma” refers to an inherent conflict between pastoral-spiritual and organizational responsibilities. It is remarkable that the conflict between professional autonomy and managerial control are almost tacit in the material. These disturbing elements hinder an overlap of the two logics, and the deans may be critiqued for harmonizing these tensions. As the material shows, the three deans in this study chose different strategies, which are theorized into the model. The common aim of the deans and the diocese was to take the clergy along, regardless of their personal views. This appears to maintain or modify the tension within the institution of pastoral ministry. It is not surprising that the WHA led to a great amount of conceptual work within the ideological context of the church. The result of this conceptual work is the changed institution of pastors *both* as autonomous professionals *and* as employees. This signifies an integration of the spiritual and managerial realms that may indicate a cultural change.

### 5.3 Article 3

Sirris, Stephen and Byrkjeflot, Haldor. (2019). Realising calling through managers’ identity work. Comparing themes of calling in faith-based and religious organisations. (Accepted in *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 32(2)).

The article builds on and extends canonical and recent cross-disciplinary literature on notions of *calling* in organizational work life (Duffy & Dik, 2013; Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, & Schwartz, 1997). It explores how hybrid professional middle managers understand their work as a calling and examines the characteristics of negotiating calling in their identity work (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003). The article compares hospital and church managers’ notions of calling. Cultural changes and reforms force organizational members to interpret situations and be reflexive and raise questions of identity (Alvesson, 2002). Because FBOs have been secularized, traditional personal beliefs and commitments are now mainly institutionalized (Askeland, 2015). This is not the case with religious organizations, and thus it makes sense to compare the two.

While the logics perspective is implicitly present, it surfaces as the article reports data and draw comparisons on calling situated within profession and within management. Calling

has been researched in relation to profession but less so within management (Ibarra & Barbulescu, 2010; Pattison, 1997). The material is somewhat unique because it gives insights into calling both related to professionals *and* to management. Studying the managers' calling, identity, and meaning-making addresses a research gap in Nordic studies on religious leadership (Askeland, 1998; Hansson & Andersen, 2008; Hernes, 2007), which has been more occupied with descriptions of roles from a functionalistic perspective (Sirris, 2018). With this backdrop, the research questions guiding the article are as follows: *What are the similarities and differences between managers' understanding of their work as a calling in faith-based and religious organizations? How do they negotiate calling in their work?* The article is based on in-depth interviews with 18 managers.

The article discusses the established dichotomy of the classical religious approach and the modern meaning-making notion of calling and argues that the two blur in managerial identity work. This means that the managers use both as resources for the meaning-making of their work. We theorize how notions of calling for these managers function as resources in their identity work, particularly when bridging professional and organizational identities. The managers understand calling as emanating from above, within, and outside.

The main findings highlight similarities and differences. Church managers have a broader understanding of the themes of calling: the spiritual dimension and the calling from God are more evident in their data. For them, calling is taken for granted as a part of the established discourse or religious logic. The church managers relate calling to profession and priesthood and less so to management. The hospital managers do not report the religious dimension and emphasize the managerial calling, emanating from inner convictions, recruitment, and encouragement. The basic similarities are that both categories of managers experience fulfillment through successful employees and when performing core work. Further, both appear strongly committed to the organizational mission. They also have a fundamental orientation to serve. These features portray the hybridization of profession and management, each blending in particular ways in each context.

Calling is not understood individualistically but interpreted within the frames of the profession as well as the organization. It implies identification both with coworkers and with the organization. Calling is conceptualized in a novel way by being historically oriented, pluralistic, and present-oriented. The study offers a comparative perspective. Findings show that calling is not static but an evolving process of constructing meaning in organizational life, which is essentially identity work. The main difference between the manager categories is how church managers explicitly draw on religion, both diachronically through historical

accounts and synchronically, when depicting their present work situation. They view calling as a connection to the activities of God or to the greater good. Calling elevates work beyond rational utility and economic rewards to other-oriented or pro-social purposes. Calling themes are not only personal in the individualistic sense but reflect institutionalized practices in organizations and draw from social narratives, cultural norms, and scripts.

The church managers did not abandon their commitment to professional ideals or “the common good” on becoming managers. Such accounts function as sources of legitimation and motivation in the everyday life of managers, offering them fulfillment and challenges. Calling reflects commitment toward the organizational mission and service as well as cosmopolitan ideals of professionalism. It also reflects organizational ethos, values, and identities. As such, calling is an important site of negotiating organizational, professional, personal, and managerial identities. The calling concept appears as comprehensive, and the approach adopted in the study has been open-ended in order to let the managers elaborate on the salient issues in their work. The comprehensive use of calling may be criticized and appear as a sensitizing concept, which engages managers in meaning-making in these organizations.

#### 5.4 Roadmap

The starting point that led to the research question and aim is that professionalism and managerialism within organizations are changing. Managers experience changes in their external and internal contexts because of both exogenous and endogenous forces (Chapters 1 and 2). This has specific impacts on their everyday work. Through the analytical lens of institutional theory (Chapter 3), I have studied how institutional changes affect one specific phenomenon: the negotiation of professional and managerial identities. The embedded, multiple case study (Chapter 4) provides insights into how managers respond to and enact logics at a micro level, especially when performing identity work and reflecting on who they are and what their roles are. The articles analyze these responses and efforts of managers by outlining three specific modes of negotiating identities emanating from the two logics: identity-role salience, conceptual work, and calling as identity work (Chapter 5). I describe these outcomes as the hybridization of logics. This next chapter relates the articles to the overall research question of the study.

## 6 Discussion

As outlined in Chapter 5, the individual articles provide partial answers to the overall research question: *In a context of institutional change, how do managers negotiate their professional and managerial identities?* To offer better clarity, this chapter discusses and explains the main findings of the thesis, using theory and other relevant research. I critically review the results of the articles in terms of the theme articulated in the research question and shed light on some aspects that are implicit. These are important for uniting the individual articles into a coherent whole and developing the specific contribution of this thesis.

### 6.1 Explicating the main argument

Overall, the articles examine the dynamics between logics and identities by studying institutional changes and negotiation. This section discusses the main findings by relating them to changes, which occur at several levels. To reiterate, on the one hand, I have elaborated empirically and theoretically how logics manifest themselves in identities and how this in turn triggers negotiating. For example, the exact combination of professionalism and managerialism for a hybrid professional manager is not a given. It plays out differently depending on the individuals and their contexts. The outcome is stronger or weaker identification with the two logics (Article 1). On the other hand, actors shape the perceived relation between logics as they modify and make sense of them. Coexisting logics may imply a state of conflict or complementation. This is also a matter of interpretation and strategic efforts (Article 2). Figure 3 shows the key concepts and the three modes of negotiating identities, which constitute a synthesis of the main findings.

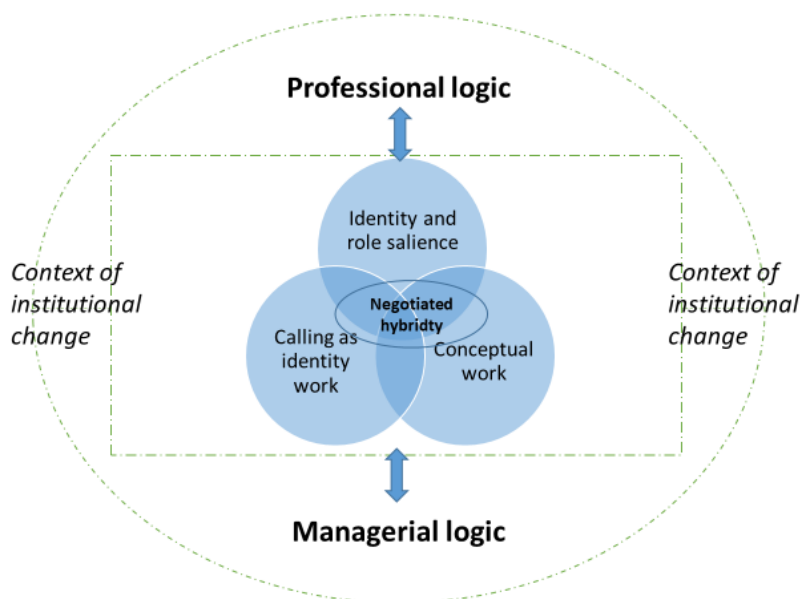


Figure 3: *Modes of negotiating identities*

The arguments in this chapter are structured as follows: Section 6.2 deals with managerial responses to change, namely, negotiating professional and managerial identities, which in turn also contribute to change. The three modes of negotiating identities represent the analytical tools to differentiate and refine the meeting of professionalism and managerialism with hybridization as the outcome. Section 6.3 interprets the findings of increased managerialism using insights from fundamental institutional changes that facilitate the growth of the managed organization. This disruption triggers identity work within organizations because changes facilitate construction and necessitate negotiating in distinct ways. I specify the micro-level negotiating of institutional logics. I adopt a critical stance toward the concept of hybridization, which may be understood as a distinct kind of institutional work. In 6.4, I explain how negotiating identity becomes important when facing changes characterized as new constellations of logics.

## 6.2 Managers responding to institutional change

All the three articles present facets of institutional changes, addressed as the constellation of logics re-constructed by managerial identity work. My approach is to study how actors interpret and enact logics in terms of a specific characteristic, namely identity. Article 1 testifies to a logic shift: a managerial logic was introduced and became established within the case organization. Article 2 studies changes marked by a clear event—the introduction of a new work hour procedure. This is a subtle arrangement that is open to interpretations in terms of its significance. Article 3 shows long-term developments as work is understood as a calling both in the modern meaning-making sense and in the traditional religious sense. Seen together, these processes represent transitions in various ways. Negotiation is sparked by changes in the balance between the logics themselves. This necessitates a response by negotiating and enacting the new constellation. Change is not something exterior; rather change permeates these organizations in characteristic ways that I now discuss.

### 6.2.1 Change as institutional alignment

A key finding of my study is precisely that managers tend to safeguard *both* logics, as I note in Article 1. Yet the salience of the logics is changed. Institutional forces heighten managerialism through employer's liability. The deans' anchoring in professionalism comes from the relational network, part-time connection with professional work, mono-professional leadership, collegiality, professional knowledge, and values. The hospital managers are strengthened by hierarchy, full-time managerial tasks, multi-professional leadership, and total responsibility. However, they are anchored in professionalism through knowledge and values.

According to institutional theory, managers as well as organizations respond to changes in their environments (Scott, 2014). I applied this perspective to analyze how logics coexist within my case organizations. The very idea of coexisting logics facilitates agency and potential for change to resolve any friction between the logics (Johansen & Waldorff, 2017). This idea resonates with my research data. I use logics as conceptual tools to understand how managers relate to the institutions of profession and management. When these two logics meet and manifest in managerial work, managers through agentic efforts interpret and perform institutional work. By employing two trajectories within institutional theory, logics, and work, I analyzed how managers negotiate their identities. How institutional change is analyzed in this thesis particularly concerns how managers work on shaping and interpreting logics.

My study shows how the logics perspective has the capacity to explain institutional change. According to Micelotta et al. (2017), institutional change deals with how institutions are created, modified, or transformed. This definition implies a dynamical understanding of logics, enabling actors to choose elements and co-construct configurations of logics. Whereas classical new institutionalism basically viewed change as the product of exogenous disturbance, agency and institutional work foreground incremental practices (Micelotta et al., 2017). This generates increased complexity (Alvehus & Andersson, 2018), which is also evident in my data. The managers in the case organizations were required to respond to somewhat contradictory prescriptions in the areas of identities and roles emanating from each logic. Their responses were marked by embedding of changes into well-known institutions. Importantly, none of the changes were revolutionary, rather they were integrated into existing templates and connected to present arrangements. All three articles document this.

Particularly, as shown in Article 2, the managers put efforts into conceptual work that serves to legitimate and integrate a new procedure into the church organization. This study also showed that implementation in highly institutionalized and professionalized organizations progresses gradually. Conceptual work serves as the means of translation between the two logics. This work answers the research call to show how actors use “rhetorical strategy to legitimize institutional change” (Suddaby, 2010:17). This is in itself a strong argument for the case of institutional alignment in religious organizations.

The importance of context cannot be undermined: evolutions in the environments stimulate changes in organizations and practices. There are differences between a faith-based health organization and a religious organization. Religious organizations may also be analyzed through a religious logic, which is generally considered under-researched (Johansen



& Waldorff, 2017:60). A religious logic is described as dominant and not easily compromised, rather it buffers against other logics (Gümüşay, Smets, & Morris, 2019). Such buffering in turn leads to very slow institutionalization processes and resistance toward changes.

Micelotta et al. (2017) claim that institutional complexity may in some contexts be a structural condition. I have argued in Chapter 2 that this is the case in the two organizations I studied.<sup>66</sup> Article 1 describes the hospital as more complex and pluralistic than the church. Importantly, change in these organizations is perceived according to the viewpoint of the actors. The two case organizations are in different phases in terms of implementing managerialism as shown in Article 1, yet both are marked by historical traditions that facilitate long processes of institutionalization and institutional alignment (Articles 2 and 3).

My comparative study shows some striking temporal differences between the case organizations. The process of institutionalizing management has progressed further in healthcare. Article 1 on identity and role salience shows that the deans embrace their professional identity, whereas the hospital managers emphasize their managerial identity. This empirical finding is contrary to the established wisdom (Currie, Lockett, Finn, Martin, & Waring, 2012; Reay & Hinings, 2009; Spehar et al., 2012; Spehar & Kjekshus, 2012). Studies on hospital managers have previously emphasized the professional identity of hospital managers (McGivern et al., 2015). However, I find that the hospital managers, both nurses and physicians, strongly identify as managers.<sup>67</sup>

The main trend suggests a widening of the management institution with hybrid professional managers distancing themselves from the professional part of their work. They do this by delegating to others, which is a contested process. The data showed different individual stances among each category of managers.

Overall, I have shown how the cohabitation of professionalism and managerialism triggers work and efforts, and in turn, new managerial identities are formed. Managers are in need of resources that help them interpret who they are. The context in which this develops plays a crucial role, as seen in this study exploring managers within specific types of organizations.

Identity and role, outlined in Article 1, are concepts that mediate between different

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<sup>66</sup> The very configurations of professional and managerial logics are highlighted by the position of these organizations at the intersections of institutional realms or sectorial boundaries. The context will be discussed further in chapter 6.3.

<sup>67</sup> See chapters 2.3 and 2.4.1 for underpinning this argument, which I do not generalize outside the specific hospital.

levels, and are well suited to institutional theory. It is evident that identity and role are not individual-specific notions but connected to institutional forces. Article 3 addresses this intersection through the notion of calling. The efforts of managers and their organizations must hence be considered in relation. The negotiating of identities occurs at several levels. At the macro level, managerial negotiating of identity and role plays out in environments that are changing due to reforms. This generates changes in terms of expectations toward managerial roles. Additionally, managers are bound to be faced with identity questions. This is especially relevant in Article 1, which analyzes identities and roles. A central underlying question is: When tasks and responsibilities change in one direction, does identity follow? The articles show that negotiating of identity, or identity work, is a type of change characterized as institutional alignment.

In summary, the empirical material analyzed in all the articles clearly shows that profession and management are perceived as two distinct phenomena, implying both different tasks and responsibilities as well as somewhat different identities, priorities, preferences, and inclinations. From the managers' point of view, a central part of their work is to sustain both dimensions. I refer to these dimensions in an ideal typical manner, and the choice of two main logics may be nuanced. This dichotomy is, however, unlocked and clarified in the articles and the findings. The overall picture shows that a managerial logic prevails. Scott (2014) sheds light on this development by interpreting the pillars of institutions in the threefold way: regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive. Managerialism and professionalism rest heavily on the regulative pillar, which is easier to measure and control. Normative and cultural dimensions are not that easily measured and hence not prioritized. Managerialism thus has the advantage of its regulative gravity. The next question to be addressed is the conceptualization of hybridity in relation to change.

#### 6.2.2 Change and negotiated hybridity

In this section, on the basis of the findings, I argue for the notion of negotiated hybridity rather than integrated hybridity. A core finding of this work is that the managers in each organization display various inclinations toward professionalism and managerialism. A “perfect” integrated hybridization does not exist. Integration denotes too smooth a relation between the two logics, which is not empirically supported by my data. Therefore, I distinguish between the concepts of integrated hybridity and negotiated hybridity and discuss evidence obtained for the latter.

In Article 1, I conceptualize hybridization as a continuum: from pure managerialism and pure professionalism to a pure hybrid. The exact combination of logics must be studied in

context. In doing so, scholars would benefit from delimiting the scope of research and defining precisely the unit and the phenomena and attributes that are hybridized or blended. In Article 1, I argue that the term hybridization should be applied to specific attributes. Most studies on hybridity of logics are at the organizational level. Some organizations, like hospitals, that are hybrid by definition are dependent on the combination of managerialism and professionalism to function (Pache & Santos, 2013). If the two logics were not present, my case organizations would not function in their present form. The term hybrid professional manager is thus a long established reality in many sectors (Chapters 1 and 2).

The term hybridity—which implies the coming together of two opposites that normally do not blend—is sometimes overused (Noordegraaf, 2015). Its result is a novelty, often marked by innovation. The abnormality of a hybrid does not cease, as this concept originates in biology and refers to something “unnatural”; a hybrid is not sustainable over longer periods of time. Metaphorically, the concept of hybridization should be critically assessed. The very terminology implies that professionalism and managerialism are opposite and contradictory. However, my study shows that they in fact coexist and that the negotiating of these logics is deemed beneficial to the organization (Articles 1 and 2). Hybridization may be connoted as a blend, mix, overlap, or combination. My main use of the hybridization concept is the outcome of relating logics. Hybridity very often uncritically refers to mere coexistence even when the outcome is not a hybrid or novel in the strict sense. I nevertheless find the hybrid concept useful because the managers I study *de facto* are hybrids, and their efforts at being both professionals and managers constitute everyday organizational life.

What is called hybridization may in fact be two logics residing within the same organization but not interacting. I set out to explore whether the managers in fact hybridize or rather compartmentalize the logics of professionalism and managerialism. Article 1 shows that only one of the two logics enjoys prominence in various dimensions of work, which I studied in terms of identity and role. Article 3 showed that these two logics could vary when specific characteristics are examined. For example, the hospital managers understood both professional and managerial work as a calling, whereas the deans understood calling as primarily related to priesthood, which pertains to profession and not management. As I have emphasized, the managers discussed professional and managerial issues separately, which indicates compartmentalizing rather than integration. This finding strongly suggests that although the analytical apparatus is unknown to the participants, their experiences and reflections are close to the phenomenon examined. In this regard, my study has an emic perspective. For example, management was, to a large degree, associated with unpopular

administrative work that *had* to be done. Issues with distribution and coordination of work had budget implications and were of importance to the managers. The empirical material shows that the managers in both organizations accepted their actual workload and its contents but had preferences and notions about a certain balance. These notions varied to some degree, but as all articles show, they could not avoid central tasks on the grounds of their orientation.

Hybridization, in my view, is best understood as configurations of how logics actually manifest. These are ideal types at the discursive level, but they may not be that separated in real life. In this study, observations showed that the managers performing tasks typically did not have problems in distinguishing them as either professional or managerial. Yet, there were some intermediary tasks like professional administration that could not be easily classified. I study this as partial autonomy, where managers by embedded agency construct logics. An important finding of this study is that hybrid professional managers are both professionally and managerially oriented. This finding deviates from that reported in other studies, which tend to emphasize one over the other (Larsen & Slåtten, 2014; Møller, 2009). A premise that is not detailed is that when logics are hybridized, operationalization must be researched (Article 2). In sum, my research data show a negotiated hybridization, which is a salient contribution of this thesis.

### 6.3 Changing toward a managed organization

An overall finding, expressed across the three articles, is that the participants experienced management as increasingly more important and time consuming—something that superseded a part-time job. Their emphasis was clearly in favor of management, not because of personal preferences but for reasons of accountability. The very idea of organization is also of greater importance. This section discusses why managerialism is so important for my case organizations. Here, I explore how managers negotiate identities informed by professionalism and managerialism. I interpret these findings by drawing on institutional theory, which highlights changes at the macro level, where the organizations are embedded. While managerial dominance is partly the result of NPM reforms, which are being implemented currently, my study also examines factors at the micro level and the managers' responses to institutional logics, as discussed in 6.2. The managerialism discussion cannot be isolated from wider cultural developments that surround organizations, which is a dimension of context (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

I studied two case organizations: one religious and the other faith-based. In Article 2, I discuss the balance of the sacred and the secular. This duality is described as “the pastor`s

dilemma.” Observational data reveal that the deans have increased managerial authority. The two structures—the spiritual realm and the organizational realm—provide their institutional work with a twofold focus. This could eventually lead to internal secularization. A managerial structure tends to diminish religious authority and promote societal organization, as these institutions pursue non-religious templates and structures (Chaves, 1993).

Etzioni (1975), in his seminal work, understood religious organizations as normative and using symbolic means of control. The central issue of authority stems from this overlap between religion and organization, as authority is inherently related to beliefs. This is also the basis of Chaves’ (1993:148) comment: “The heart of religious organization is *not* religion, but religious authority.” As Weber noted, authority within religious organizations is not rational-legal, rather charismatic and traditional (Bartholomew, 1981). However, organized religion has bureaucratic (legal-rational) authority. The Nordic countries have long witnessed an overlap of authority between the state and the church, whereas managerialism is a recent entrant to the mix. My research data show that employer’s liability and managerial authority are gaining more importance in the church organizations. This in turn may indicate that religious organizations are secularized from within, perhaps accompanied by the lowered importance of religious authority. The articles capture the deans’ unease with integrating the two logics and types of authority. This is also evident in dichotomizing language and practices, in contrast to what I found in the hospital context. These characteristics make the two settings fertile grounds for researching institutional complexity.

Thus far, I have highlighted the relation of professionalism and managerialism from an institutional perspective, focusing on macro cultural pressures that influence organizations and provide managers with resources and tools for construction. I now turn my focus to the subject of identity, placed against the background of previously shared information. FBOs are characterized by being purpose-driven. Managers are carriers of values that express the organizational mission and identity (Jeavons, 1992). Their Christian faith-base, to various degrees, shapes their core work and self-understanding. Despite changes and reforms over the years, these organizations still encompass religious imagery. For example, both the hospital and the diocese I study have experienced a call for a shift to a more instrumental approach promoting efficiency (Askeland & Schmidt, 2016). In FBOs, institutional work related to values may serve to connect the sacred and secular spheres. This is prominent in diaconal hospitals which offer healthcare like other hospitals and cannot demand that employees are religiously committed (Aadland & Skjørshammer, 2012; Askeland et al., 2019). I assume that the development of the church as an organization extends its repertoire of meaning-

making resources in today's work life. This development helps managers in both organizations to access various sources of motivation and even renew their traditional faith-based and religious identities—setting the stage for identity work.

#### 6.4 Identity work as change

The growing importance of negotiating identity is a consequence of the managed organization and the general strengthening of agency as a cultural model. Older and traditional institutions are adopting the template of human service organizations (Bromley & Meyer, 2017; Meyer & Bromley, 2013), and this is triggering identity work in these organizations. How third-sector organizations, like FBOs, seek to maintain their identity in face of increasing formalization, has been widely studied (Knutsen, 2012; Knutsen & Brower, 2010; Suárez, 2010). Such studies show how traditional values and ideology are maintained alongside instrumental pressures and within coexisting logics. As discussed above, the negotiating of identities is triggered by reforms and organizational changes that disturb the coexistence of logics (Micelotta et al., 2017).

##### 6.4.1 Contextualization of professional and managerial identities and roles

As indicated in Article 3, middle managers hold organizational positions, fulfill certain tasks, and represent the organization and not only themselves. The research data in this study confirmed that managers are committed to their organizations and are associated with the organizational identity. They face a wide array of responsibilities and expectations. Their job is constrained, yet they are also agents in forming and shaping their work. The context of this case study is a faith-based hospital and a religious organization. As the articles have shown, managers in the case organizations frame work, both professional and managerial, in novel ways that are aligned with work life in general and foreground meaning-making in particular. These commonalities within the case organizations represent a blurring of boundaries between sectors and general isomorphic tendencies. Hybridizations are occurring across sectors, and the principles of empowering rights and scientific rationalization (Bromley & Meyer, 2017) make an impact, irrespective of sectorial uniqueness.

In this study, I have emphasized the significance of professionalized and institutionalized contexts. To discuss the implications of my findings, I draw on the study by Sveningsson and Alvesson (2016:336) on middle managerial identities in knowledge-intensive private businesses. Their study offers an interesting comparison framework and illustrates how the managerial discourse—or logic—is evident in organizations. Unlike in the study by Sveningsson and Alvesson (2016), the manager participants in my study have not

abandoned professionalism. They are indeed hybrids—close to professional work and still maintaining a professional identity. Interestingly, both studies underline that management is an identity project—something that surpasses the idea of a mere job or livelihood. The meaning dimension of work is highlighted in Article 3 and understood as a postmodern feature. Sveningsson and Alvesson (2016:76) found that managerial work gives managers a way to realize their potential and express the ideals to which they adhere—or their identity. A key finding in my study is that the managers are in fact hybrids, integrating their managerial position with professional identification and work. Professional work is not in principle left behind. Their motivation for becoming managers is not to escape professional core work but perform managerial work in addition. I have discussed the three negotiating modes—identity-role salience, conceptual work, and calling as identity work—as central to linking professionalism and managerialism in terms of identities.

In my study, the managers are deeply rooted to their organizations and committed to performing their core work. My case organizations are not a good example of pure managerialism, which is weakened both by the type of professionalism and the nature of these organizations. The managers in my study relate not only to their coworkers but also to the recipients of the organizational services, namely the patients in the hospital and the parishes in the diocese (Article 3). They seem to identify strongly with their profession even though they spend much of their time and efforts on managerial tasks, especially administration. This multi-level identifications are the hallmark of these managers—it helps them bind themselves and their work into a coherent whole. Such integration though challenging does not introduce conflicts or doubts about their primary work. The managers experience calling as making meaning *both* as professionals and as managers.

I found in my study that the managers downplayed or spoke moderately about their manager positions. This may be because they are motivated by the ideals of serving and not by power. Article 3 points to a salient feature of my study: the extent to which managers discuss relations, engage in role modelling and are oriented to serve their employees and organizations. This is possibly because faith-based and religious organizations exist to serve the greater good and embody the values of their founders (Jeavons 1992). This finding is also evident in previous studies of managerial work in the Church of Norway (Askeland 2015). Managers are fundamentally relation-oriented, even if they have various roles and tasks (Hansson and Andersen 2008; Hernes 2007). There are various explanations for why role modelling, which is a part of relation-orientation, was crucial to the two organizations. First, it reflects a trend in work life (Alvesson, 2002). Second, the managers were professionals

themselves and had not left this identity; rather they were hybrids—organizational managers with professional training and experience (Sirris 2018).

### 6.5 Additional methodological and theoretical contributions

In this chapter, I have reviewed the three articles included in this thesis, by concentrating on negotiating dynamics between logics and identities. By doing so, I have highlighted certain underlying themes that were not explicated within the strict frames of the articles. Key findings have been highlighted and placed in the context of relevant and recent research.

Context and comparison are at the center of the two key methodological contributions of this thesis. First, this thesis responds to several calls for contextualizing research by highlighting micro-level and intraorganizational phenomena (Chapter 1). Chreim et al. (2007) underline that macro and micro research should be but have not been integrated. This necessitates research in contexts exploring how the constellations of logics play out (Fulop, 2012). My multi-level approach helps me specify both the case dimensions and the phenomenon and contextual dimensions. Empirical studies on micro-processes providing fine-grained analysis are needed (Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013). Further, I answer the call of Micelotta et al. (2017:1899) to map how macro logics are understood at a micro level.

The second main methodological contribution is the extensive use of comparison, facilitated by an embedded, multiple case study. Comparison is conditioned by contextual awareness. Scholars have demanded more comparative studies of managers or professionals within the field of organizational studies (Alvehus & Andersson, 2018; Askeland, 2015; Micelotta et al., 2017; Scott, 2014; Townley, 2005; Willmott, 2005) and in the sociology of professions (Molander & Terum, 2008). Micelotta et al. (2017:1906) note that “comparative cases are essential if we are to develop a better understanding of who and why we observe some outcomes, but not others, given similar contextual conditions.”<sup>68</sup> The comparative approach of my study is inspired by Smets, Morris, and Greenwood (2012), who stressed the need for such research in exploring how field-level logics are enacted in micro-level practices in different contexts. Pinheiro, Geschwind, Ramirez, and Vrangbæk (2016) explicitly called for comparative studies using institutional theory. Usually, a drawback with comparisons is that individuality is less focused. However, in this study, the amount of material obtained is sufficient to provide for individual participant descriptions.

The use of an embedded, multiple case study shows that observations are useful in

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<sup>68</sup> They also argue, on the basis of their review, that future studies of institutional change may benefit from a multi-method approach.



studying how institutional logics manifest (Reay & Jones, 2016). Yet this method has seldom been applied mainly because it is time-consuming. Further, most research on the topic has been quantitative. I sought to avoid the pitfall of using context as a catchall container. McLaren and Durepos (2019:4) criticize positivistic and acontextual research that reduces context to assumedly controllable variables. Qualitative research allows contextualization and prizes movement over stability and holism and complexity over fragmentation. I find it important not to discount such knowledge for its social context.<sup>69</sup> Taking embeddedness seriously has led me to detail the organizations and utilize context as more than a backdrop.

In terms of theoretical contributions, I set out with an aim of going beyond description in order to theorize the negotiating of professional and managerial identities. The overall research question with the term “how do managers” encapsulates both description and theorizing. The key theoretical contribution is the analysis of the three negotiating modes that managers employ in hybridizing logics: identity-role salience, conceptual work, and calling as identity work. I have analyzed these as more or less active efforts and not as passive responses. Negotiations as institutional work has been neglected in existing research (Helfen & Sydow, 2013). In this study negotiating implies dialectic where confronting logics are synthesized. Negotiations show how agency and constraints are related in interactions.<sup>70</sup>

In my view, institutionalism, despite its complex and over-packaged terminology, is suited to my study. The main challenge with institutionalism is clarifying the meanings and contents of terms. First, its explanatory power is tied to adopting a multi-level approach. Institutional theory is concerned with explaining changes that affect several levels. This thesis also aims at showing how the macro, meso, and micro are related. This objective is achieved in all three articles, and institutional theory has served as the key lens to study such phenomena. The theoretical construct of identity is also common to all three articles, yet variously utilized. Identity is a multi-level construct and relates to profession, management, and organization. It has been defined and referenced at different levels throughout the articles. In this thesis, it is primarily studied at the micro level, as I examine managers in organizations. In alignment with institutional theory, however, it is crucial to investigate how

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<sup>69</sup> According to Sandberg and Tsoukas (2011:341), this ignores three problems: “(1) it underestimates the meaningful totality into which practitioners are immersed, (2) it ignores the situational uniqueness that is characteristic of the tasks practitioners do, and (3) it abstracts away from time as experienced by practitioners. By doing so theories developed within the framework of scientific rationality fail to do justice to the logic underlying practice.”

<sup>70</sup> Similar efforts have been addressed through different terms (Chapter 3): mediation (Waring & Currie, 2009), hierarchization (Arman et al., 2014), sensemaking (Bévort & Suddaby, 2016), re-interpretation (Reay et al., 2017), and co-optation (Andersson & Liff, 2018).

the macro level applies at the micro level. Czarniawska and Joerges (1996) argue that a water-tight division between these two is not productive. This is also because a managed organization is agentic and responsible. Commitments and identifications are spread across several levels (Meyer & Jepperson, 2000). Emphasizing the micro is, irrespective of theoretical anchoring, an expression of interest in people's actions and choices. The free actor has limited validity within institutionalism, which departs from the taken-for-granted approach, as I outlined in the theory chapter. This balancing act avoids the methodological individualism and the "iron cage" of neo-institutionalism (Suddaby, Ganzin, & Minkus, 2017). Actors are both constrained and free, and they are reflexive in making themselves into something other than "cultural dopes.

Second, in my case, coexisting logics are relevant as context. A key finding is that managers in these organizations relate to professional issues because of their proximity to core work as middle managers. This agrees with the fact that deans are not neutral of profession, but ordained priests. In the hospital too, the middle managers are professionals. A spike in managerial tasks due to external pressures and greater workload represents a shift in orientation. A close examination of the relationship between logics within organizations has been a focal point of this thesis. Because the dynamics are complex, more studies are needed in particular contexts. This work answers the call to use qualitative methods "given that at the core of understanding institutional logics is gaining insight about meaning making" (Thornton et al., 2012:145).

A limitation is connected to previous research applying the logics perspective. The influence of intraorganizational institutional work on logics *outside* the organizations (Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013) has not been studied, mainly because it is beyond the scope of my study. Hampel et al. (2017) report that such research has seldom been undertaken. In this study, the logic perspective has mainly been applied at the field level, and the study is positioned at the intraorganizational level. This means that although logics are founded in extra-organizational structures, cultures, and institutions, they are always translated or localized (Reay & Jones, 2016).<sup>71</sup> Another limitation pertains to the transferability of findings as this study focuses only on contextual constraints and features of third-sector organizations. However, I have proposed theoretical modes that extend beyond the particular contexts

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<sup>71</sup> Suddaby (2010:18) claims that institutionalists by large have studied "the outcomes or products of institutional influences on organizations." This has moved the focus to outside the organizations, and we need a deeper understanding of "institutional meaning systems are understood and interpreted within organizations." Hampel et al. (2017:28) also claim that identity is a key "type of symbolic institutional work."

investigated. Thus, this thesis provides empirical insights into a under-researched context (Tracey, 2012; Tracey et al., 2014). Further, this thesis has employed only some of the empirical material generated in this study. I plan to use the rich dataset in future articles.

Third, interpreting the notion of institutional work as conceptual work is another key contribution of this thesis. I place it in a religious setting, and it has only implicitly been applied before. Askeland (2000) studied church reforms and pointed that managers had to spell out and “sell” the reforms to their coworkers. He coined this initiative and defining problems. Huse (1998) similarly noted that deans prior to the deanery reform had different orientations. Huse’s typology ranged from the strategic dean on one end of the continuum to the pastor-dean at the other extreme. This denotes an act of interpretation or translation (Sahlin & Wedlin, 2008). Conceptual work, in this study, is a more active form of translation that refines the works of Huse (1998) and Askeland (2000).

## 7 Concluding remarks

This study has examined how hybrid professional managers negotiate their professional and managerial identities in a context of institutional change. I have addressed this subject by analyzing empirical material from organizations characterized as highly professionalized and institutionalized. In these organizations, professionalism and managerialism are in state of flux. The dynamics between the two are described and theorized by three distinct negotiating modes, which are relevant even outside the case organizations: identity-role salience, conceptual work, and calling as identity work. The main theoretical contribution of this study is the refined conceptualizations of how hybridization occurs, and I also distinguish between integrated and negotiated hybridization. Thus, this thesis contributes to the discipline of organization and management studies and more specifically extends our knowledge of how identities of hybrid professional managers are related to coexisting logics.

### 7.1 Practical implications

This study offers several practical implications, which are rooted in managerial experiences. From the outset, I have positioned this thesis in everyday work challenges. The findings could therefore be relevant to practitioners, both managers and professionals, and particularly to those working in faith-based healthcare and religious organizations. They are likely to recognize the empirical descriptions of intersecting professionalism and managerialism. Beyond description, this study offers a refined conceptual apparatus. The findings provide a vocabulary that facilitates conversations about issues that could contribute to intraorganizational discussions, better understanding of each other, and increased quality of services.

As managerialism increases in these complex organizations, various competencies may be required. In hospitals, managerial teams in each unit represent manifold competencies that enable the unit manager to delegate tasks. In a church organization, resources are scarce, and work is more decentralized. The Church of Norway, for example, is exploring whether to implement unitary management by which the dual structure of clergy and council can be united. If the ecclesial units at the local level are fused into larger units, clearer managerial roles and identities may emerge. If the deans are to hold such positions, they will hardly have the scope to practice as priests, although this also applies to the top manager in the diocese, the bishop. This discussion on managing professionals raises the following question: how close and familiar should the manager be with the core work? This is indeed a fundamental question to all professionalized organizations. This question is intractably related to this thesis

in terms of identities and roles, where these may vary and affect each other. The thesis illuminates certain core issues and lessons that can be learnt from other sectors on how to navigate the same set of issues.

This study particularly challenges organizations to consider how and to what extent middle managers should engage in professional core work. Hybrid professional managers who lose proximity to such work are likely to become more managers and less professionals. Such a development represents a dilemma in the present research contexts since it is crucial that managers have thorough knowledge and experience about the core work. Tensions related to identity are present in the everyday lives of managers, often as dilemmas of priorities. When changes occur in strongly institutionalized organizations, it evokes both reflexivity and practical efforts in their work. Organizations may want to strengthen their awareness about such dilemmas and address them in their strategies and internal discussions. This is not only a matter of increased efficiency but also an ethical concern because it affects numerous lives. The importance of management is growing along with the rights and duties relevant to work life. It is only a matter of time until management becomes a profession in its own right.

## 7.2 Limitations and further research

The insights presented are based on a case study and thus, the findings may not be generalizable. Nevertheless, I argue that my study has analytical transference to other contexts. The main aim of this study has been to explore how managers negotiate two institutional logics. In hindsight, it may have been possible to extend this study's scope to include a religious logic. The logics perspective is grounded in organization and management theory. However, the religious dimension in my study is implicit. For deans, religion is inherent to their everyday work and thus constitutes a major part of their professional work, a point that is evident in the articles. Although the hospital is faith-based, a religious logic was not perceptible (Article 3). A strong emphasis on religious logic would constitute a starting point for asymmetry between the two case organizations, and in my opinion, serve to delimit the analytical gaze. Instead, choosing a professional logic allowed me to analyze everyday work in both organizations. Moreover, questions of identity within these contexts encouraged reflections on beliefs, values, and the broad category of religion.

Future research may depart from the theoretical models developed in this thesis and rely instead on questionnaires and surveys of larger populations. Such a quantitative approach may facilitate comparisons between these organizations and those in other sectors. A mixed-methods approach allows the use of archival material with observations and quantitative

study. Another avenue that can be pursued in the future is practice theory research.

It would be interesting to use a more critical approach to understanding managers' use of authority. For example, Article 2 focuses more on determining the characteristics of conceptual work than examining the use of power and manipulation. While the middle managers in the case organizations did not favor the WHA, which increased their administrative work, it is important to note that the reform also gave them more direct influence over the clergy's work situation. Thus, my research scope can be extended to study power structures and relations.

In my view, more research is needed that employs context-sensitive approaches providing in-depth knowledge. The present study compares, in some respects, similar organizations. These findings may be especially relevant to professionals and managers in contexts traditionally committed to the public values. The identities and roles of hybrid professional managers should also be explored in dissimilar organizations, wherein reforms challenge established patterns of identities and roles. Organizations relying on economic rationality as opposed to value-oriented rationality and voluntarism would also make for interesting comparisons. Moreover, organizations with high versus low degree of professionalization and operating in public versus private sectors could be investigated.

It would also be worthwhile to study the managerial training programs offered by Norwegian hospitals in order to understand the cultivation of managerial identities. Longitudinal studies on reforms and their implementation that span across several years should also yield interesting results. Such an approach to examining processes would elucidate if identity follows when tasks and responsibilities change in one direction. Finally, the institutional changes I study go beyond individual managerial preferences. The reforms affect not only the managers but also the character of the organizations. The question of identity should be studied at an organizational level to understand how highly institutionalized organizations evolve and develop their identity.

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## Appendixes

Appendix 1: Article I

Appendix 2: Article II

Appendix 3: Article III

Appendix 4: Observation scheme

Appendix 5: Example of analysis

Appendix 6: Approval from Norwegian Centre for Research Data (Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste)

Appendix 7: Interview guides

Appendix 8: Example of letters to the organizations

Appendix 9: Example of consent of middle manager

Appendix 10: Example of information letter to employees at hospital ward

Appendix 11: Examples word frequency and word clouds

## **Appendix 1:**

### **Article I**

Sirris, Stephen. Coherent and contextual identities and roles? Hybrid professional managers prioritizing of coexisting institutional logics. (In second review in *Scandinavian Journal of Management*).

# Coherent and contextual identities and roles? Hybrid professional managers prioritizing of coexisting institutional logics

## Abstract

This article explores how hybrid professional managers experience coexisting institutional logics in their everyday work. It examines whether the logic managers identify with is the same as that prioritized in their roles, tasks and responsibilities. Comparing data from interviews with managers in two contexts, faith-based healthcare and a religious organization, this article discusses the concepts of *primary* and *secondary identities* and *roles*. Findings show that experiences with coexisting logic differ according to organizational context. Hospital managers are foremost organizational managers in terms of both identity and role. A professional logic informs the church managers' identity, yet they prioritize a managerial logic in their role as employers. The article proposes a model that links hybrid professional managers' identities and roles with Besharov and Smiths (2014) framework of coexisting logics.

## Keywords

Hybrid professional middle managers, coexisting logics, identity, role

## Introduction

This starting point for this article is to question the assumption that managers' self-understandings equate with the actual contents of their work. Such coherence between identity and role may often be the case (Johansen & Gjerberg, 2009; Johansen, Olsen, Solstad, & Torsteinsen, 2015; Pache & Santos, 2013a; Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012, p. 84). However, this view is also contested (Døving, Elstad, & Storvik, 2016) since managerial identity and ideals are not by necessity corresponding with the mundane work of their constrained role (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2016). The phenomenon of coherence benefits from further scrutinizing through empirical research.

This article investigates identities and roles emanating from the two distinct institutional logics of professionalism and managerialism. *Role* is an external attribute linked to positions in the social structure, whereas *identity* is internal perceptions of self, consisting of "internalized meanings and expectations associated with a role" (Stryker & Burke, 2000, p. 289). *Institutional logics* are defined as "the socially constructed, historical patterns of



material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduces their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality” (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, p. 804). Hence, logics manifest in the practices of professional and managerial work and roles. Logics are enacted through professional and managerial identities, which “represent frames of reference that condition actors’ choices for sense-making, the vocabulary they use to motivate actions, and their sense of self and identity” (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury, 2012, p. 2).

A case of particular interest in terms of logics coexistence, is the object of my study; hybrid professional managers. They are professionals who have entered managerial positions and lead co-professionals (Noordegraaf, 2007). They embody both logics and assumedly balance both sets of identities and roles. Professions are ideal-typically closed self-regulated expert occupations. Professional identity is exclusive because of long-term academic training and socialization (Abbott, 1988). Autonomy, discretion, and trust characterize professional work. Collegiality and decisions based on consensus, with professional managers serving as first among equals, are all indicators of professionalism or a professional logic (Freidson, 2001). Managerialism or a managerial logic is composed of elements from market and bureaucracy, often introduced in public and non-profit organizations through New Public Management reforms. The focus is on efficiency and hierarchy, marked by line management. Indicators are emphasis on economy and managerial control (Lægreid & Christensen, 2011).

However, the two ideal-types blur in everyday life since most professionals work in organizations with these logics in a state of flux (Evetts, 2011; Noordegraaf, 2011; Waring & Currie, 2009). Professionals encounter managerialism encompassing governance because work specialization necessitates coordination and cooperation (Noordegraaf, 2015). Whereas earlier research emphasized the dichotomous nature of professionalism and managerialism, recent researchers have instead focused on how professionals and managers handle diverse logics (Blomgren & Waks, 2015). This approach reveals new insights about how professional and managerial commitments are interwoven in identities and roles. Empirical studies improve our understanding of whether professionalism and managerialism are considered two different phenomena, implying opposing sets of tasks and responsibilities, as well as somewhat contrary identities, priorities, preferences and inclinations. Presumably, the question about coherence is context-dependent. If so, it is useful to explore the phenomenon in two organizational contexts that enable comparison (Micelotta, Lounsbury, & Greenwood, 2017). I address a research gap by answering the call for studies based on specific

organizational contexts (Barley & Kunda, 2001; Hampel, Lawrence, & Tracey, 2017; Willmott, 2005).

To empirically contextualize my study and compare, I selected a type of highly professionalized and institutionalized organizations where managerial work still relates closely to profession. Hybrid professional managers occupy the middle managerial levels in both organizations, which are a faith-based hospital and a religious organization, a diocese within the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Norway. They are extreme cases being inhabited by particularly values-laden professions (Evetts, 2013; Pattison & Pill, 2004). These organizations may be described as professional hierarchies (Mintzberg, 1979) that in the recent years have experienced reforms emphasising managerialism. The middle managers in the church context are not neutral of profession, but ordained priests. In the hospital, the middle managers are medical doctors and nurses. The professional character of hospital work is related to medicine and nursing, and it is, largely, technical, with life and health at stake (Glouberman & Mintzberg, 2001). The church is a membership organization of an ideological nature, and more of a network promoting certain values and centering on religious worship (Torry, 2017). The church is an old institution, but a young organization due to the history of the national church incorporated in the state. Recent changes in this regard have led to the church to develop its own organizational features and managerial structures (Askeland, 2015). By choosing these settings, I am interested in how modern managers articulate and understand themselves and their work.

To sum up: It is established that logics coexist in organizations, yet we need a better understanding of how they manifest and how this involves actors (Hampel et al., 2017). This article contributes empirically by specifying managers' experiences of coexisting logics. The theoretical contribution is linking logics to identity and role by explicating this relation. The article achieves this by suggesting concepts and a figure. The focal point of my inquiry is to determine whether the logic that managers identify is also prioritized in their role, the phenomenon of coherence. The term *prioritize* is a sensitizing concept that is reflected in emphasis on identification as manager or professional, time-use, which task sets are addressed first, and how arguments are used in decision-making. By analyzing managers' descriptions of their work, the article aims at theorizing on how managers relate to coexisting logics. The overall research question is: *How do coexisting logics affect the coherence of identities and roles in differing contexts?* This is aided by two subquestions: 1) *How do hybrid professional managers prioritize professional and managerial logics*, and 2) *How may identity and role be*

*integrated in a coexisting logic framework?* The following sections review further relevant literature before addressing methodological issues. Findings are presented and discussed by a comparative approach, enabling a model of the two dimensions of identity and work role within a coexisting logic framework.

## Theoretical perspectives

### Coexisting logics

Multiple logics coexist in society and organizations are embedded in pluralistic institutional environments. Logics are historically contingent and highlight the importance of social context (Friedland & Alford, 1991). Although the logic perspective originated at the field-level, we see a resurgent interest in viewing intra-organizational settings through these lenses (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011). The notion of plural logics coexisting within organizations is a central concept within the logics perspective (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Glynn, 2000; Lok, 2010; Pache & Santos, 2010). Studying multiple logics facilitates knowledge into either the contradictions or the overlaps that are embedded in organizational and managerial commitments and work (Kraatz & Block, 2008).

I follow Micelotta et al. (2017, p. 15) who hold that the logics perspective functions as an integrative framework for various levels, accounting for change, behavior, actors, and phenomena which also include identities and roles. Applying this theoretical lens, this article offers insights into the coherence of logics manifested at the micro-level internally in organizations and the dynamics of meaning creation (Suddaby, 2010). Studying managers in context presupposes a fine-grained analysis of what occurs at the intersection of different institutional logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014; Smets & Jarzabkowski, 2013). By highlighting managers' priorities among coexisting logics, this article contributes to the literature on individual responses to institutional logics (Pache & Santos, 2013a). It provides insight into the bridging of macro- and micro-levels. To do so, it is important to consider how institutional logics are intractably connected to action (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lounsbury 2012, p. 2). Logics prescribe coherent sets of guidelines for action deemed as legitimate within an organizational field. A singular logic provides a coherent set of prescriptions, while dual and plural logics may give different guidelines to several organizational areas. This coexistence potentially raises challenges for actors like hybrid professional managers.

Logics may be experienced as ranging on a continuum from conflicting, competing, contradictory, and compatible to complementary (Pache & Santos, 2013b). Various

conceptualizations are suggested to describe cohabitation of institutional logics within organizations as well as organizational responses to conflicting demands: hybridity, compatibility, coexistence, heterogeneity, ambidexterity and centrality (Jarzabkowski, Smets, Bednarek, Burke, & Spee, 2013). Early studies proposed how logics replace each other (Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2005), segregate (Purdy & Gray, 2009), blend (Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005), or assimilate (Murray, 2010). There is a call for empirical research on mechanisms of logic re-combination and how actors are involved (Greenwood et al., 2011; Kraatz & Block, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012:118). Various concepts for how actors engage in the constellations of logics are proposed. Reay and Hining's (2009) seminal study used competition and cooperation, and hybridization is also suggested (McGivern, Currie, Ferlie, Fitzgerald, & Waring, 2015). I depart from the micro-level, as have several other studies (Arman, Liff, & Wikström, 2014; Bévort & Suddaby, 2016; Blomgren & Waks, 2015; McPherson & Sauder, 2013; Pache & Santos, 2010). These studies show the resurgence of interest within institutional logics towards actors. An illuminating example is Lindberg (2014) who study how individual actors are carriers of logics.

Research on coexisting logics shows how actors can use minor or major elements from another logic in pursue of their own goals. It illustrates the agency of individuals when reconfiguring logics. For strategic reasons, actors are pragmatic, aiming at solving problems, when combining dimensions of different logics. McPherson and Sauder (2013) show how actors can "hijack" others logics, which call for further studies of how such processes happen. Explanations for coexistence are mediation (Waring & Currie, 2009) and hierarchization (Arman et al., 2014), as well as sense making (Bévort & Suddaby, 2016), re-interpretation (Reay, Goodrick, Waldorff, & Casebeer, 2017) and co-optation (Andersson & Liff, 2018).

Whereas Battilana and Dorado (2010) studied the negative effects of conflicting logics in organizations, another study noted that logics maintained in fruitful tension might spark innovation (Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2005). Noordegraaf (2011) and Carvalho (2014) found that coexisting logics within the same job exhibited a complementary and not competitive relation. Turning to the contexts of this article, the interrelationships between managerial and professional logics in healthcare have been studied. An extensive body of literature confirms the institutional complexity in healthcare organizations (Byrkjeflot & Kragh Jespersen, 2014; Numerato, Salvatore, & Fattore, 2012). In contrast, the literature on this topic in religious organizations is scarce (Askeland & Schmidt, 2016), which calls for empirical studies.

Overall, these studies have neglected how coexisting logics manifest in the specific areas of identities and roles, which I now explicate.

### Logics manifesting in identities and roles

This article concerns how logics give consequences for behavior (Thornton et al., 2012) and which tasks and responsibilities emanate from each logic. This is the fundamental link between the institutional logic perspective and work role. Tensions are likely to arise in organizations with conflicting demands situated in a complex institutional environment, at the receiving of pressure from various stakeholders (Greenwood et al., 2011). I understand hybridity as responses to logics, offering a broad repertoire of identities and roles from which managers are informed. The managers may develop dual sets of professional and managerial identities and roles that may be integrated or kept in isolation. In this article, the study of hybridity benefits from considering contextual factors and managerial agency—the actors' ability to operate somewhat independently of the constraints of social structure (Micelotta et al., 2017).

Overall, logics manifest in routines, structures, practices and identities. Such a differentiation offers an analytical tool for exploring how hybrid professional managers both enact and are influenced by logics. Identity is “a key categorical element of institutional logics” (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 180). Logics are clearly related to identity, primarily through identification by institutions with collective identities such as organizations or professions: “A collective identity is the cognitive, normative, and emotional connection experience by members of a social group because of their perceived common status with other members of the social group” (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008, p. 111). When such identities are institutionalized, distinctive logics are developed (Reay & Hinings, 2009). Townley (1997) studied professional identities in the UK universities, while Thornton and Ocasio (1999) researched logics and common identity of industry players. Rao, Monin and Durand (2005) saw nouvelle cuisine as identity movement, while Meyer and Hammerschmid (2006) surveyed Austrian officials' dual identities.

Logics guide how to act in specific situations, while identity focuses on the issue of who we are. The concept *identity* denotes interrelated ways of constructing self, for example central life interest, coherence, distinctiveness, direction, positive value and self-awareness (Alvesson & Willmott, 2002, p. 8). Identity refers to various meanings attached to a person by himself and others (Gecas, 1982), connects different experiences and reduces fragmentation in feelings and thinking. *Personal identities* are notions of unique features, character traits

displayed and attributed based on conduct. Work involves personal and social significance, and relates to identity and identification (Ashford, 2016). *Social identities* are understandings of selves as members of social categories, for example gender or nationality. This concept relates to *role identity*, how an actor identifies with a given role, which is formed by external expectations and signifies a position within a given social system, like brother or teacher.

Scholars agree that identities are multiple and mutable (Mead, 1934), yet coexist and integrate experiences into a unity, a composite of aspects rather than being monolithic. This points towards what March (1989) calls the logic of appropriateness. Managers ask themselves three questions: what kind of situation is this, what kind of person am I, what do a person as I do in this situation? These are questions of recognition, identity and rules, which connect identity with actions.

Highlighting identity will clarify how the managers regard themselves as professionals and managers (Khapova, Arthur, Slay, & Smith, 2011; Pratt, Rockmann, & Kaufmann, 2006). My study is primarily on individual responses to logics. Of particular interest is how identity are both related to agency as well as constraints. Studies of hybrid professional managers and identity is of particular interest, given the fact that they are professionals in managerial position in the organization; a basic assumption is that they must relate to multiple logics (Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006).

It has been assumed that identification with a certain logic will give priority to that particular logic (Johansen & Gjerberg, 2009; Pache & Santos, 2013a). Some studies claim that manager identification with a logic does not dictate that this logic is prominent in their tasks (Døving et al., 2016; Oterholm, 2015). Like institutions, identity is also a multilevel construct. March and Olsen (1989) also linked logics to identity as a component of institutional order. In pluralistic societies, one assumes multiple roles and identities. Both individuals and organizations have coping mechanisms for living with such potential stress, as compartmentalization as decoupling (Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Pache & Santos, 2013b; Weick, 1995) and segregating (Hannan & Freeman, 1993). Scott (2014) claims that logics provide organizing principle in the field, which in turn gives purpose, unity and a sense of who we are; identity. Individuals have many identities as in social identity theory and as identifications with particular roles (Stryker & Burke, 2000).

*Role* refers to a formal position is guided by work descriptions, indicating the role and constituting managerial functions (Simpson & Carroll, 2008). Roles may be understood in this

functionalist notion as predetermined, and in a symbolic interactionist way that highlights how actors make sense of a given social position. In this article, role is an emic concept, used by the participants. I use it in the functionalistic sense referring to the managerial position and the bundles of tasks and responsibilities they have, summing up external expectations. Professional identities are related to the enactment of roles (Ibarra, 1999). My point of departure is managers' descriptions of responsibilities, tasks, and time-use.

As discussed above, coexisting logics manifest in identities and roles. If a manager identifies with a logic, it is likely that he translates knowledge into action (Thornton 201, p. 84). Identity concerns self-understanding, and is regarded more fluid as persons use agency to form identity. Regulations and reforms introduce new roles that give new understandings of what a manager should be and do. This may result in a split of profession and management for incumbent of the role. Professionals have mutual loyalty based on clinical core work. Managers supposedly have loyalty towards the formal organization. The situation described above, underpins the question of how managers actually negotiate the dual identities that they assumedly balance. To this, I now turn.

#### Centrality and incompatibility

I build on and extend the integrative framework of hybridity provided by Besharov and Smith (2014) in explaining how the nature and constellation of coexisting logics relates to managerial priorities. Organizational actors, and in particular hybrid professional managers, are carriers of various logics (Besharov & Smith, 2014). Logics manifest in how values and behaviors are shared or isolated organizational arrangement. Managers are close to logics when they potentially prescribe different solutions to problems and courses of actions; thus, they constitute a fertile area of research. As noted above, identity and roles are central issues for hybrid professional managers, and I presuppose that they will experience tensions between coexisting logics. This conceptualization of hybridity illuminates the intra-organizational dynamics by analyzing it in terms of the “extent to which multiple logics offer incompatible prescriptions (“logic incompatibility”) and the extent to which these logics are central to organizational functioning (“logic centrality”)” (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 4). When centrality is high, organizations embed multiple logics within their core organizational features, often reflected in the mission, values, and strategies. Hospitals are well-known for high centrality, given their mission of patient care that requires integration of multiple logics into the core work (Greenwood et al., 2011). Low centrality means one dominating logic, while others are enacted more peripherally. When logics are compatible, “they provide

consistent and reinforcing prescriptions for actions and beliefs” (Pache & Santos, 2013b, p. 7). However, if logics prescribe different ends, they may be more incompatible than in various prescriptions of the means to achieve these ends (Pache & Santos, 2010). Incompatibility may also connect to coexisting professions in the organizations (Heimer, 1999). High incompatibility and high centrality may enable both innovation and conflicts (Jay, 2013). In alignment with this literature, a presupposition is that the hospital in this study displays high incompatibility and high centrality, setting the stage for tensions.

On the other hand, the church organization, I assume, is low on both dimensions. Logic centrality suggests that one logic dominates key organizational arrangements and core activities, while peripheral activities shelter a weaker logic. Supposedly, the church managers are clear on what they think are the core functions of the church, which are largely synonymous with the work of professional clergy (Sirris, 2018). Accordingly, they are framed by compatible and peripheral logics: one logic is core to functioning, the other is peripheral, and the logics seldom provide contradictory prescriptions for actions. Both centrality and incompatibility are weak; therefore, logics do not really meet, blend, or hybridize. Confrontations between logics are thus rare, which perhaps diminishes the scope of innovation, which, in turn, is fueled when logics are held in fruitful tension. Besharov and Smith (2014) describe this compartmentalization strategy as logic distribution in organizations, where various actors and arrangements represent distinctive logics. In the church context, the two ideal-typical logics are assumedly distributed on separate arrangements. Applying the framework of logic centrality and incompatibility (Besharov & Smith, 2014), figure 1 visualizes this relation in the two case organizations. According to the literature review and the presuppositions discussed above, this pattern is partly institutionalized in the organizations as well as reproduced by managerial agency.



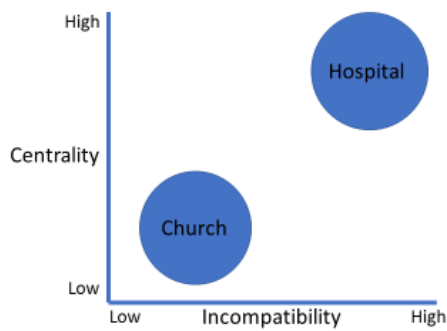


Figure 1: *Presuppositions of logic dynamics in the two organizations*

## Methodology

### Research setting and comparative approach

This article reports data from a larger qualitative research project initiated in 2016 involving hybrid professional managers' work. The illustrative comparative cases involve hybrid professional managers in a healthcare and in a religious organization. These contexts have witnessed institutional changes in the past years, which may be interpreted as shifts in logics or new institutional constellations (Micelotta et al. 2017, p. 17). This development makes managers face similar challenges of institutional change, which in turn facilitates comparison. A comparison between professions will likely reveal how different organizational contexts influence professionals (Døving et al., 2016, p. 23). The rationale for comparison intertwines with awareness about context. Comparative studies of managers or professionals are rare within the field of organizational studies (Scott, 2014) and in the sociology of professions (Molander & Terum, 2008). The comparative approach of my study is inspired by Smets, Morris and Greenwood (2012), who underlined the need for such research to explore how field-level logics are enacted in micro-level practices in different contexts.

Pinheiro, Geschwind, Ramirez, & Vrangbæk (2016) call for comparative studies within institutionalism. I follow their twofold argument. First, both organizations have similar sets of structural and cultural characteristics. They may be defined as human service organizations (Hasenfeld, 2010) characterized by professional and moral work. Second, both are placed in highly institutional environments characterized by expectations and political pressure, demonstrating a long history of professional autonomy, disciplinary leadership, and an institutionalized role pattern (Pinheiro et al., 2016). The reforms strengthen belief in

management, and have been aiming at more planning and reporting, demanding organizations that are more effective. In this context, a modernization of profession is simultaneously happening. The organizational ethos is empowered as values such as transparency. Responsibility and accountability become more central. In Norwegian hospitals, unitary management was introduced by law in 2001 (Spehar & Kjekshus, 2012). Managerial positions became in principle neutral of profession, and relate to clearly defined units or departments where one formally appointed manager have a clear responsibility for budget, personal, tasks and the daily running. Traditional professions experience decreasing autonomy and are gradually understood as occupations. Professionals are placed into management, hybrid professional managers, (Noordegraaf, 2015) to bridge the two logics.

Comparisons also presupposes differences (Pinheiro et al., 2016). The two organizations differ in terms of size and number of employees, budget, technology and hierarchies. The church is a network organization, yet in the pastoral line, it resembles a loosely coupled professional bureaucracy. I also note some differences between the groups of managers. The church managers reported in this study have long work practice, which is also the case for all the hospital managers. Albeit the clergy represent a classic profession, they have not been closely studied as such. Clergy have generally been regarded as eccentric in studies on professions (Abbott, 1988). The hospital has a managerial training program, and some of the interviewees had a master's degree in management. Each manager has a manager group, whereas the deans in church are part-time managers with a part-time secretary. The deans do not have budget responsibility, which lies with the diocese administration and director. Thus, they do not have total responsibility and are not pure managers. With the rise in the laws regulating employment, which outline the rights and duties of both employer and employee, employer liability has an effect on leadership within organizations.

A professional logic originally dominated both organizations where leadership has been practiced within professions and has been criticized for lack of a holistic view (Askeland & Schmidt, 2016; Byrkjeflot, & Kragh Jespersen, 2014). The organizations are comparable because they have undergone similar reforms, framing tensions between professionals and organizations as a problem and responding to it by strengthening management (Micelotta et al., 2017). I will not compare the two organizations based on these differences and similarities, per se. This is a comparison of a certain phenomenon: priorities of logics in the identities and roles of hybrid professional managers related to coexisting logics in each organization. I use contextual cues to illuminate and explain the phenomenon inquired in two

ways: by *generalizing* (i.e., findings are strengthened because they appear in two contexts) and *variation-finding*, (i.e., a mapping how the two cases differ on a set of variables).

### Sample and data collection

The data collection was planned and carried out as multiple, embedded case studies (Stake, 2013) using observation and semi-structured interviews, gathering narratives about hospital and church managers' identities and roles. Case studies are suited to examining subjective phenomena bound by time, context, and activity, aimed at studying someone in situ (Creswell, 2013). The design of the two studies was similar on key dimensions, which enabled comparison (Eisenhardt, 1989). In both organizations, I strategically sampled managers (Morrow, 2005), with the help of the HR-department, and the interviewees agreed to partake.

The hospital is average sized and located in a Norwegian city. It serves as the local hospital for about 140 000 inhabitants in addition to providing national specialized functions. It has 1700 employees. There are three levels of managers: directors, department managers, and unit managers. This hospital is diaconal and owned by a non-profit organization. Unitary management was introduced in 2001 by law, making these positions profession-neutral and accessible to other professionals (Mo, 2008). However, at the department and unit level, 90% of the managers are health personnel (Byrkjeflot & Kragh Jespersen, 2014). My informants consisted of four department managers (3 men and 1 woman, all medical doctors) and four unit managers (1 man and 3 women, all nurses), and one assistant manager. At both levels, management is a full-time job and gives little room for clinical work. One department manager has a master's degree in management, whereas all managers have attended the hospital's leadership program. Three departments are represented: surgery, medical, and psychiatric. The managers are aged between 45 and 65 years and have held their positions from 4 to 16 years.

The Church of Norway was a state church until 2012. Comprising 69% of the population, it is the oldest and largest nationwide member organization. Several reforms have brought about changes, including the Deanery reform in 2004 (Askeland & Schmidt, 2016). Eleven dioceses within the Church of Norway cover every region of the country. The bishop leads the diocese and employs the deans who execute the employers' liability on behalf of the bishop in their deanery, typically consisting of 15-25 priests. With the reform, the deans have become distinct middle managers, which somehow diminishes the traditional autonomy of the clergy. The purpose was to facilitate better working conditions for the clergy, strengthen management through goal setting, and decrease rule governing. An evaluation of the reform showed a

growing amount of administrative work for the deans (Stifoss-Hanssen, Angell, Askeland, Schmidt, Urstad, & Kinserdal, 2013). The position of a dean is not neutral of profession. Deans should be formally qualified as priests, and several informants said that typically skilled parish priests apply for the post. Deans work as parish priests for 25-50% of their time and are thus not full-time managers. They are the managers of priests and have only informal leadership over other employees in the parishes. The diocese included in this study is located in and around a larger city. Its central location ensures that the diocese does not have recruitment problems. This allows the deans to use their time as managers and not fill up vacant positions performing clergy work. I contacted the diocese administration and the bishop, and I asked all deans to participate, and they consented. The material includes interviews with nine deans, three women and six men. They have been in their current position from 4 to 24 years, and they are aged between 50 and 69 years. None of them has formal degrees in management, and two have held manager positions in other lines of work.

This article reports findings from interviews with 9 hospital managers and 9 church managers to better understand how they make sense of their work and the issues they find salient. The questions were open-ended and enabled the interviewees to elaborate and provide thick descriptions. The interviews lasted on average for 57 minutes and conducted in the informants' offices. They were performed in Norwegian, audio recorded, and transcribed verbatim.

#### Research ethics and analysis

Ethical concerns were safeguarded by granting the participants anonymity; they were informed and gave their consent. They openly and freely discussed the issues in the interviews, and I noted no controversial problems. The Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) granted permission to conduct the study. The analysis was an open-ended iterative analytic process moving between data and tentative theories. A preliminary analysis consisted of reading the material, guided by a thematic search of similarities and differences, in what I regarded as relevant data given the research question (Yin, 2009). I used the NVivo software for the systematic process of inductive thematic content analysis as well as manual coding. Both the steps were useful for identifying emergent analytical themes. I then systematically compared the narratives using matrixes to display the patterns between data (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013). These patterns highlight the commonalities within each group of managers. The analysis does not attempt to identify variation within each group but aims at comparing the two groups. Data were coded and categorized to describe and understand how

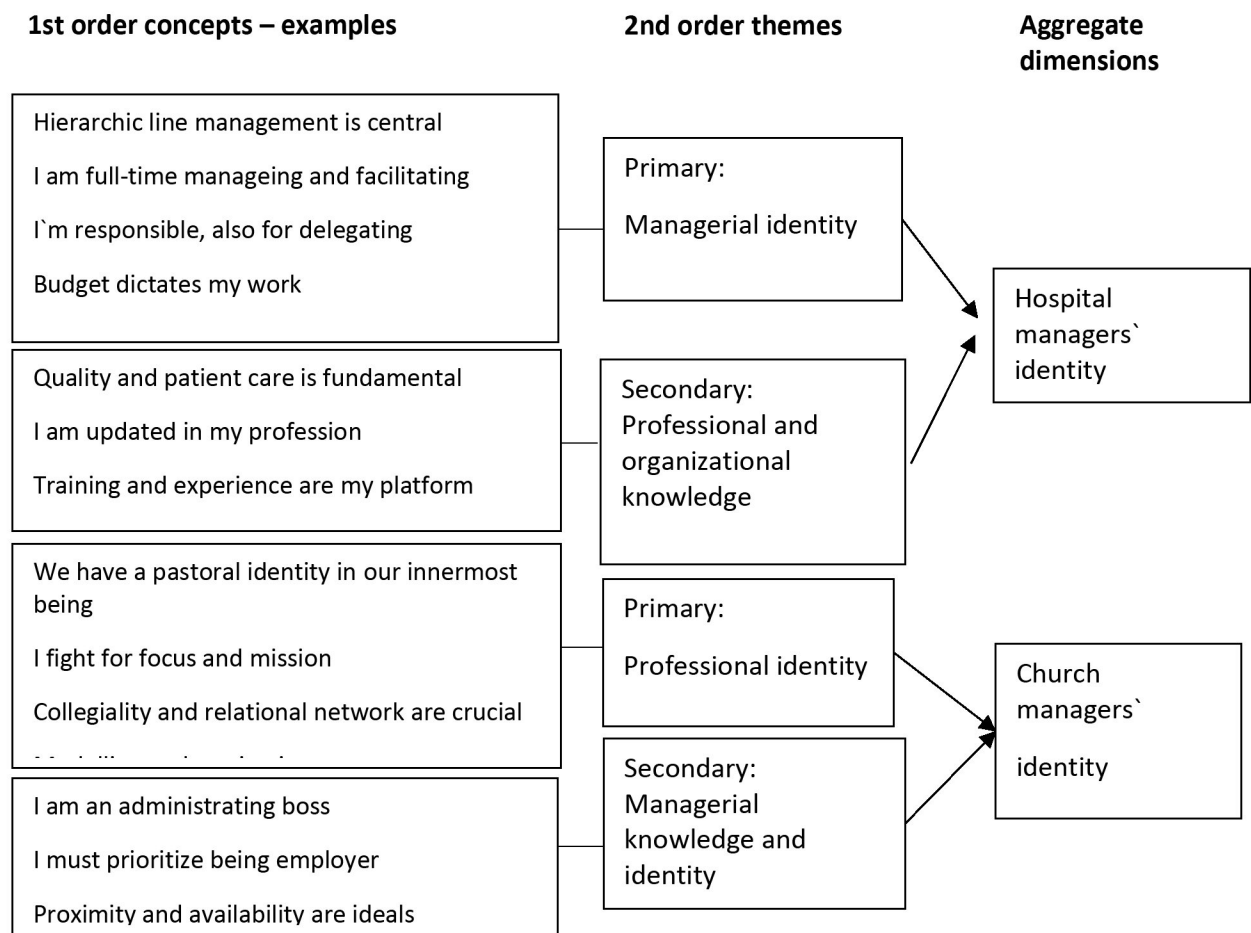
managers perceive logics and how these logics manifest in identities and roles. The analysis departed from how the managers described their work. Tasks indicate how logics materialize in practices and consequences for behavior. Descriptions were categorized as professional if they favored clinical work, in terms of participating in such work themselves, guide and supervise others in core work, develop profession, know what is going on, extend the professional knowledge base and be familiar with it. This is somewhat different in the two contexts. Managerialism is indicated by administration, budget, employer's liability, reporting and meeting. Following Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton (2013), my analytical process moved from narratives to theory-informed concepts. First-order concepts present emic terms emerging from data, while second-order concepts and themes are etic, then distilled to aggregate categories. Table 1 and 2 exemplify the analytic steps from quotes to categories.

## Findings

### Identities

Table 1 provides an overview of the findings on the managers' identities within the frames of professional and managerial logics.

Table 1: *Identities*



### Hospital managers' identity

The hospital managers were univocally clear about the managerial dimension of their identity. In introducing themselves, they used role identity labels that positioned them within the organizational hierarchy, characterized by line management. They mentioned superior managers as well as the professions and number of professionals they managed: “I am the manager of this unit. Above me is the department manager and above him the CEO. I am an employer and in charge of 60 persons.”

Given the multitude of systems available for control and measurement, expectations from managers were predictable and measured by three parameters: employee surveys, budgets, and sick leave: “If these are bad, management is bad—and I am responsible.” Yet, they experienced great maneuvering space. Line management was found to integrate responsibility and freedom, rather than responsibility and control. The hospital did not standardize leadership, which instead reflected the context of the unit or department and the personality of the manager. Their self-conception as managers was evident in the recurrent use of the term “facilitator”: “I am a technical facilitator who gets other people to do their job in the system. I

am in service, available for them. They do the core work.” Some argued that this label signaled a greater appreciation for the professionals and was less hierarchical and manager-follower oriented. Awareness of the hierarchical structure did not devalue the hospital’s core work, which the managers explicitly assigned to the professionals. Managers as facilitators dealt with the practicalities in serving those doing the core work. Being a hospital manager was a full-time job that in practice comprised no clinical work. The hospital managers explained the chronologically sweeping changes in management:

I do not have any clinical practice myself. I rust in my profession. My job is to make others perform. The old role is the medical doctor who works clinically and only part time as a manager. The new role means understanding the budget and the overall goal for the hospital.

The managers themselves mostly worked office hours, and the employees worked shifts. The managers were concerned with being present, talking of “open doors” and “short distances.” Openness toward addressing issues at an early stage is the cornerstone of good communication. An important avenue for this communication was the manager in each unit and department. Professional identity came second, even if they were health personnel with extensive experience as medical doctors or nurses. One expected that this identity would surface in the narratives. Instead, they relegated their profession to the background in two ways. First, some managers, despite their long-term positions, had not worked in clinical practice for years. None of them wished to return to clinical work and regarded their managerial positions as permanent. Second, they explained that their professional background enabled them to run the department. All hospital managers talked about a professional identity, even if they foregrounded managerial identity in their current, profession-neutral position. Hypothetically, some of the managers could have done clinical work. The notion of attaining professional knowledge served to bridge the realm of pure managerialism and pure professionalism. Knowledge was not only cognitive, but also about practical experience and lived life:

Additionally, to management, my profession is nursing with specialization. Be an informed professional. I go to conferences and discuss. However, I do not do clinical work myself. I do not need to; I have many years’ experience. Within my profession, I am just as updated as those I lead.

The following statement was rare: “My identity is that of a doctor and surgeon. A great loss in becoming a department manager is less contact with patients.” It was common to find professional identity and various competencies in the manager group, safeguarding different

perspectives. As such, professional expertise was institutionalized and accessible to the manager. Professional knowledge was a necessity:

Having experience from their work, I can discuss with authority. I have had their life. A manager cannot lead anything. Dealing with strong professions, you must know what is going on and understand it, participate in the discussions to get information when deciding.

The managers stated that neither pure managerialism nor pure professionalism would suffice as the sole perspective for a hospital manager. The managers, even those not working clinically, remained informed about their professions. They spoke about the benefits of having a manager interested in professional issues: “Having health personnel in the top management is important; they know what daily work is.” The informants principally believed that qualification as health personnel was not strictly necessary. However, in practice, it was a great asset for all parties. One of the department managers had grown to like management very much and identified as “coordinator, team manager, manager, coach. I find no conflict being a professional and manager, rather a synergy.”

Central to the managers’ narratives about their identity was their relation with their employees: the professionals. Although the former section focused on managers as facilitators, administrative tasks did not account for much of their workdays. They worked so that the specialists could perform. The idea of protecting professionals gained prominence during the times of reform to prevent employees from becoming insecure. It also enabled them to develop professionally; for instance, the professionals were typically eager to attend courses. However, in many cases seminars or meetings on professional issues were not prioritized if the daily work of the unit suffered. Thus, instead of canceling a surgery, the managers postponed joint study meetings. This sparked conflict in the units, and professionals viewed this as a test of their manager’s loyalty. The managers explained the situation by citing problems of under-staffing and lack of time. They conceptualized problems with employees in terms of lack of quality in professional work. The managers corrected professionals only occasionally. Doing so was time consuming and demanding for the manager. In cases of unresolvable conflict, employees lost their job.

#### Church managers’ identity

Findings on the deans’ identity situated well on a continuum ranging from professional to managerial, though typically highlighting the first:

A good dean must have a pastoral identity in his innermost being. That means faith in God, and practice as a priest, knowing it; it is part of your identity. A pastoral manager



maintains the distinctiveness of the church, opposed to administration. Managers are carriers of visions in our organization. As priests, we have an authenticity and commitment to the mission of the church.

There were some stepping-stones in between; professional knowledge, facilitating, and helping. With professional identity and employer identity at the far ends of the continuum, there were some interesting points in the middle pointing to the value of organizing and structure. Whether deans in fact identified as an employer was somewhat uncertain. Saying they did seemed to indicate that they performed employer's duties and responsibilities. One dean used an administrative system to identify with the clergy, plan, and register work hours. He tended to identify as an employer more than the other deans did, arguing that: "I am also a bureaucrat, who ensures that people are equally treated." This is a rare instance of valorizing administration and connecting it to justice. Given that the deanery was a geographic area with priests working in different locations in their parishes, the dean did not see them every day. Contact was established via meetings, and additional communication occurred when needed or wanted. This meant that the dean practiced leadership from a distance, while the local clergy practiced self-leadership.

Within a professional logic, the manager was regarded as a first among equals. The deans identified and were identified by the clergy as priests. None of the deans claimed that they ought to be the best skilled theologian in the deanery. Given the collegial idea of *primus inter pares*, this was slightly surprising. Many of the deans had been well functioning parish priests, willing to pay the price of becoming deans, i.e., assuming administrative workload. The deans instead framed themselves as qualified and updated conversation partners in theology and the functions of a priest. All the informants spoke about the increasing amount of administrative work and the importance of structure and defined routines. Questions about church order often initiated this communication. It was clear that the deans wanted to be available, almost 24/7. Through e-mail and cell phones, they tried to respond instantly.

The deans expressed it clearly: "We are first priests, then managers and thirdly employers doing administration and bureaucracy." The deans identified as priests because of their professional training and experience. Even if occupying a managerial position for many years, this professional identity remained intact and was practiced. Because the position was not a full-time job, it allowed them to perform the same tasks that they did before becoming deans. When reflecting on manager identity, the informants typically said: "I view myself as a discussion partner for the priests", which implied an equal conversation partner, signaling dialogue, reciprocity, and equal standing. Equality between deans and priests was cherished,

as a matter of guidance rather than governance. This was not a choice or coincidence but explained by theology: “Our vow of ordination makes our relationship with the priests collegial. They may guide me regarding my pastoral identity and how I am as a priest.” This affected the degree of control a dean may exhibit over the clergy. Being a dean was, according to some informants, not only a question of competence but also skills. By its very definition, it requires a pastoral identity of faith and work experience as a priest. The deans were clear about the unique standing of the church, “which is not like any other firm.” Being a professional in a church was about faith and internal commitments and convictions. This meant that professional and managerial identity had to somehow correlate with faith. To a certain extent, some deans called themselves colleagues of their employees when doing clergy work. Even if the term “colleague” was not frequently used, the notion of collegiality was striking. The deans still regarded the priests as managers. Within a collegial paradigm, the deans actively sought to strengthen their priests and support their autonomy.

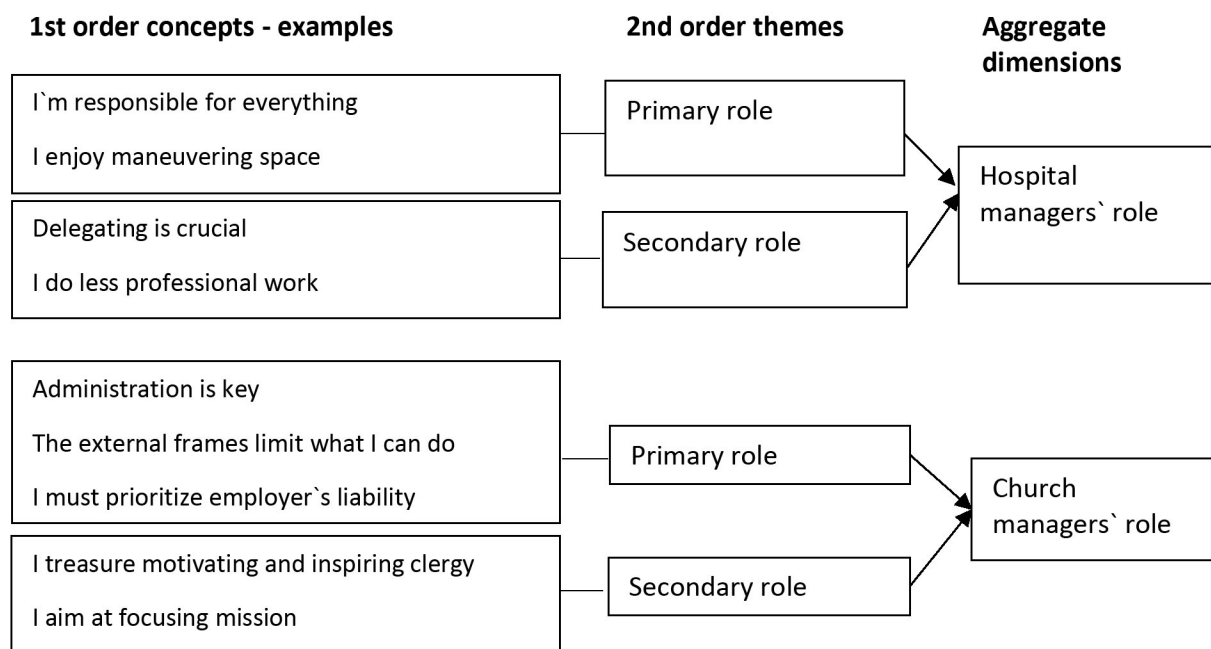
They were generally comfortable giving guidance or instructions, distinguishing between the frames of clergy work that they could and did strongly influence and those where each priest was an autonomous professional. The autonomy of the priests had a substantial impact on the deans as managers, as it was their point of departure for exercising leadership. I scarcely registered any attempts from the deans to interfere in such a way: “I wish very strongly that the priests are independent. The dean is too far away to know what ought to be done in their parishes.” The dean could initiate conversations and raise issues, but did not decide strategies, which are formulated in every parish by the council and the vicar. Ontologically, the deanery appeared second grade, serving as an instrument that was relevant and useful for the parish and the priests. This instrumental function of the dean was also commented upon: “The dean is needed as long as he is useful and relevant, and helping the priests in their work.”

Autonomy meant a distanced manager. The deans’ point of departure was the expectations of priests and their autonomy. The deans arranged their leadership accordingly. Management was in this context a matter of facilitation—of what worked and agreed with the followers.

## Roles

Table 2 show examples of quotes and categories related to roles of both groups of managers.

Table 2: *Roles*



### Hospital managers' roles

Examining the role of hospital managers involved exploring expectations and responsibilities.

When talking about their core tasks and workweeks, they spoke of “total responsibility”:

I have a total responsibility for budgets, personal, professional and daily work. Every unit manager has a delegated responsibility, yet I am involved all the way. The department manager wants us to stick to the budget and not quarrel too much. If I delegate economy, I lose control of the budget. The mantra of the CEO is that one has responsibility for more than one is responsible. I cannot only fight for my own department; instead, we must view the hospital as a total.

This totality led to hectic workdays for them, and they referred to their work as the “oil in the machinery, making things work in practice and distributing the work.” Delegation was a relief. A manager group was needed if the functions were delegated to several persons. Further, the delegation was not always based on interests or preferences. One of the unit managers said: “I cannot delegate more administrative work; instead I prioritize an extra position as a nurse.” This also meant that the unit manager was the only person not working in the clinic, while the rest of the manager group did so part-time. In general, managers delegated professional issues. Every unit had nurses working up to half time with procedures, training, and seminars, supporting and guiding the other nurses. Quality was strengthened and would lead to constant improvement, since these nurses supported the manager and were experienced role models. Work was mundane and prosaic, with a focus on staffing and daily business, and ad hoc issues were resolved via strategizing. Some of the managers wanted to

be in the clinic but had little time. This distanced them, but they made an effort to stay close and work on the relations: “I use lots of time caring and talking with employees.” This indicated that the managers both protect and challenge the professionals. None of the managers delegated their budget control tasks. Contact with the superiors occurred daily and in regular meetings. In addition, within the units, the managers had established a structure for meetings consisting of information and discussions. These were arenas of logics. In addition to total responsibility for a unit or a department, the managers felt responsible for the overall hospital. The department managers had joint meetings with the CEO and his staff every second week, where all participants were called “hospital managers.” There were generally few statements about the struggles between professions. Possible conflicts were solved through communication and conscious cooperation on a general level.

### Church managers' roles

The tasks of the deans were described in their work description. However, the document identified only the main areas of work and did not detail how the work was to be done or the various aspects that were to be emphasized. All the informants mentioned the freedom and maneuvering space they had to use their interests and personalizing their role. The group of deans consisted of markedly different persons, doing their jobs differently. One of the deans emphasized, “I do not get a pattern for how to be a dean, no recipe.” The deans were responsible for a range of tasks. They had a professional responsibility for the clergy based on theology and church order:

I see to that there is a deepening of theology and thought. My third area is to focus on the mission and main task of the church. I have an overall pastoral and strategic responsibility for all parishes, priests and employees in the deanery. My role is to motivate and inspire the priests.

Deans were responsible as employers for the frames of work, which is regulated by Norwegian law. Being a pastoral manager required ensuring that the clergy did what they promised when they were ordained. Serving as a role model was a salient motivating factor for all the deans. A matter of concern for those who desired a local presence and good knowledge of the parishes and work situation of the priests was the lack of time. Some of the deans visited the church staff regularly and preached once a semester in each church. They also felt it a part of their manager role to guide the priests. The strategic part of the role involved reminding the priests and parishes of the mission of the church. However, the deans did not decide the strategies; they rather initiated dialogue and asked questions. The deans derived their motivation from performing clergy work, and they remarked about the drastic

changes in their work profile over the last years, which had turned them into administrators. Time use was discussed in all interviews, and the deans were not happy about the development. They felt that something was lost. All the deans agreed that to lead the priests, the deans should be present and available to them. The ideal was one of proximity. Guidance and conversations presupposed trust and time. However, the administrative work they performed in the office seemed to contradict what they should in fact be doing. One dean expressed concern over “losing the theologian within me.” He had made attempts to safeguard this aspect by preaching regularly during Sunday services. Deans expressed fear over becoming administrators, and a metaphor they used was “to be eaten up by bureaucracy.” To some extent, they delegated prosaic administrative tasks to their executive officers, usually not a priest in a part time job doing secretarial work. The deans most willingly delegated these tasks. Even if they could be relieved of some administrative work, they did not want to abandon being managers. This issue was a dilemma for the church managers, and they explicitly contrasted administration with core work:

A clever dean has relational competence; administrative and theological competence is secondary. Administrative order is salient. Our tasks range from the very prosaic—see that all are working, helping to organizing their work hours and holidays. The external frames. In addition, how we perform the work. Employer’s liability for the priests is a large part of my work.

The increase in administration workload stemmed from the professionalizing of work life within the Church of Norway. With the enforcement of the Work Environment Law, priests’ rights and duties as employees are now closely regulated, like in the rest of society and of course in healthcare. The dean, as an employer of the priests, should ensure that staffing is optimal and that parishes have a priest. Some of the deans noted that increased administrative workload also had a positive effect; it encouraged proximity with the priests and their work.

## Discussion

### Distinguishing and prioritizing logics

The first subquestion is: *How do hybrid professional managers prioritize professional and managerial logics?* The empirical data describing identities and roles show that managers relate coexisting logics in their everyday work. A central contribution in this study is specifying how managers distinguish clearly between professionalism and managerialism, yet claim to incorporate and commit to both. Managerial narratives are remarkably in unison when portraying this duality. A ranking is evident in how issues are portrayed as crucial. None of the managers want or can abdicate from any of these two coexisting logics, neither in

their identities nor roles. This finding is consistent with and complement the works of Blomgren and Waks (2015), and Smets and Jarzabkowski (2013) who underline that managers want to resolve tensions, provide solutions to problems, “get the job done,” and succeed in their mundane and pragmatic work. In doing so, they draw on both professional and organizational competencies and commitments manifested in their dual identities and work roles.

A striking similar finding in both contexts is strategies of *logics prioritizing*, by which hybrid professional managers unlock the dichotomy of professionalism and managerialism. This distinction proposes a nuanced approach to hybridity. Importantly, prioritizing did not represent a problem for the managers. In fact, it came naturally to them toward solving their job challenges. To function in their complex jobs, they are bound to accommodate both logics and integrate both professional and managerial concerns. In contrast, a dichotomous distinction is proposed in studies in other contexts by Møller (2009) and Larsen and Slåtten (2014). They suggest that managers are *either* professionally *or* managerially oriented. However, the specification offered in my study is supported by identity theory, which suggests that identities are arranged hierarchically according to their salience (Stryker & Burke, 2000). Arman et al. (2014) indicate similar results by conceptualizing this as logics hierarchization. Importantly, a key insight in my study is that hybrid professional middle managers experience managerial and professional logics as an act of prioritizing.

This study shows that logics prioritizing manifests in managers identities and roles and varies according to their organizational contexts. In the case of hospital managers, their primary identity coheres with their primary role, both aligned with a managerial logic. Temporality is a key difference between the two managerial groups. The process of institutionalized managerialism had advanced further in the hospital than in the church. It is likely that the law on unitary management enacted in 2001, advancing the principle of management neutral of profession, now seems to have been implemented, whereas earlier studies may have pointed at conflicts and debates (Mo, 2008). Additionally, this particular hospital had a managerial program, unlike the diocese in the study where the deans experience tensions brought about by managerial reforms. This indicates that context is important, and contextual differences frame how managers variously relate coexisting logics in their identities and roles.

In contrast, the church managers seek to improve their organization by nurturing professionalism. The institutionalization process of managerialism in the church has not progressed very far. The deans prioritize tasks and responsibilities emanating from a

managerial logic. I explain this variation in the light of the character of work and the contexts of each group of hybrid professional managers.

The ways in which the managers prioritize logics, of course, varies between the two groups and internally within each group. There are both professional and intra-professional differences. This article emphasizes the group comparison, yet there are, to some degree, variations within each group. Nevertheless, this study indicates a strengthened managerial identity. Other studies show that the professional identity is very dear to healthcare managers (Currie, Lockett, Finn, Martin, & Waring, 2012; Reay & Hinings, 2009; Spehar, Frich, & Kjekshus, 2012). The managers in my cases are all health personnel, even if they in principle believe that their jobs hypothetically could be performed neutral of profession. The managers have an overall professional responsibility, which they perform by both protecting and challenging professionals. McGivern et al., (2015, p. 19) found that healthcare managers choose different strategies:

Incidental hybrids, professionals temporarily in hybrid roles, use hybrid roles to represent, protect and maintain professionalism. Willing hybrids developed authentic hybrid identity (...) provided a foundation for challenging and disrupting traditional professionalism.

In contrast, my findings show that hospital managers both protected and challenged professionals, independent of the stance on hybrid identity. The distinction between incidental and willing hybrids does not find support here, since the managers find themselves in permanent positions and do not aspire to return to clinical work. Hybrid managers are largely portrayed as buffering colleagues who are only temporarily in managerial positions (Andersen & Rasmussen, 2005; Preston & Price, 2012). The role of the hospital managers connects closely to their identities.

Turning to the church, the deans do not profoundly identify as managers; they rather perform managerial tasks. The most striking characteristic is the duality in the church context where managers primarily identify as professional and secondarily as managers. The deans separate between being a spiritual/pastoral manager and being an employer. This finding resonates with the evaluation of the deanery reform (Stifoss-Hanssen et al., 2013). Askeland (2016, p. 111) also noted that the deans conceptualize their work in two distinct ways: theologically and functionally. An analysis of the tasks and their use of time revealed that the managerial aspect accounted for the majority of tasks. They complained about increased administrative workload depriving them of time for clergy work or following up with their priests. A

managerial logic characterizes their role. The work situation of the deans does not fully accommodate their primary identity as professional managers. In other words, their identity and values do not cohere with their role, with tasks and responsibilities. Other research finds similar variations (Døving et al., 2016, p. 25).

#### Coexisting logics framework

The second research question guiding this study is: *How may identity and role be integrated in a coexisting logic framework?* I now employ the coexisting logics framework (Besharov and Smith, 2014) to highlight central findings which beyond individual preferences relate to the systemic level. The two logics are compartmentalized and manifested in different arrangements and are unequally distributed among actors within the organization.

Professionalism and managerialism do not cohere with the church managers, to which I will now provide a clarification. Logics may be differentiated for both members and arrangements, or integrated. Separation may be strengthened by physical distance or geographical locations (Glynn & Abzug, 2002), which largely is the case with the deans. When separated, each logic has distinctive representatives. In the hospital, the manager groups surrounding the managers and the very structure of the hospital prevented such isolation of logics. When logics are separated in different practices and identities, one is more aware of the particularity and value of each logic. Members interpret issues through the lens of the logics they carry and enact these logics through their own behavior: “Differentiation involves distinguishing or separating multiple demands from one another, while integration involves seeking synergies or bringing demands together into a unified whole” (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 15). The relation between these two is complementary and marked by cooperation; conflicts are less disruptive.

The work of the church managers is sequential, with tasks clearly originated in a distinct logic are separated from one another. Thus, the demands are buffered instead of conflicting each other. “When incompatibility is low, actors do not experience contradictions between demands” (Besharov & Smith, 2014, p. 13). The separation of logics manifested in incompatible activities may be an expression of differing power and status. This coheres with perceptions of what constitutes core work for professionals and what does not—often indicated by jurisdiction (Abbott, 1988). Studies of clergy work show that relations, traditional tasks, and the integrator function of managers are treasured in church leadership, as opposed to administrator functions (Sirris, 2016).

Differentiation is a characteristic of the church managers and integration of the hospital managers. In the hospital, unitary management institutionalizes the integration of logics. The



accounts of the hospital managers reflect a situation where logic incompatibility and centrality are high. This sets the scene for complexity and potential conflict. I find this reflected in the emphasis on discussions in the managerial groups and openness toward different views and perspectives. The complexity of coordination and the demands on cooperation put the logics in dialogue. According to Besharov and Smith, (2014, p. 54), the hospital managers' commitments to logics are incompatible and central. This characterizes healthcare organizations (Reay & Hinings, 2009). Thus, both logics are core to the functioning of the organization, yet they provide contradictory prescriptions for actions.

The strength of the managerial role links to more specific prescriptions for actions, which are more understandable than discretionary professional reflections. The functions of middle managers in both contexts have increased, which curbs their professional role. This development also mirrors a general societal change where work legislation is growing and regulating the rights and duties in work life. It is more comprehensive in the case of an employer. This represents a strengthening of the legal pillar of the institution of management (Scott, 2014). Governance integrated into managerialism is more regulated by formal guidelines and thus more transparent than professional considerations. Organizational responsibilities are in both cases more defined and obligatory than professional issues. The discrepancy between the two groups of managers when relating their identities and work roles does not imply that the church managers are less of managers or that they are not capable of fulfilling their manager role (Hill, 2003). On the contrary, their construction of logics in their identities and work roles reflects the solid organizational contexts to which they belong. They do what they do for pragmatic reasons, not only for professional principles (Blomgren & Waks, 2015). From the empirical material, I do not claim that a professional logic permeates the church organization. Actors do not adhere to any given logic in full but are eclectic (Kipping & Kirkpatrick, 2013; Meyer & Hammerschmid, 2006).

The dynamics of coexisting logics and managerial practices in the hospital and the diocese reveal differences in organizational contexts and professions. The hospital is more hierarchical, centralized, and characterized by higher speed and complexity. Hospital managers challenge professionalism and identify as managers instead of employees. This study shows that hospital managers are primarily committed to their organizational identity and work role, and this relation is one of integration where they aspire to merge conflicting demands into a unified whole. The clergy seems more resistant to managerialism and organizational control than the health professionals. Thus, the diocese is a more distributed

and decentralized network organization with a low pace. Occupational professionalism thrives, and the mandate of the collegium situating the manager is to safeguard professionalism. Although church managers fill managerial positions, they tend to identify as professionals. Driven by normative and disciplinary convictions, they describe their work roles in a mundane fashion as facilitators for other professionals performing work within the organization. The relation between their identity and work role is thus marked by differentiation and separation, and hence disintegration.

*Managers’ identities and roles within the coexisting logics framework*

The overall research question guiding this article is *How do coexisting logics affect the coherence of identities and roles in differing contexts?* From this discussion, I visualize the managers’ identities and roles be in figure 2, which extends figure 1.

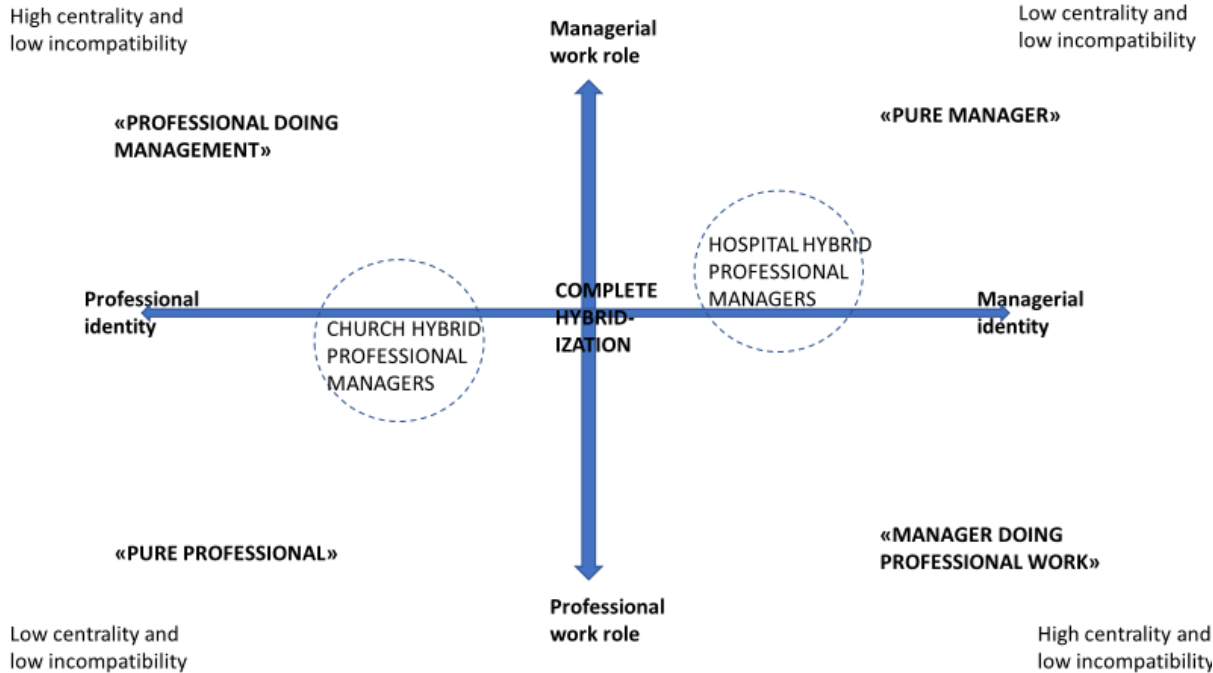


Figure 2: *A contextual model of hybrid professional managers’ identities and roles*

This model integrates two systems. First, it extends the coexisting logic framework by the ideal-types of pure professionalism, pure managerialism, and the notion of complete hybridization. Second, the quadrant depicts two dimensions: identity and role. These are not either-or dimensions, but rather degrees on a continuum. Coherence along these two orientations are conceptualized as primary and secondary. The hybrid professional managers

are positioned as constrained and creative actors performing and making sense of their identities and roles, based on this study's empirical data. These internal dynamics are all situated within the coexisting logic framework, which is manifested in the institutional constraints limiting the agency of middle managers. In the corners of pure professionalism and pure managerialism, both centrality and incompatibility are low as the dominating logic rules out coexistence. In the two other corners of the quadrant, some unlikely ideal-types are placed: manager doing professional work, and a professional doing management. These possibilities are marked by tensions, as both incompatibility and centrality are high. However, these options are peripheral to hybridity and irrelevant to the managers in this study. Remote from these ideal-types, denoting the center point of the two continua, is complete hybridization. As the model shows, this is a hypothetical point of theoretical interest, which cannot exist in practice (Noordegraaf, 2015). Institutional forces pushing the church managers into management is increasing employer's liability. Their anchoring in professionalism is relation network, part-time connection with professional work, mono-professional leadership and collegiality. The hospital managers are becoming managers by hierarchy, full-time, multi-professional, and total responsibility. They are anchored in professionalism through professional knowledge and values.

## Conclusion

The study contributes with knowledge about how hybrid professional managers relate to coexisting institutional logics. This is specified in terms of prioritizing among coexisting logics on the dimensions of identities and roles. I explore and provide a theoretical framework of hybrid professional managers' responses to a professional and managerial logic in their identities and work roles. I find in both contexts that hybrids prioritize the managerial role. In short, employer liability trumps profession. Hybrid professional managers cannot avoid performing core managerial tasks, despite identifying as professionals. This shows that the phenomenon of coherence is contextually conditioned. This comparative study shows some differences between the faith-based health organization and the religious organization. Foremost, there are temporal differences. It seems like the process of institutionalizing of management has come further in healthcare. The hospital managers in this study embrace their managerial identity. This is not the case with the church managers. This profound discrepancy may be studied in light of contextual factors, yet the reforms were introduced at the same time. This finding is somewhat new (Currie et al., 2012; Reay & Hinings, 2009; Spehar et al., 2012; Spehar & Kjekshus, 2012) to studies where hospital managers have

emphasised their professional identity (McGivern et al., 2015). In contrast, I find that the hospital managers, both nurses and physicians, strongly identify as managers. The overall picture is that management is growing more absorbing, and hybrid professional managers in practice distance themselves from the professional part of their work. This is maintained by delegation to others. This is a contested process, and the material exhibit different individual stances within each category of managers.

According to the theoretical framework of hybridity proposed by Besharov and Smith (2014), the relation between logics in the hospital is one of high centrality and high incompatibility. Coexisting logics in the religious organization display low centrality and low incompatibility. It appears that in organizations with two central logics, like the hospital, hybridizing is more likely. If one logic is low in centrality, such as the managerial logic in the church, logics will not really meet. The cost of this distance is the phenomenon experienced by the deans of disintegration in identity and role.

There are several limitations of the study. To gain analytical clarity, the number of coexisting logics has been limited to only two. This ideal-typical approach sidelines some rich material displaying a range of individual differences within each context. It offers no normative answer to how managers should relate logics. Further research that would increase our knowledge of coexisting logics in the work of managers could compare professionals within various organizational contexts, either by operationalizing identity and work role or by establishing other characteristics. Following organizations over time can provide robust longitudinal data. If the perspective of professional and managerial work were to be taken seriously, as long suggested by Barley and Kunda (2001), it would be fertile to connect the institutional logics perspective with practice theory. Examining observational material on how managers in situ relate coexisting logics to their everyday work broadens the methodical approach and provide direct access to the manifestations and relation of logics. Whereas many studies have examined healthcare organizations and professions, researchers have paid little attention to religious organizations and the professions therein. Civil society organizations constitute an area for future research as they are situated in the interstices of different institutional realms and inhabited by several interacting logics.

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## **Appendix 2:**

### **Article II**

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**Stephen Sirris**

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## “The pastors’ dilemma” revisited. Religious leaders connecting the spiritual and organizational realms through conceptual work

Stephen Sirris

VID Specialized University, Oslo, Norway

### ABSTRACT

Drawing on a qualitative study in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Norway, this article analyzes how Deans as religious leaders and organizational managers implement a clergy reform. In an ecclesiastical context, traditionally characterized by weak managerial control and strong professional autonomy, the article explores how Deans use the ambiguity of the reform and negotiate between spiritual and organizational responsibilities. Through such efforts, analytically termed conceptual work, managers reframe an administrative reform into professional strategy and seek to conceptualize the institution of clergy as both a traditional calling and a modern occupation. The article contributes to the literature by theorizing through systematic analyses on the strategic efforts of religious leaders on a micro-level within organizations, thereby expanding our understanding of various types of institutional work and showing how leaders mediate between differing demands in their daily work.

### ARTICLE HISTORY

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### Introduction

Clergy are expected to make both a professional and organizational contribution. They are by nature spiritual leaders; in addition, they may also be formal organizational managers. This dual nature of clergy responsibilities has been widely noted since Blizzard (1956) seminal study of pastors balancing spiritual roles with administrative and organizing roles. The theme has been investigated empirically through time allocation studies (Brunette-Hill and Finke 1999; Sirris 2016; Kuhne and Donaldson 1995), and researched through typologies of managerial roles (Askeland 1998; Huse 1998). Scholars have compared religious leaders to managers in secular contexts, identifying both similarities and differences (Hansson and Andersen 2008; Andersen 2004; Askeland 2015; Driscoll et al. 2018). Such efforts enable a cross-disciplinary conversation of joint interest between organization and management theory and scholars of religion, spirituality, and theology (Tracey 2012). This engagement between the spiritual and the managerial is a key issue in religious institutions. Given the internal and external forces buffeting post-modern religious organizations, the management of change is crucial.

**CONTACT** Stephen Sirris  [stephen.sirris@vid.no](mailto:stephen.sirris@vid.no)

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We know that clergy combine spiritual leadership with organizational management, but less about how they do so and how they reason about it. Thus, this article addresses this research gap and reports a micro-level study of how religious leaders in a particular context balance spiritual and managerial responsibilities. It provides a case description of how Deans in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Norway handled a reform of the working hours for clergy, and how this prosaic reform illustrates what Blizzard coined “the pastor’s dilemma.”

Until 2012, the Church of Norway was the national state church, protected by the constitution, with Christianity as the established religion (Hirschl 2011). As a folkchurch, it comprises 71% of the population and is the nation’s oldest and largest member organization. The loosened ties to the state through several reforms sparked the development of organizational features, including an increased emphasis on management. These recent changes create exciting areas of research, mainly because organizational and management theory scholars have mostly neglected religious organizations (Tracey, Phillips, and Lounsbury 2014; Dyck 2014; Sørensen et al. 2012). Supposedly, these organizational changes have an impact on leadership. This article intends to investigate this phenomenon and examine the religious leaders who are also increasingly becoming organizational managers.

The changing conditions of professions within organizations have drawn considerable scholarly interest in addressing growing managerial control and diminishing professional autonomy (Noordegraaf 2016; Freidson 2001). Through the lens of institutional theory (Thornton and Ocasio 2008; Lawrence and Suddaby 2006), this study discusses the empirical facets of such developments through the illustrative case of the new Work Hour Agreement (WHA) for pastors in the Church of Norway. It analyzes how Deans handle spiritual and organizational responsibilities when implementing the WHA, theorized herein as a specific type of institutional work (i.e., conceptual work), performed by hybrid professional middle managers.

Although clergy represent a classic profession, they have not been closely studied as such. Clergy have generally been regarded as eccentric in the studies on professions (Abbott 1988; Carr-Saunders and Wilson 1933). Traditionally, the Norwegian clergy have been a self-governed profession, working mostly independently in parishes within a widely distributed ecclesiastical organization (Sirris 2016). Deans were first among equals; however, the Deanery reform in 2004 transformed them into distinct middle managers, carrying out employers' responsibilities on behalf of the bishops. The intentions were for better working conditions for clergy and decentralization to a local rather than a regional level. Thus, the Deanery reform was termed a New Public Management reform in line with the other ideas and notions that originated in the private sector and were imported into the public and third sectors (Askeland and Schmidt 2016). The WHA may be regarded as a follow-up of the Deanery reform, providing Deans as employers with managerial tools yet increasing the role conflict between the Dean as a spiritual leader and an organizational manager (Askeland 2016).

The WHA poses a dilemma. It regulated pastors' workweek to 35.5 hours, which is common for secular Norwegian work life. The WHA raised questions and sparked off debates within the church and the national media: Does the WHA challenge pastoral autonomy? Does the emphasis on clergy as employees enforce a new understanding of pastoral ministry, transforming it from a traditional calling to a modern occupation? It was ambiguous from the onset as whether the WHA represented a major change or a minor alignment to general work life and thereby secularization experienced within faith-based and religious organizations in the Nordic countries (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2012). This agreement is scarcely a reform in the strict sense but rather a change in organizational procedure. Paradoxically, the Norwegian clergy unions introduced the WHA and rapidly negotiated with the State Ministry of Church in 2015. The purpose was to frame the pastors' working hours and free time within clearer terms and simultaneously maintain the characteristics of the pastoral ministry (Sirris 2016). The working hours should not exceed 35.5 in a 5-day workweek. Of the total amount, 20% of the working hours are "unbound," thereby allowing clergy to pursue special interests (e.g., theological studies and other tasks), which do not need to be reported. The regulation of working hours resulted in less work for clergy, allowing them to focus on the core tasks of Sunday services, funerals, weddings, and baptism. The WHA had economic and practical consequences. The dioceses had to pay higher wages, which were not proportionally funded by the state. This necessitated reducing the number of pastors, prolonging vacancies, and minimizing the use of substitutes. The parishes worried about clergy's reduced working hours' load, which also brought about the end of residence duty in vicarages within the parish. The Deans, who were responsible for administering the WHA, witnessed an increase in their workload and were most affected by these unsettling developments. Additionally, an electronic system of planning and reporting hours and activities forced clergy to plan, count hours, and report.

Against this backdrop, I investigated the Deans' strategic responses to the WHA and asked the following overall research question: What characterizes the institutional work performed by Deans when implementing the WHA? I analyzed the interviews and the observation materials that demonstrated their efforts to balance spiritual and organizational demands, here termed as conceptual work. I define conceptual work as the reflexive, legitimizing, and integrative efforts initiated by managers to recast the relationality of the logics at stake. Such work originates in ambiguity and aims at institutionalizing the reform via interaction. These partially overlapping phases reflect a process that conceptualizes pastoral ministry in a slightly novel manner, which illustrates an evolution where traditional calling is also understood in terms of a modern occupation (Percy 2006). I approach this article from the perspective of the middle managers who seek to conceptualize and understand the new situation with a view to finding solutions to the challenges raised by the WHA. This article intends to examine the manner in which the Deans performed their conceptual work by constructing an overlap when interpreting the WHA and considering both spiritual (professional) and organizational (managerial) responsibilities.

This article contributes to the existing literature through a systematic analysis and theorizing on how religious leaders handle and reflect on what Blizzard coined “the pastor’s dilemma,” that is negotiating the spiritual and organizational realms. It illuminates the organizational changes within the Church of Norway with regard to the institution of pastoral ministry. Lastly, by employing the conceptual work construct, the article advances our understanding of the various types of institutional work. In the following sections, I will first situate the conceptual work within the framework of institutional theory. I will then explain the methodology and discuss the main findings of the research on three Deans. In the end, I will propose a model of conceptual work to theorize the religious leaders’ handling of spiritual and organizational responsibilities.

## Theoretical perspectives

### The logics perspective

The WHA may be interpreted as a meeting point between the logics of professionalism and managerialism. Logics determine which issues and problems are salient and which answers and solutions are given (Thornton and Ocasio 2008). Logics provide a schema of interpretations and connect inherently to practice, providing guidelines for action and enabling actors to create meaning. A wealth of literature depicts these logics as contradictory, often describing an ideal-typical pure professionalism pressed by bureaucracy and market (Freidson 2001). Such research focuses the introduction of a new logic into a field previously dominated by a professional logic. However, the separation of these structures is not very clear in the mundane work routine of professionals who mostly work in organizations that are governed by managers, which also applies to many religious organizations. Researchers have long observed the coalescence of these realms and conceptualized the phenomenon as part of hybridized professionalism (Blomgren and Waks 2015). Heterogeneity increases as professionals assume managerial responsibilities, which is often studied in terms of hybrid professional managers (Noordegraaf 2011). This is obviously the case with the Deans, who are by definition part-time clergy and part-time managers.

The aforementioned ecclesiastical changes may influence the institution of inquiry, clergy professional identity, and work role. I will discuss how this institution is negotiated on the basis of a professional logic that emphasizes traditional professional autonomy and spirituality, and on the basis of a managerial logic that emphasizes organizational responsibilities and governance. Within the first logic, clergy are perceived as autonomous actors and priesthood is framed as a religious calling, whereas the second logic considers pastors employees and pastoral ministry an occupation. Professional identity is exclusive, mainly because of long-term academic training and socialization. Autonomy, discretion, and trust characterize professional work. Collegiality and consensual decision-making based on consensus, with professional leaders who are first among equals and give guidance and plan work are all indicators of a professional logic (Freidson 2001). In contrast, managerial logic is composed of elements from the market and bureaucracy, often introduced in public and non-profit organizations through New Public Management reforms. The focus is on efficiency and hierarchy, marked by line management, and indicators emphasize economy and managerial control (O’Reilly and Reed 2011).

How logics meet and potentially conflict within organizations may be framed as a jurisdictional overlap (Thornton, Ocasio, and Lounsbury 2012, 57). Two logics create institutional complexity, in case of divergent prescriptions pointing at different courses of action. However, an overlap of logics may also offer the same prescriptions and hence establish a clear solution to problems. The notion of overlapping logics is particularly useful for coming to terms with the implementation of the WHA. Professionals in managerial positions (e.g., the Deans in this study) presumably suffer from a certain degree of ambiguity as professionals with administrative assignments. It is not always obvious whether actions clearly fit the professional or managerial category. This depends on the interpretative context and the eye of the beholder. Benefits for professionals may also be valid for managers, constituting areas of overlap. For example, better administrative routines may help clergy perform their professional work. Olakivi and Niska (2016) label this an overlap between professionalism and managerialism. Thus, logics are not monolithic entities but rather resources that actors draw from by picking selected elements. Since logics and institutions are socially constructed, the role of the actors is crucial. By agency, managers may recast the relationship between logics and use ambiguity to create overlaps. When something is conceptualized in different ways, it becomes ambiguous. Ambiguity may lead to conflict, as it denotes a lack of clarity and even confusion. However, ambiguity may also be used as an instrument of change, allowing actors to introduce their interpretations as valid. This perspective, in which ambiguity is applied in meaning creation, is especially common

in organizational reforms studies (Thelen & Mahoney 2010). Following Eisenberg (1984, 232), actors accomplish something through ambiguity when they succeed in promoting unified diversity and facilitating organizational change. The institutional work perspective offers tools to show how leaders achieve this.

### Institutional and conceptual work

There has been a new approach to work in organization and management theory. The trajectory of institutional work examines how actors produce and reproduce practices and understandings that lead to change in the existing institutions.

[Institutions are] a relatively stable collection of rules and practices, embedded in structures of resources that make action possible (. . .) and structures of meaning that explain and justify behavior-roles, identities and belongings, common purposes, and causal and normative beliefs. (March and Olsen 2008, 691)

In this context, the taken-for-granted assumptions and ideas of what clergy (ought to) do in their work constitute the institution of clergy work. In times when changes are sparked by a reform, an institution is contested. The manner in which such processes occur is normally studied within institutional work, defined as a broad category of purposive action aimed at “creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions” (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006, 216). Phillips and Lawrence (2012) have identified several types of institutional work. This study adds to their taxonomy by adding conceptual work. Of particular relevance is theoretical work, which is identified as “the development and specification of abstract categories and the elaboration of chains of cause and effect,” which refer to the broad phenomenon of theorizing “by naming of new concepts and practices so that they may become part of the cognitive map of the field” (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006, 221). Lawrence and Suddaby (2006, 238) underline that often an institution changes gradually by conceptualizing it in novel ways, albeit recognizable for others: “Actors appear to disrupt institutions primarily by redefining, re-categorizing, reconfiguring, abstracting, problematizing and, generally, manipulating the social and symbolic boundaries that constitute institutions.”

The church context is well suited to studying conceptual work, mainly because of the ideological nature of clergy work and because pastors are interpreters and mediators of beliefs and values (Torry 2005). Religious and faith-based organizations exist to give utterance to the ideas and values of their founders (Jeavons 1992). Nesbitt (1998) also emphasizes the centrality of clergy in formulating, interpreting, and preserving tradition when presiding over worship, participating in communication, and fostering relations. The role of conceptualizing and (verbally) articulating values and identity is a hallmark of clergy work and a profound act of sense-making (Carroll 1991). Given that religious organizations and leadership are under-researched (Tracey, Phillips, and Lounsbury 2014), it is useful to borrow some examples from other sectors. A few studies have focused on the institutional work of middle managers when they are engaged in implementing public reforms (Klemsdal, Andreassen, and Breit 2017); however, none of them has concentrated on religious organizations. This article builds and expands on a reform taxonomy of institutional work (Cloutier et al. 2015). Structural work comprises formalized roles, rules, and organizational principles. Conceptual work involves “efforts by managers to establish new belief systems, norms and interpretive schemes consistent with the new policy” (ibid:11). This resembles changing normative associations and recreating connections between sets of practices and their cultural foundations. Cloutier et al. (ibid) claim that this work has three features: (a) specialization by special roles, (b) detachment from the existing operations, and (c) repetition to take hold among professionals. To complete Cloutier et al. (2015) taxonomy, the two other types of work are operational – the technical handling of the reform and relational – implying interactions and mobilization affecting the actors.

Klemsdal, Andreassen, and Breit (2017) have applied conceptual work to middle managers in a Norwegian social work reform, articulating their autonomous agency and illustrating their loosely coupled work fashion. They emphasize the connection between conceptual and operational work, which they termed coping work. These two studies offer various definitions of conceptual work in different contexts. The term conceptual work denotes middle managers’ major efforts to implement reforms. There is a need for the further development of conceptual work by theorizing on its properties and clarifying its practice. I offer a renewed definition of conceptual work. Such development is valuable because the definition of Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) is of an aggregated nature and linked to causal explanation and positivistic research. The present article studies micro-processes and uses the interpretative paradigm. I use conceptual work in a very different context and contrary to the abovementioned

studies by examining how managers perform conceptual work on a microlevel. Given the rather limited scope of the WHA, I focus on ideological responses and conceptual character rather than structural, operational, or relational aspects.

## Methodology

To examine how Deans combine spiritual and organizational considerations when implementing WHA, I chose an in-depth qualitative study, which provides direct access to the phenomenon of inquiry. A case study is beneficial when studying a phenomenon that evolves within a particular context and over time (Ragin and Becker 1992). The aim is not to explain variations but rather to identify common traits across variations, focusing on the meaning assigned by actors.

## Data collection and analysis

Data collection involved a combination of methods. Observations, interviews, and documentary analysis generated a large ethnographic study of leadership within the Church of Norway; this article aims at analyzing the reception and implementation of the WHA. This process involves studying the documents that span one year since the implementation agreement from August 2015 until August 2016. Ethical considerations were observed by obtaining approval from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) to conduct the study and anonymizing the participants.

The folk-church comprises 12 dioceses, each led by a bishop. The total number of Deaneries in Norway is 104. The diocese that I studied is located in the most densely populated area in Norway. As many Norwegians prefer to live in the central areas, this diocese alongside any other work organization in this part of the country does not face any recruitment problems. This meant that the diocese in this case study did not have long vacancies; rather, it enjoyed long lists of applicants for vacant clergy positions. In turn, this enabled the Deans to work as leaders for most of their time without having to perform work as substitute pastors in their own Deanery, which is the case in more remote parts of Norway. Thus, good recruitment of clergy allowed the Deans to act as de facto managers, which was important for this study, emphasizing the intertwining of spiritual and organizational realms. The following figure shows the pastoral structure within the Church of Norway, where the bishop leads the diocese, the Dean leads the Deanery, and the pastor leads the parish. This pastoral structure parallels the democratically elected structure of each of these three organizational levels, where respectively the diocesan council, the Deanery council, and the parish council participate in leadership (Figure 1).

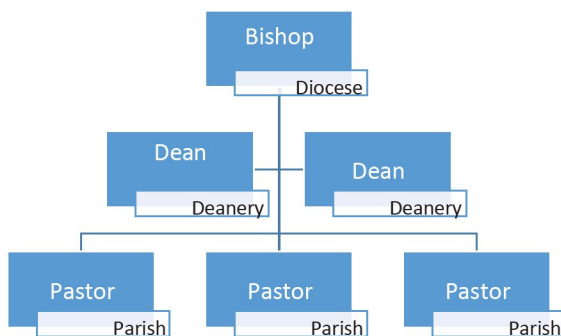


Figure 1. Organizational chart.

The diocese in this case study encompasses nine Deaneries. All Deans were invited to participate in the study, and all nine agreed to be interviewed. In addition to interviews, the case study made use of observations. Of the nine Deans, three agreed to be “shadowed” (Czarniawska 2007) for one workweek each in addition to scheduled meetings. Shadowing is an observation technique that gives direct access to an individual. I followed each Dean as he or she was about doing their job. The method permits questions and small conversations between activities, allowing probing the Deans’ intentions and interpretations of their actions. They were aged between 52 and 68 and have been Deans for 34, 8, and 2 years. The Deaneries are in or near a large Norwegian city and differ demographically. The number of clergy within each Deanery was 25, 11, and 22. The observation weeks involved daily work as well as interactions and meetings with clergy and others. Moreover, I observed the entire group of



Deans in meetings with the bishop and diocesan administration for three full days. The total observation of 18 days generated 320 pages of field notes. Additionally, eight diocesan leaders and 18 local clergy in three focus groups within each Deanery were interviewed. These additional interviews do not form the primary data source of this article but inform this study as they shed light on the phenomenon in question and give access to the organizational level above and under the Deans. I recorded and transcribed the interviews verbatim in Norwegian. All the semi-structured interviews focused on the Deans' leader roles, practices, cooperation, and being a religious leader and manager. The interviews lasted in average 72 minutes and added up to 220 pages. I also used documentary evidence to triangulate the interview and observation data with insights from the firm-level documents, such as policy documents, strategy plans, and minutes from official meetings with various actors in the diocese. These documents came to 180 pages. As noted above, the case study provided a wealth of material. Since this case study aimed at "thick," in-depth descriptions, the sample was deemed sufficient. This is due to both the quality and amount of the generated data as well as to the fact that all nine Deans in the selected diocese participated in the study. Even if a more diverse sample of Deans was achieved, it would still be unrealistic to claim that it was statistically representative of the entire population of 104 Deans within the Church of Norway.

For data analysis, I first used the data analysis software program NVIVO and opened coding as conventional content analysis (Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña 2014). I supplemented this inductive process by a thematic search, guided by my theoretical interest. The materials relating to the WHA had an easily identifiable trajectory. In several of the observed meetings, it was explicitly negotiated and was a recurrent theme in the interviews. Then, I wrote the narratives (Langley 1999) on how the WHA appears in the materials relating to each of the nine Deans, highlighting both their understanding and practical implementation of it. I did not use the term "conceptual work," which arose from the analysis in the next step. When dealing with the WHA, some distinct yet overlapping stages emerged. The opening section focuses on ambiguity as the starting point of implementation. I called this process of interpretation "conceptual work," and looked for patterns and characteristics that would elucidate the properties of such work. The following analysis shows conceptual work during implementation, which comprised somewhat overlapping stages and displayed five distinct dimensions, which I integrate into a model of conceptual work. These stages do not reflect a clear time span but are overlapping. During analysis, I also benefited from placing the quotes in a "Gioia-tree" (Gioia, Corley, and Hamilton 2013), demonstrating the steps from exemplar quotes to first and second-order concepts and aggregate codes. The overall structure is presented here, and other empirical materials are included in the next section (Table 1).

## Findings

### The bishop – ambiguity: "Pastoral identity is under pressure."

The central ecclesiastical authorities in the Church of Norway decided upon the WHA. Then, the responsibility for its implementation was delegated to each diocese, mainly because this organizational level was the employer of the local clergy. The first excerpt is

Table 1. From quotes to categories.

Exemplar quotes	First order	Second order	Aggregate code	Facing ambiguity
The WHA interferes with professional work and makes it harder to be a dean	Interfere	Disrupting		
The WHA may be interpreted in various ways, according to interests		Pluralizing		
The WHA raises questions that may help us focus on core issues	Interpret	Maneuvering		Reflecting
The deans must cooperate with the pastors relating to the WHA	Focus	Consolidating		
The WHA is basically about priorities and efforts	Cooperate	Strategizing		
My job is to create understanding for why the WHA is needed	Prioritize	Linking		Legitimizing
I have initiated discussions and facilitating talks between actors concerning the WHA.	Understand	Mediating		
My emphasis is that the WHA is not about money, but about professional responsibility	Facilitate	Reconfiguring		Integrating
The WHA is a tool to protect the pastors from burnouts.	Responsibility	Integrating		
When interacting with the pastors, the WHA helps define what ought to be done or not done	Protecting	Defining		Interacting
We must develop a modern organization and as professionals, to which the WHA helps us	Efforts	Developing		
I am repeating the message that the WHA is useful, which gradually creates understanding and a common language.	Modernize	Repeating		
	Language			

from a meeting in the early stages of this process, which brought together the Deans, the bishop, and the diocesan administration. The bishop gave the following opening address:

We must be aware of the critical questions concerning increased bureaucracy in the church, of which the WHA is typical. The division between the WHA for pastors and the Leader Agreement for Deans says linguistically that pastors are no longer leaders. Now, as pastors go from being independent into regulated work hours, pastoral identity is under pressure. The WHA may increase consciousness about our own use of time. We must work together and be present in the parishes. The liturgy of ordination is the founding document when working with the WHA. We must

rethink the identity, content, and goal of pastoral ministry. I expect the Deans to contribute with strategic reflection. We must focus on the organic life in the church, not the organizational.

The first striking feature is the bishop's dichotomizing approach when contrasting administration with pastoral ministry, organization with organism, and the liturgy of ordination and work instruction with the WHA. He initially states that the WHA represents increased bureaucratization of both clergy and church and is hence an intruding novelty. He worries about the practical consequences – less clergy work and presence in the parishes. However, he also indicates the positive features and possible areas of overlap (e.g., the focus on time use). Not only is this a matter of counting but of prioritizing the content of pastoral ministry. This may be interpreted as new practices and values, contradictory in nature with the existing template. The ambiguity of the WHA surfaces in dual interpretations: first, the WHA is seen as a bureaucratic arrangement that generates administrative work – an administrative reform that follows the Deanery reform. Second, it is perceived as a reform that promotes the interest of the professionals themselves and is initiated by the Clergy Union. The bishop notes the ambiguity of the WHA, through which the pastoral ministry is not transformed from calling to occupation but rather involves conceptualizing clergy both in a traditional manner and as employees.

The bishop calls for consciousness regarding the overall issues at stake and concretely regarding professionals' use of time, which illustrates plural interpretations. This may distract attention from professionals' core work when applying abstract expertise to unique situations. Essentially, the WHA contains something more than administrative duties. What is at stake is the identity of pastors. Therefore, the bishop points at the constitutive elements of pastoral ministry, namely the ordination and the work instruction, superseding the WHA. The WHA may not be the sole interpreter of pastoral ministry and is less important than the abovementioned elements. This implies a ranking and priority of logics from which identities emanate. The bishop appears to identify as a professional. He also frames the discussion through identification with all clergy, integrating the levels of parish pastors, Deans, and bishop within a greater "we," "us," and "our." Constructing the category "we" signifies identification with the pastors as colleagues. It is identification not on the grounds of employer's liability or hierarchy but on belonging to the same profession. The excerpt visualizes the existing tensions, contradictions, and potential overlaps. The bishop is mainly on a discursive level. He outlines the challenges that may grow into problems but offers no practical solutions. He calls for alertness and invites the Deans into the discussion, implying that leaders are agents who foster the relation between spiritual and organizational responsibilities.

#### The Deans' meeting – reflecting: "This is a rare opportunity to talk about focus!"

In the following discussion, the Deans appear satisfied with the bishop's talk. They eagerly debate the WHA and negotiate how to frame it. The following statement from a Dean illustrates how they intend to go about implementing and framing the WHA:

Done is done, regarding all difficulties that this agreement implies. We have a rare opportunity to talk about focus in clergy work. Let us use the liturgy of ordination and Work Instruction in appraisal interviews. We must pose a good example. In clergy meetings, we focus on core tasks, digging deeper into the Bible, and theology. This is a strategic choice, sustaining the wow of ordination. Our choices influence what happens locally. We must remind pastors about both working hours and the lifelong promise. We must tell the pastors that they have an obligation that supersedes the working hours, but we cannot bestow anything on them; this they must integrate in their own lives. The Deans must cooperate with the pastors relating to the WHA, not only talking about time limits but why priests are priests.

The Deans might have chosen another approach, since the WHA and the bishop are essentially ambiguous. This extract represents a deliberate choice of focus, namely strategically reframing the WHA, as indicated by the bishop, which involves more than the practical details of everyday work and administration. Their statements display motivation, will, choice, autonomy, and interest.

Reflecting on the WHA, albeit mundane and prosaic, the Deans enter the core of ministry and raise crucial issues. Thus, they lift the WHA to a level of principal importance and relate it to identity and core tasks. The Deans very rapidly change the course of the conversation and connect it to a practical level and their responsibility for implementing it. During implementation, they will utilize the two main sources of pastoral identity and use the WHA as a tool that sharpens the spiritual focus. This provides legitimacy to the new arrangement, which helps the Deans to motivate their employees. Their strategy is also to appeal to the professionals themselves beyond what the WHA regulates. They use all relevant arenas to inform and implement the WHA.

The Deans connect the discursive and operational levels. They discuss this in the Deans' meeting, their meetings with the diocesan administration and bishop, and among themselves. Locally, they talk with the unions, in clergy meetings, among staff, and in parish councils. This may be regarded as both operational and relational work.

The inherent ambiguity of the WHA is addressed through reflecting. Several key concepts are not defined, whether it is organization, bureaucracy, or strategy. This meeting discusses the overarching themes of ideological nature, namely the identity and mission of the clergy. The Deans seem occupied with coupling strategic thinking with the WHA. The conceptual and operational levels do not easily separate in content and frames but are interconnected. The Deans appear as reflective managers. They choose a course of action and make a connection between the conceptual and operational levels. Regardless of their personal sentiments toward the

WHA, they find a constructive solution to implementation by motivating pastors to adopt a strategic approach to planning and reporting work hours and tasks. This illustrates dialogues on priorities, which inter-relate the WHA with the constitutive documents of pastoral ministry.

**Thomas – integrating: “You cannot let professionals abandon their responsibility.”**

The next excerpt comes from a meeting between the local clergy union and a Dean, Thomas. They meet formally twice a semester to discuss the working conditions and the professional issues.

Dean: Concerning the WHA, I argue with the diocesan administration about the working hours of pastors at confirmand camps. They claim that pastors cannot work after 8 pm, which is impossible. You cannot let professionals abandon their responsibility in such situations.

Pastor 1: The parish councils see tensions between the economy and pastoral concerns. We would need more volunteers.

Dean: This is principally not about money rather responsibility toward the confirmands in camps and supporting our priests professionally. It is expensive to have priests in youth camps. Therefore, we must pay attention to the economic consequences of parish plans and your work plans.

Pastor 2: It is easier if we don't take the WHA that seriously and just write up numbers and work as we have done before.

Dean: Well, the WHA means a standardization toward normal work life. It might result in lost flexibility. It says that Sundays and holy days are “uncomfortable” working hours. Odd language! Work environment law and the WHA do not coincide with the characteristics of pastoral ministry.

This excerpt reveals a critical stance toward the WHA, which Thomas finds difficult to integrate into his work and conception of priesthood. He openly proclaims that he argues with the diocesan administration regarding

interpretations. This implies that the regulations are not fixed but allow various interpretations. Thomas appears antagonistic to this agreement but also in favor of professionalism and professional work. He claims that he protects professionals in principle by underlining the strategic importance of camps, which does not align with work environment law or WHA. He explicates that these do not sit well with pastoral ministry. He emphasizes the strategic importance of youth work and wishes to provide resources for it. In this case, not only do administration and law interfere and disturb pastoral work at a practical level but also at a principle level. He sides with the pastors to gain professional support and internal legitimacy. The tenor of his argument is responsibility, both toward confirmands at camps and the pastors as professionals. Responsibility is an aspect of commitment. This appears to be an argument for quality and trust – two professional values. He believes that administrative routines should support the work and not interfere with it.

This passage implies an additional focus on economy for both him and clergy. Thomas displays an instrumental attitude toward it. This expands the traditional work role of the Dean and forces pastors to consider economy and increase their cooperation with others. Even if professionals are more organized, they still have an autonomous space. He appears an antagonist ministerial theologian who underlines the independence of clergy mainly because of ordination. He has a skilled secretary who carries out delegated administrative duties. He supports the pastors and wishes to buffer them against peripheral tasks of clergy. It is an alignment to the agreement for other employees in the church. This is a matter of legitimation that parallels the WHA: “Now the priests are getting what everyone else is having.” However, the concerns about a changed identity of clergy were seldom made concrete. The Deans also agreed that they must be very proactive in their conceptual work: “But it demands the conversations about, what do I expect of you as a priest, what is most important for you to do. Not only, please make your plan and I will approve it!” Thus, strategy and professional concern also mean time-consuming work and engagement with the professionals instead of short-lived control and orders. He also emphasized the Deans’ maneuvering space: “Formally, we are middle managers. However, in real life, we are more influential on the work situation of the pastors than even the bishop.” This may also be read as a statement of increased managerial control, even if the wording is “influence.” This is also a result of the WHA. He thinks that the WHA is of strategic importance and expects the priests to discuss with their colleagues. The clergy stated that the Dean had not “entered this in a constructive way. He has been very critical; this has influenced us.” Thomas is not constructing an overlap but holds two contradictions together in dualism.

**Ann – legitimizing: “I have become a more tiresome dean.”**

The Deans have annual appraisal interviews with the bishop. The following excerpt is from a meeting with the diocesan administration and bishop. Ann is talking about technicalities and helplessness. In this conversation, she talks about the joys and worries in her work besides addressing the WHA:

I’ve become a more tiresome Dean. Some get demotivated by planning work. This has not been sunshine and people are talking about their ordination. It is more practical. I have visited the parish councils and talked about the WHA: No good reactions, even if it is the product of a democratic process. I have encouraged them to respect it; pastors are employees now. Creating motivated pastors is very challenging. My role is to create understanding and improve relations. My goal is to plan and administer the pastors, which is time-consuming. None of the Deans was happy about the WHA. The clergy have been loyal. I have never felt as much as a technician. I know some of us think it stinks, but we don’t talk about that anymore. I can use it as a tool to lead the clergy.

The Deans used the argument of responsibility. They were not the cause of the WHA and hence not solely responsible for it. It was not their creation. The Deans and the diocese articulated that they did not initially want the WHA. As employers, this implies that they did not take responsibility for the potential increased managerial control. Instead, they felt negatively influenced by more administrative work. Courses have been held locally in each Deanery and the quotation above shows the reality of Ann having to deal with the WHA. She argues on an operational level, pointing at the challenges of the WHA. These also imply more managerial control and a Dean who ensures that the employees play by the rules. This is a role with which she is not very comfortable. She prefers to see more independent clergy going about their job. Ann is the pragmatist among the Deans; she is not interested in technology or administration. She emphasizes that the WHA has generated

a great deal of extra work. She intends to perform relational leadership herself and is occupied with pastoral identity. She comments that the WHA is a major change that implies less clergy work and more administration. She explicitly states that “pastors are employees now,” which is not actually new; however, the WHA underscores this point. She also demonstrates her own resistance to the WHA but feels obliged to act as a role model and be constructive and motivate the clergy. The technical and operational implementation has been accompanied by attempts to create understanding.

John – interacting: “This is what it now means being employed as a pastor!”

John underlines the conflict between theology and law: “Being an employer, I may command them to do what I wish within the work instruction and rules and command them to work but not what to say.” There is a distinction between frame and content. He criticizes the pastors who complain that it “is not possible to be a proper pastor when we have regular working hours, but you may perfectly be one.” For him, these constitute two distinct role sets. He communicates the first to the pastors, given his primary identity as an employer.

John: There are tensions between these two logics. A very clear example is the WHA, which provides an employer with clear rules for what to say to an employee, and what the employee might expect: 35.5 hours a week period. However, the spiritual supervision would say: The priests are ordained to a lifelong service. You have a duty for being in the service as a pastor around the clock.

Interviewer: Has the WHA made it more difficult to be a Dean?

John: Quite the opposite! When defining the Dean as an employer, it is much easier when we have the tools.

John is fully aware of the tensions. The two paradigms do not completely overlap. He is sure that organizing is part of the professional job, not an addition. Administration is an inevitable part of clergy work. John appears as a protagonist to the WHA. He is a skilled administrator, who identifies as an employer and conceptualizes the clergy as employees. He administers very easily and even offers courses in the TID electronic system. (TID is not an acronym, but means “time” in the Norwegian language.) He is positive about the WHA, which represents an appropriate tool that was lacking previously. He uses it himself and identifies strongly with the paradigm of employer–employee. He is quite new in his position – working as a Dean for two years. He appears as a responsible and accountable employer, whose work is regulated by law, and as a pastor who gives spiritual supervision and guidance: “My job is to show the pastors that they are important.” John represents a type of Dean who emphasizes the employer–employee relation between Deans and pastors. However, this is not the only framing. The WHA is grounded in this paradigm. As a Dean, he is not obliged to count hours, but he does:

I count the hours myself. I cannot impose on clergy a system that some experience as rigid, without doing it myself. I need to physically feel the regime I put on others. Otherwise, I would not understand it. I cannot counsel or supervise others and answer the questions if I do not know the system. Those skills I get by using it myself.

John identifies with the clergy. However, he is also the most practical among the Deans. This illustrates well how discursive and operational elements are configured in one managerial practice. The identification with the clergy and the WHA turns his efforts into practice. The following excerpt from a clergy meeting illustrates how John elaborates on the mechanism of integrating the WHA as part of the profession and being a pastor. He remarked that “this is what it now means being an employed pastor.” The meeting opens with a communion service in the church, collecting approximately 30 local clergy. Thereafter, they move into a meeting room where tables are placed in a square shape, facing a table in front of a screen. After coffee, the Dean presents the day’s program: “Clergy in a new time: experiences and reflections.” Then follows basic training in the program for registering hours; TID. He gives a talk about recent reforms, highlighting “from being independent, we have become employees who are governed.” He refers to this development thus: “From state officials to church employees.” This talk accomplishes something for him, namely giving an overview and knowledge of the WHA and placing this reform into a setting of theory and development. It

also allows the clergy to look beyond their personal worries about the WHA. The speeches last until noon and then afterward they are followed by a one-hour talk about TID. The last hour is devoted to information, cases, and questions particularly about TID and the registering hours. John interprets and elaborates the WHA as a lawyer and employer, not as a theologian. Having given the usual information, he informs the audience about the next meetings and says: "Go in peace and serve the Lord with joy!" These are the concluding words of the Sunday service, marking its end. These words are presented out of their context, which demonstrate that what has happened is part of their core work as pastors. These words illustrate a way of wrapping it up and suggesting a legitimation of the event.

### Summary of findings

The analysis identifies the properties of managerial institutional work, implementing the WHA that aims at handling the spiritual and organizational dimensions, referred to as conceptual work. Such work originates in ambiguity. Reflecting denotes the Deans as agents. Legitimizing and integrating are efforts within conceptual work, resulting in interacting. [Table 2](#) shows the characteristics and overlapping phases when Deans handled the WHA.

### Discussion

The research question guiding this article is: What characterizes the institutional work performed by Deans when implementing the WHA? The analysis provides in-depth illustrations of how religious leaders succeed in balancing the spiritual and organizational aspects of pastoral work. This section introduces their efforts as conceptual work,

**Table 2. Dimensions related to conceptual work.**

Facing ambiguity		Overlapping phases in the implementation of the WHA	
Re	Re	Integrating	Interacting
WHA disrupts institutional template of pure professionalism	Identifying maneuvering space WHA is contested and discussed both conceptually and operationally by the leader group	Linking WHA to existing template by contrasting or aligning	Reconfiguring and constructing logic overlap
Navigating pluralism and contradictions by contesting interpretations	Consolidation by agreeing on course of action and interpretation; defining problems and solutions	Articulating in known and established terms, and linking to other constitutive documents – legitimizing internally and in societal context.	Integrating by connecting organizational with professional core work
	Strategy relates ideas, concepts, and operations	Mediating diachronically between past and future to shed light on the present.	Case treatment of the WHA by defining symptoms, diagnosis and treatment through strategy choices of problems, solutions, and actions
			Developing and merging concepts with operations, creating new practice
			Repeating the former stages within the community of practice

underpinning its renewed definition. I emphasize the importance of conceptual work in the church context and propose a theoretical model before the concluding remarks.

### Conceptual work

The analysis provides a micro-level focus on managerial activities and shows that aligning the dual nature of clergy reform was indeed hard work. Work signifies efforts that challenge resistance by negotiating the



existing rules, practices, and beliefs. Institutional work recognizes managers as embedded agents. The Deans, ambiguously positioned in constrained institutional contexts with strong professions and organizational regulations, were responsible for implementing the WHA. Reforms are external attempts at deliberate institutional change (Lowndes and Wilson 2003). Echoing Eisenberg (1984), it was possible to implement the WHA precisely because it was possible to understand it in two ways. This presupposition displays a relativist view of meaning, which is contextual and constructed. Ambiguity implies a lack in both message attributes and receiver interpretation. This is relevant in situations where equivocality is absent. Omitting contextual cues enables multiple interpretations. A strategic use of ambiguity is to accomplish goals, and inconsistency of goals increases creativity and flexibility. This balances the organizational need for both individuality and community, which is essentially paradoxical. Ambiguity is notorious in relation to reforms, which calls for institutional work (Thelen and Mahoney 2010). Moreover, ambiguity makes way for creativity and agency, in which individuals may exploit a reform in their own interests.

As middle managers and agents of change, Deans played a central role in handling ambiguity in alignment with Woodrige and Floyd's description:

Middle managers provide top management with unique interpretations of emerging issues and by proposing new initiatives. In their synthesizing role, middle managers interpret ambiguous, diverse data related to the strategy situation, framing the perceptions of other managers and changing the strategic agenda. Implementation role involves engaging in ongoing set of interventions to bring organization action in line with deliberate strategy. (Floyd and Woodrige 1997, 467)

Moreover, Balogun and Johnson (2004, 523) argue that the role of middle managers as change agents "will continue to increase in importance as organizations become increasingly complex and geographically distributed." Agency implies responsibility and being the cause of alternative courses of action, hence an ability to act differently, exemplified by the purposeful efforts displayed by the Deans. They recast the relationality of logics, facilitating the values, norms, and ideals in which both logics resonate (Olakivi and Niska 2016).

To illuminate this specific work of the Deans, I will compare my findings with a particular study. The term conceptual work was first employed by Cloutier et al. (2015), who researched top managers who were engaged in implementing a major Canadian health reform. They found four types of institutional work: structural, conceptual, operational, and relational. This classification is comprehensive. These modes appear to be general, mainly because changes resulting from a reform necessitate work in a broad field. All these types of work were included in the WHA. Nonetheless, the Deans were particularly concerned with conceptual work. Cloutier et al. (2015, 11) define conceptual work as "efforts by managers to establish new belief systems, norms and interpretive schemes consistent with the new policy." Establishing this definition, they identified three properties of the phenomenon, which I relate to the WHA. First, they found conceptual work to be specialized – delegated to particular people with necessary time and skills. In my study, the top management initiated the overall discussion situated in ambiguity. However, the Deans involved professionals in an ideological debate. This interpretative level was not solely a matter for specialists. Both the bishop and Deans emphasized the necessity of entering into a dialogue with the pastors regarding the understanding of the WHA through reflection on the new template, related to history and the essence of pastoral ministry. All the practitioners participated in conceptualization, as all are ordained pastors. The professionals reflect the phases in conceptual work performed by the middle managers. The managers proactively initiated the joint reflecting, legitimizing, integrating, and interacting. Thus, they safeguarded the autonomy and participation of the clergy. This expresses professionalism that emphasizes the collegium dimension (Sahlin and Eriksson-Zetterquist 2016).

Second, Cloutier et al. (2015) found that conceptual work was performed in a detached manner, took place on the level of discourse, often separated from the operational level, mainly because new ideas were put forward in contradiction with the existing patterns of operation. This is not the case with the WHA. First, the nature of the working hours' reform was very practical. The WHA was immediately connected to ideology, recognizing the paradoxical nature of the agreement and the understanding that work hours might affect the

institution of pastoral ministry. The bishop remained at a discursive level; however, the Deans as middle managers immediately made efforts to construct potential overlaps of logics and ideas with technicalities. They combined the practicalities of the WHA with ideological discussions. In contradiction to the Canadian study, the process of implementation cannot be separated into discursive and operational levels; rather, these are elements in the same practice. Middle managers have to link the conceptual with the concrete. Third, Cloutier et al. (2015) found conceptual work to be repetitive, since new concepts and ideas were exchanged in forums that were remote from operations. Therefore, the managers needed to reformulate the concept. In the case of the WHA, the ideological debates were not detached from the professional community of practice. The Deans brought experiences from the operational level to the top management throughout the implementation. This finding reflects an easier organizational structure with only two managerial levels above the clergy – the Deans and the bishop. The share size of the organization, with only 140 employees, is smaller than that in the Canadian study. According to Cloutier et al (2015, 272), “conceptual work pushes toward the ideas associated with the new policy; in contrast, operational work pulls back toward the old.” I found such evidence in my material, since conceptual work is translating the former institution into a new situation; the former leaves its marks on the current. In line with Klemsdal, Andreassen, and Breit (2017), I found that conceptual work involved significant efforts to institutionalize the new reform. It focuses work on the meaning of the reform and communicating meaning. This consisted of establishing categories and interpretive schemes. The church leaders considered WHA a change if not a radical one. An institution is a social structure, which is resilient to change and of a self-activating and self-reproducing nature. Institutionalization denotes how practices, norms, and values are widely accepted, used, and taken for granted. The Deans are present oriented, corresponding to practical and normative judgments on possible trajectories of action that respond to the emerging demands and ambiguities. They reproduce with an awareness and purpose (Thelen and Mahoney 2010).

In summary, middle managers’ conceptual work in reforms is not identical and universal but seems to exhibit specific contextual properties. The Deans performed conceptual work because they are religious leaders in a professional context. The characteristic of their clergy work is interpretative and communicative. Deans have a limited number of employees and are close to the operational level, unlike Cloutier et al. (2015) study of top managers in a major reform in the entire system on several levels where conceptual work appeared abstract, global, and pristine, creating visions that were “often difficult to connect to day-to-day practice” (2015, 269). However, there is no rigid separation between conceptual work in the WHA and operative and relational work. The conceptual level permeates the church, being the carrier of values (Torry 2005). The WHA was no creative and visionary reform, rather a mundane change in organizational procedure with potential ideological implications. This explains why it sparked off such a debate. This study that was undertaken in the Church of Norway displays specific properties of conceptual work. Instead of it being detached, specialized, and repetitive, it is reflective, legitimizing, and integrating. This aligns with Kraatz (2009, 73) who proposes two types of managerial work: (a) legitimacy-seeking behaviors by winning the support of constituencies, and (b) work on organizational integrity: “It entails efforts to knit together diverse constituencies and purposes, to engender cooperation and win consent, and to create a whole entity that is at least minimally coherent, integrated, and self-consistent.”

The Deans refused to interpret the WHA solely as an administrative reform. Instead, they interpreted it as strategy and care for the pastors, which constitute an overlap of logics. The Deans underlined their challenges and negative experiences, time-consuming administration, confronting pastors who do not work too much, and a lack or change of electronic programs. Outwardly, they agreed on a presentation that is far more positive, with the overarching goal of motivating the clergy. They appear somewhat reluctant to enter into counterproductive discussions and wish to avoid the negative effects of the WHA. This is clearly a question of adequate framing. The clergy’s view on administration, regarded as functions of support and not proper pastoral work, is rather negative (Sirris 2016). The Deans agree on working relationally and talk constructively about the WHA in their network organizations. It is imperative that administration and its connotations link to strategy and discussions on priorities. This implies that the Deans must engage in a dialogue with the function of both managers and professionals to discuss what every pastor shall prioritize in

his or her amount of time. The leaders attempt to frame it as a situation marked by synergy. By conceptualizing the WHA as an administrative tool with strategic significance, the Deans avoid focusing on increased control and decreased autonomy. As such, the WHA is not actually a complete overlap but rather a selective approach that focuses on a few principles that overlap between professionalism and managerialism (Olakivi and Niska 2016).

### Toward a model of conceptual work

In examining institutional change, the emphasis is often on the creation and emergence of new institutions rather than on the work undertaken to disrupt the existing ones (Thelen and Mahoney 2010). This entails changing normative associations by recreating the connections between sets of practices and the moral and cultural foundations for these practices. Thus, they offer rationalizations for new forms and ideas. This also occurs when adopting structures and practices from other sectors. Kitchener (2002, 401) describes naming and theorizing through narratives. It may undermine assumptions and beliefs, decreasing the perceived risk of innovation, and differentiate by undermining core assumptions and beliefs.

Cloutier et al. (2015) also highlight the creation of new institutions in a reform setting. It is difficult to separate the conceptual and operational, which lean on structures and is performed relationally. I propose a renewed definition of conceptual work as the reflexive, legitimizing, integrative efforts initiated by managers to recast the relationality of the logics at stake. It originates in ambiguity and aims at institutionalizing. Conceptual work is integrative and legitimizing. I conceptualize the WHA as entailing elements of both creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions. The middle managers navigate the reform in a context of ambiguity, pluralism, and contradiction. By agency, they hybridize a reform using the existing institutionalized forms and practices. The concept underlying the WHA is not new but belongs to the occupational domain. It does not emphasize translating, since this concept is a known one. However, Deans purposefully bring new arrangements into being by navigating according to their prior ideas and practices. They confront contradictions inherent in the pre-existing institutionalized arrangements, thereby leading over time and not toward radical transformation, as originally envisioned, but toward

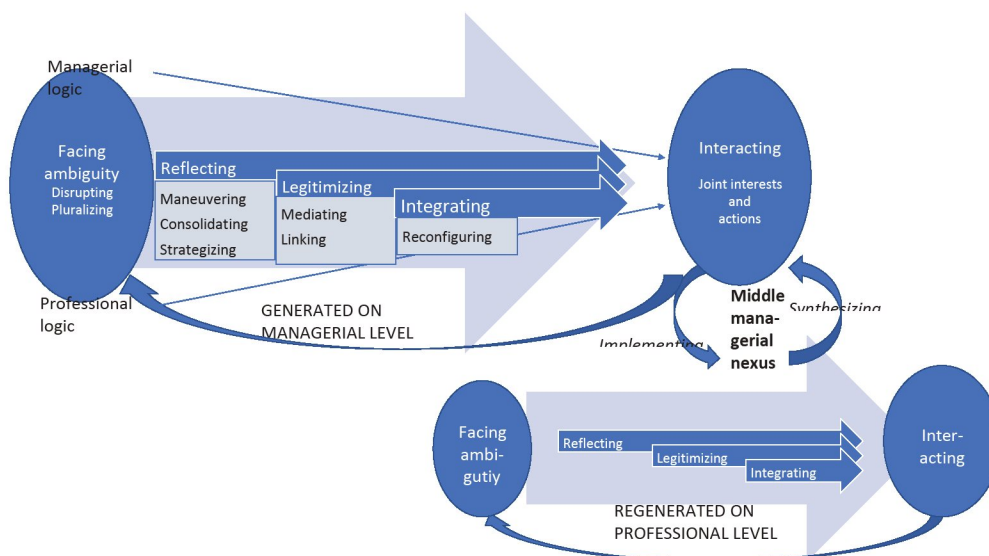


Figure 2. Mechanisms of institutionalization of the WHA – middle managers performing conceptual work.

a hybridized form of transformation where elements of the proposed reform are crafted onto previous arrangements (Cloutier et al. 2015, 274).

This work was carried out in two parallel processes: internally in the managerial group and externally when meeting the professionals. As professionals participate in conceptual work, the process reproduces itself in the practice community, as actors are socialized or learn to follow the institutions. Clergy are involved in the conceptual work on the WHA, not merely accepting it. Conceptual work encompasses both linear and cyclic processes, as indicated by the straight and semi-circular arrows in [Figure 2](#). The five dimensions related to conceptual work are analytically separable, as they intertwine and appear simultaneously in real life. There is no causality among the stages, and the process may iterate between these dimensions. However, my materials reveal progression among these aspects. In practice, institutionalization of the WHA is the final product in which conceptual and operational aspects meet and new ambiguity arises. Doing conceptual work successfully appears to depend on close contact at the operational level and hence relations. It is paramount for them to clarify, operationalize, define, and carry out their mission. I visualize the properties of the conceptual work in the following model:

### Concluding remarks

From a macro perspective, conceptual work may be viewed as involving handling changes within the evolution of clergy (Percy 2006). Alignment to general work life may indicate secularization, since the institutionalizing and deinstitutionalizing of professions are caused by pressure from the environment (Oliver 1992). This article illustrates how leaders negotiate the institution of pastoral ministry through conceptual work, bridging the existing ideas with new arrangements. The analyzed empirical materials have been theorized into insights of a processual model of how middle managers contribute to changing an institution through conceptual work by identifying five distinct dimensions on managerial and professional levels. Implementation of a reform poses challenges on several organizational levels. This study on conceptualizing highlights what the Deans aimed at and attempted to accomplish. I have demonstrated that, through the interpretations that emanate from ambiguity through conceptual work, the Deans mediate between spiritual and organizational responsibilities as well as professional and managerial logics. The institutional perspective deals with both identity and understanding of beliefs. Based on this assumption and theoretical conception, I investigated how middle managers enact such work in the implementation of a clergy reform.

The Deans conceptualize the pastors variously as autonomous and constrained professionals, while the WHA facilitates the employee dimension. Deans seek internal organizational legitimacy while gaining increased managerial control. The “pastors’ dilemma” denotes an inherent conflict between pastoral spiritual and organizational responsibilities. It is remarkable that the Deans do not highlight the conflict between professional autonomy and managerial control. These disturbing elements hinder an overlap of the two logics, and the Deans may be critiqued for harmonizing these tensions. The materials suggest that the Deans in this study chose different strategies. The common aim of the Deans and the diocese was to take the clergy along, regardless of personal views. This appears to maintain or modify the tension within the institution of pastoral ministry. It is not surprising that the WHA launched a great amount of conceptual work, given the ideological context of the church. The result of the conceptual work by the Deans on the WHA is the changed institution of pastors both as autonomous professionals and as employees within an organization. This signifies the integrative aspects of spiritual and organizational realms, which, in turn, help precipitate a cultural change.

### Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

### Notes on contributor

Stephen Sirris is an assistant professor at the Faculty of Theology, Diaconia and Leadership, and a PhD student at the Centre of Diaconia, Values and Professional Practice at VID Specialized University, Oslo, Norway. He is the head of the master program in value-based leadership, and also the head of Centre for Value-Based Leadership and Innovation. He has published articles on management, organizing and professions in the public and the third sector.

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### **Appendix 3:**

#### **Article III**

Sirris, Stephen and Byrkjeflot, Haldor.(2019). Realising calling in managers' identity work. Comparing themes of calling in faith-based and religious organisations. (Accepted in *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society*, 32(2)).

# Realising calling through identity work. Comparing themes of calling in faith-based and religious organisations

## Abstract

This study explores notions of calling in management careers in faith-based and religious organizations. What are the similarities and differences between managers' understanding of their work as a calling in these two types of organisation? How do they negotiate calling in their work? We use interview data of nine middle managers in a faith-based hospital and nine deans in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Norway. The article builds on cross-disciplinary literature on calling in work-life. We theorise by comparisons how notions of calling are resources when negotiating identity at work. Our findings show that the hospital managers respond to the modern meaning-making calling as emanating from within and outside, while the deans *also* experience the traditional religious calling from above. Such notions blend in our conceptualisation of calling as pluralistic, biographical and present-oriented. Both categories of managers tell that their transition into management is guided by an orientation to serve and to promote organisational mission and values.

## Key words

Calling, identity work, managers, professionals, faith-based

## Introduction

Scholars across disciplines are studying work as a central source of purpose and identity (Duffy and Dik 2013, Hall and Chandler 2005). Irrespective of sector or occupation, individuals seek meaningful work transcending production and livelihood (Alvesson 2002, Wrzesniewski, McCauley, Rozin, and Schwartz 1997). Facilitated by technology and the ideal of flexibility, work extends beyond the traditionally demarcated lines of regulated work-hours and specific locations, permeating life in new ways (Sennett 1998). These changes resonate in the plethora of concepts describing work. While *job* focuses on financial rewards and necessities, and *career* implies advancement, *calling* denotes fulfilling work – with or without



religious cues (Wrzesniewski et al. 1997). Employers and organisations are attracted to workers with a sense of calling because they are intrinsically motivated, creative and engaged (Steger, Dik, and Duffy 2012). Despite their differing motives, the interests of employees, managers and organisations converge to enhance the meaningfulness of work. Aligning with the notion of lived religion (Ammerman 2016), where religious cues appear outside the traditional religious domain, religion may be *in work* and *at work* in organisations. Since work entails a search for identity, embedded in, yet transcending, mundane tasks and interactions, religion is presumably in some instances reflected in managerial work accounts displaying identity, values and organisational commitments (Farris 2013). This sets the scene for a renewed interest in the interplay of the sacred and secular in work-life, here illustrated through the conceptualisations of *calling*. We review two ideal-typical approaches to calling; the classical religious approach referring to a sense of “destiny and pro-social duty”, and the modern meaning-making approach concerning “an inner drive toward self-fulfilment or personal happiness” (Duffy and Dik 2013, 429). We then discuss them in relation to identity work as a space for negotiating calling.

We situate our research within management and organisation studies exploring managers’ talk about the meaning dimension in their work by drawing on interviews with 18 managers. Nine are managers in a faith-based hospital, and nine are deans leading clergy in the Church of Norway. Faith-based organisations (FBOs) are particularly purpose-driven and managers are distinct carriers of values that express organisational mission and self-understanding (Jeavons 1992). Constituting fertile areas for our investigation, their Christian faith-base variously provides the rationale for organisational identity and core activities. Despite historical changes, these contexts assumedly still encompass perceptions of calling and discourses containing religious imagery. However, both organisations experience that their task environment and international reform movements provide reasons for adapting to a more instrumental approach (Askeland and Schmidt 2016). Institutional work related to values in FBOs serves as stepping-stones between the sacred and secular spheres. Hospitals rooted in the diaconal tradition offer health care like other hospitals. We cannot presuppose that the employees possess religious commitments (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2012). Their status as professionals in FBOs triggers identity work; engagement in “forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a sense of coherence and distinctiveness” (Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003, 1165).

On this backdrop, we presuppose that the hospital exhibits an array of calling notions. Similarly, we assume that the modernisation of the church as organisation extends its repertoire of meaning-making resources in present work-life. This development facilitates managers in both organisations to incorporate various sources of motivation. We propose a nuanced conceptualisation of this phenomenon. Thus, this article has primarily a theoretical purpose, which is achieved by the means of an explorative and comparative approach. We compare a specific phenomenon, themes of calling in managers' talk about their work, searching for similarities and differences. The organisations have undergone similar reforms to strengthen management and we expect tensions between professionals and organisations to be present in both contexts. This facilitates a similar system design, comparison of two phenomena that assumedly share central characteristics (Felski and Freidman 2013), due to their common Christian faith-base. The organisations differ in terms of technology, number of employees, size and complexity, budget, and the character of work. The hospital involves many professional specialities, characterized by technological and scientific discoveries. The church organisation is more ideological or idea-driven and has a simpler structure.

Researchers have primarily studied calling as a spiritual dimension of professionalism, different from professional evidence-based knowledge and practice (Tveit 2008, Felter 2010, Christensen 2013). There exists little research on managers and calling, even within FBOs and religious organisations. Religious leadership is studied from various perspectives, however not in relation to calling and identity. Sociological studies of organizations in the Norwegian folk-church context have mainly focused on managerial roles and functions (Askeland and Schmidt 2016). This role perspective highlights external expectations, whereas an identity perspective emphasises self-understanding. Huse (1998) studied deans using economic organisation theory and the principal-agent-approach. Hernes (2007) compared church members' and employees' perceptions of and expectations towards management, which aligned to those found in schools and hospitals. Askeland (2015) also discovered profound similarities between daily managerial behaviour in FBOs compared with others. Hansson and Andersen (2008) characterised the leadership style of Swedish vicars as relation-oriented. Sirris (2018) explored Norwegian clergy's dual expectations towards deans in terms of managerial and professional competencies. The priests emphasised professional identification with their deans based on the commitment of ordination.

Scandinavian studies of religious managers have prioritised roles and found basic similarities with those in other contexts. This research tradition has mainly neglected managers' personal convictions and identities. There is a need for research exploring how managers conceptualise and value their work in FBOs and religious organisations. Several of the above-mentioned studies are surveys. Qualitative descriptions offer supplementary interpretations and contributions. The questions guiding this study are: What are the similarities and differences between managers' understanding of their work as a calling in faith-based and religious organisations? How do they negotiate calling in their work? We aim at investigating and comparing the notions of calling in managers' identity work in two different organizations and propose a renewed conceptualisation of calling in modern organisations.

The theoretical section discusses the interrelation between the key concepts of calling and identity. We argue that managers' perception of work is best understood in the plural, coined as *themes of calling*, rather than the established dichotomy of classical and modern calling. Next, we describe the methodology followed by the main findings. The discussion based on interviews and a literature review suggests a novel classification of calling.

### Theoretical perspectives on calling and identity

Calling is an archaic concept that originated in a religious context and has recently regained relevance and attention. Calling was discredited and left behind as a reminiscence of the past, yet scholars are re-establishing calling as a pathway for meaning-making in work life (Hall and Chandler 2005). It has seen a resurgence in multiple disciplines including psychology (Wrzesniewski et al. 1997), organisation and management studies (Duffy and Blustein 2005), literature (Frey 2008), and the sociology of religion (Davidson and Caddell 1994).

### Classical calling and its development

Calling, and its cognate vocation, is rooted in medieval Christian traditions and denotes a call away from the world into monastic life or priesthood. The Protestant reformation profoundly affected the perception of work and calling. Contradicting both the Greek-Roman perception of work as toil and medieval calling as a property of monastic life, Protestant work ethics viewed all mundane work as a calling from God (Wingren 2004). Max Weber related calling to profession and identity. He claimed calling ("berufung") turns a profession ("beruf") into a vocation (Farris 2013, 79), connecting religious callings to all types of work. Whereas Luther

emphasised loyalty to one's given station in life, Calvin underlined each person's responsibility to discover talents and use them. The Calvinist calling is a command by God to work for his glory, not a fate as in Lutheranism. Central in Weber's scholarship is the restless entrepreneur, fully preoccupied with fulfilling his predestined calling and demonstrating that he is among "the selected". Puritans develop a "personality" that is a more stable identity type associated with the strong self which Sennett (1998) terms as *character*. Having a personality implies a strong inner core not easily adapting to changing external changing circumstances, unlike the modern knowledge-worker in the post-bureaucratic organisation (Webb 2004).

#### Modern calling and the turn towards identity

Weber's approach and the link between calling, identity and work reflect a major trend in organisation and management studies since the 1980s, emphasising the role of organisational culture, employee motivation, commitment and professional and managerial identity (Alvesson 2002). The religious connotations of the current managerialist discourse are widely noted. Management scholars and consultants are often assigned the status of gurus or evangelists, and organisations develop strategies guided by their vision, mission and values (Pattison 1997).

Whereas the classical view of calling emphasised differences between the duties of work and private life, the modern version views work as inseparable from life, transcending a mere job. Work may be enjoyable yet demands efforts and even sacrifices since something crucial is at stake (Bunderson and Thompson 2009). Work becomes an expression of one's purpose and identity. Sennett (1998) underlines the potential damaging effects of the modern calling. It correlates with burnout, manipulation and "mind control" and is linked with the ideologies of flexibility and individualism. In contrast, Giddens (1984) identifies the possibility of creating a meaningful work-life in the same flexible capitalism based on the 'reflexive self'. The modern negotiable self-identity, contrary to the Puritan strong self, refers to the idea of continuous interaction between "I", "me" and "others" (Webb 2004). If identity is conceptualised as processual construction, it demands efforts from the individual. Managers may perform identity work when constructing identifications by negotiating the central, enduring and distinctive properties of the organisation (Pratt and Ravasi 2016).

In sum, calling is variously conceptualised, aligning with two main perceptions of identity; as character and reflexive self. First, Sennett's understanding of identity as a stable character

corroded by capitalism aligns with the classical concept of calling, capturing both a continuity of the older idea of duty and the more flexible type of identity associated with the term commitment. Like calling, commitment is a force that binds an individual to a target and a course of action related to the target. Second, Giddens emphasises identity as negotiated and reflexive, as is modern calling. As organisational life and work relations become more complex, employees have to relate to several targets simultaneously. There is a pressure on professionals to perform identity work and increasingly so when moving into management (Alvesson 2002). Professional identity is the relatively stable and enduring constellation of attributes, beliefs, values, motives and experience in terms of which people define themselves in a professional role (Ibarra 1999, 765). It is assumed that managerial identity constitutes the negotiation of professional and organisational identities. Managerial identity is assumedly more modern and flexible, emphasising serving the shifting needs of an organisation, whereas professionals display more stable identities in service of a common good (Pratt and Ravasi 2016).

#### [Calling related to professional and managerial work and identity](#)

In the early sociology of professions, professions were viewed as stewards of the common good in society, entrusted expertise, and guided by ethical codes (Brint 2015). Upon failure, they risked losing their licence. Health workers are still associated with ethical guidelines and the Hippocratic Oath. The clergy in our research context are called into the Lutheran church as the ordination into priesthood is stated “rite vocare”; to be rightly called (Wingren 2004). Yet, theology does not explicate calling, which Christensen (2013) interprets in three distinctive ways: a call from above, from God; a call from outside, meaning the specific need of a parish for a priest and the approval of the bishop; and third, a call from within, referring to being convinced about entering priesthood or management. We find that the first two cohere with the classical notion of calling, whereas the third aligns with the modern perception of calling (Duffy and Dik 2013, Bunderson and Thompson 2009).

Thus, both clergy and health workers are expected to serve the needs of others, which resonates with the nature of professionalism. According to central Anglo-American research on professions (Brint 2015), modern professions have lost their soul and traditional identity and become largely oriented towards market-centred and organisational ideas. Healthcare and religious organisations are undergoing reforms that increase the power of managers and the carriers and providers of managerial identities (Pratt and Ravasi 2016). Some studies examine

how church employees and health workers relate calling to their work under these circumstances (Felter 2010, Tveit 2008, Christensen 2013), arguing that workers have dropped the classical discourse of calling and substituted it by a discourse of professional expertise, seeking to build managerial legitimacy and enhance individual status. A debated question is to what extent religion constitutes part of calling and of the current identity work in these organisations. Focusing on a variety of themes of calling, we include calling in both a classical religious and a modern meaning-seeking sense. Our objective is to nuance this dichotomy moving beyond the ideal-types by exploring and comparing how managers in FBOs and in religious organisations integrate themes of calling in their identity. We summarise key features in the classical and modern calling as ideal-types:

Table 1: *The ideal-typical dichotomy of calling*

CHARACTERISTICS	CLASSICAL CALLING	MODERN CALLING
<i>Framing</i>	Collective religious traditions	Individual secular meaning-making
<i>Motivation</i>	Destiny and duty	Self-fulfilment and personal happiness
<i>Source</i>	Emanating from above and outside (transcendent)	Emanating from within (immanent)
<i>Temporality</i>	Fixed and stabile	Fluid and changing
<i>Identity</i>	Character (Sennett)	Self-reflexive (Giddens)
<i>Arena</i>	Work and life divided	Work and life inseparable
<i>Domain</i>	Professional	Managerial

## Methodology

### Research context and data collection

Our target group is managers on middle managerial levels in FBOs and religious organisations, which are at the nexus of organisational actions, close to operational and strategic levels and responsible for shouldering the organisational values and ethos (Floyd and Wooldridge 1997). Qualitative research may illuminate poorly understood phenomena like the role of calling in contemporary work settings. The HR department in both organisations helped compiling the sample, which comprised interviewees who agreed to partake.

The diaconal hospital, located in a large Norwegian city, has a catchment area of 170,000 inhabitants, 1,700 employees and three managerial levels. The informants are four department managers (three men and one woman), five unit managers (two men and three women). The participants are aged between 42 and 67 years and have held their positions for 4–16 years. Even if such positions are neutral of profession, the interviewees are nurses and doctors. At

both levels, management is a full-time job with scarcely any clinical work. The three departments are surgery, medicine and psychiatry.

The Church of Norway was a state church until 2012. Comprising 69% of the population in 2017, it is the oldest and largest nationwide member organisation ([www.kirken.no](http://www.kirken.no)). The 12 dioceses cover every region of the country. The bishop leads the diocese, and the deans who perform employers' liability on behalf of the bishop in their deanery, which typically consists of 15–25 priests. Several reforms have brought about changes, especially the Deanery reform in 2004 (Askeland and Schmidt 2016) which made the deans distinct middle managers, diminishing the traditional autonomy of the clergy. This position is not neutral to profession. Ordination is a formal qualification, and deans work as part-time parish priests. We chose one diocese, here granted anonymity, because it is centrally located and has no recruitment problem allowing the deans to use time on leadership rather than clergy work. The material includes interviews with all deans in this diocese; three are women, and six are men. They had held their current positions for 2–24 years and were aged 50–69 years.

In the semi-structured interviews, we explore how the 18 managers understand their work as a calling. The objective was to allow the interviewees to elaborate salient work-related issues. Our questions were open-ended and addressed the contents of their job, leadership, relations to employees and top management, commitments, fulfilments, challenges, and characteristics of their work, organisations and identity. The first author conducted all interviews in Norwegian, lasting in average 75 minutes, and transcribed them verbatim.

### Research ethics and analysis

Participants gave their informed consent, and ethical concerns were safeguarded by granting them anonymity. They openly and freely discussed the issues and we did not encounter any controversial issue.

Our approach to the data is interpretative, giving priority to an exploration and analysis of individual-level experiences. The thematic analysis was an abductive open-ended iterative analytic approach to building theory that moved between data and tentative theories (Eisenhardt 1989). The preliminary analysis included a reading of the material, guided by a thematic search for similarities and differences in what we considered relevant data given the research question. To get an overview of the large material, we applied NVIVO in a

systematic process of inductive thematic content analysis in addition to manual coding. Both processes assisted in identifying the prevalence of emergent analytical themes. We then systematically compared data using matrixes to find and show patterns between the data (Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña 2014). The aim of the data coding and categorization was to capture how managers perceived themes of calling – that is, how they integrated the classical and modern notions of calling in their identity work. From this inductive open-coding process, two major categories emerged within the themes of calling: biographical calling themes, and present-oriented and relational calling themes.

## Findings

### Biographical calling themes in the hospital and church

The first theme includes convictions responding to certain summons, here analysed in a tripartite direction; *from above*, *from inside*, *from outside*. These personal calling experiences focused on identity, being biographical due to their historical and enduring nature.

Few health managers referred to a *calling from above* implying an experience of external intervention aligning with the classical calling. “I was saved immediately,” one male department manager (67) exclaimed metaphorically, “this was what I was supposed to do. It was obvious for me, for the first time in my life!” This theme downplayed the agency of the called. A male unit manager, aged 45, referred to a specific event as “lightning from a clear sky, a lifelong conviction about my direction in life”. The managers who referred to a call from above, ascribed it to “the greater good”. Explicit religious calling narratives were rare.

*Calling from within* among hospital managers referred to inner commitments associated with romantic notions known to especially gifted persons, pursuing their talents by a course of life: “Here I can make a difference for those in need,” a male department manager in his 50s said, “you take pride in your work, when going to bed at night and when resting in your grave”. We deemed this as a type of inner validation after entering a given role. However, some managers also described themselves as drawn to a specific kind of work, even before entering it, and eventually achieving a validation. Such ideas were articulated by a female unit manager aged 54: “a discovery or coming home”. The imagery of discovery implied an open-ended quest rather than rational search among these research participants.



All hospital managers told about a *calling from outside*. This was a mundane dimension of calling, mediated through others, accidentally or through recruitment. A female unit manager, 45, said: “I was asked to apply for the position. I didn’t want to resist. My heart has gone more to the managerial part of my job, leaving the professional realm. I find a synergy. I started working there by chance. No ambitions to become a manager.” These managers discussed incidental situations that eventually led them into their work.

Turning to the church, most deans explicitly described being *called from above*, by God, in the context of role transitions; entering priesthood or leadership. A female dean in her 60s said about the transition from profession into becoming a dean: “I’m raised in a Christian family. Wanted to work as a priest. An inner life-long surrendering, a calling, not outgrown. When asked to apply for the position as a dean, I first resisted. I prayed, it matured. Felt it as a calling”. This historical dimension in statements referring to childhood underlines their perception of calling as integrated and enduring in their identities. The same life-long awareness about a specific mission that had brought them into priesthood, continued to nurture their calling as they moved into leadership.

Most deans experienced a *calling from within*. They had a life-long familiarity with the church. They referenced biographical accounts of careers in Christian youth work to gain encouragement and responsibility. One male dean aged 50 combined metaphors with prosaic reasons for being a manager: “This is where my heart resides. After pastoring for years, I felt like becoming a dean with manager challenges and still be a priest.”

The *calling from outside* shows that calling was not exclusively about inner emotions, but lifted from an individual level unto a systemic level. A dean in his 60s underlined that “the position itself, be it professional work as a priest or the formal role as a dean, is the calling.” This sense of calling was collective and collegial rather than individualistic. Deans’ consciousness related to their ordination, where they by making promises responded to tripartite summons from above, within and outside.

Overall, the findings reflect similarities. Managers in both organisations talked about their inner convictions of being in the right place and doing what they ought to do. Both categories of managers described calling as indicating necessary functions that needed to be filled, being faithful at their station depending on their abilities. This finding is explained by their

professional ethics and commitments. The organisations called for identification and loyalty, often expressed as a sense of duty.

There are also clear differences in the data. The hospital calling accounts were linked to the managers' background as health workers. Some were drawn to the faith-based hospital because of its Christian identity. However, they emphasised their path into management which resulted from recruitments and the willingness to take on responsibilities and challenges. These are indicators of a calling from outside and inside. In contrast, the deans appeared to take calling for granted as they primarily identified as professionals with additional leadership functions. The deans emphasised calling from above and within, and primarily into priesthood, not leadership.

#### [Present-oriented calling and relations in hospital and church](#)

This theme exhibits a dual pattern: role modelling that serves employees, and alignment with organisational mission and values.

The hospital managers talked of challenges related to the budget. They felt pressured by tight budgets and cut threatening their work of serving patients. The managers experienced success when their co-workers thrived. The managerial program and the CEO's intentions to serve as a role model was inspiring to them. Conflicts and lack of quality and commitment were cited as challenges, particularly related to patient care. Employees performing bad quality work threatened patients' lives and health. A female unit manager in her 50s said: "Neighbourly love is a value of this hospital, but it should be directed towards patients, not making excuses for not dealing with inadequate employees. Inadequate professional standards challenge us; employees not engaged don't really care about their work."

A male department manager, aged 56, underlined: "I used to work in a commercial hospital, which didn't have the higher purpose I sought. It was not right working to increase the wealth of the owners. My main challenge is focusing on the central stuff, not drowning in administration." The managers, despite administrative workload, were conscious of the overall mission of the hospital: treating patients and providing the best possible care. Some mentioned that many were attracted to the hospital because of its diaconal values and Christian tradition. They claimed that the expectations from this hospital slightly differed from those of public and commercial hospitals given its tradition and pride in history.

Occasionally, they used religious language. The classical content of calling was largely replaced with awareness about the mission of the hospital and its values. They highlighted serving patients and society by being good stewards of tax money, quality and safety. Fulfilment had its contradiction in specific challenges. One male unit manager in his 40s, who identified as a “personal and active Christian”, was recruited from a major hospital, but was “disappointed by absence of the Christian tradition.” The hospital’s values constituted a recurrent theme, and the managers used these as resources to address and sustain the mission they identified with. Other aspects of fulfilment are responsibility and freedom.

Turning to the church, the deans elaborated different sets of challenges. They clearly distinguished the core tasks and mission of the church from what they viewed as a growing bureaucracy. A female dean (52) emphasised: “I must be a professional role model showing through actions and priorities what is important, walking front line and pull. I am a co-player. I am happy seeing thriving priests. They are dedicated and committed in their hearts. Ordination is fundamental for us all.” The deans talked about their efforts to improve work conditions and enhance quality, as articulated by a male dean aged 61: “Essentially, management is about facilitating and ought to be focused on establishing good relationships among employees, and maintaining focus on core tasks”. If these criteria were achieved, they believed that they had fulfilled their role. The deans did not elaborate on own successes, rather on successful employees. They were satisfied when enabling good relationships and communication among actors.

In the dispersed church organisation, the deans lacked detailed knowledge about their employees and avoided administrative control. There seemed to be a balancing act between posing and claiming to be a role model: “The core values are interwoven in our practices. Christian values are important to me. Because I am like that myself. I want to be a pastoral manager, safeguarding the distinction of the church, see that we follow our Shepard” (male dean, 57). For instance, priests and parishes were responsible for their own development. They created theological arguments for their leadership and the function of role modelling, which they bestowed upon themselves. The deans discussed how they constantly were aware of role modelling and instances in which their actions and words were deliberate. They shared an ideal of “burning, dedicated employees” as phrased by a male dean aged 56, which might be a projection of how they want to identify themselves.

The deans also extensively discussed the positive aspects of work. They experienced manoeuvring space, although one female dean, aged 60, underlined: “I haven’t gotten a recipe for being a dean. Our vision is making disciples of all nations.” She emphasised the overall mission: “Addressing the core in our ministry and in the mission of the church, priests are inspired and motivated.” The deans highlighted the higher objective of their work; serving others.

In sum, there were clear similarities between hospital and church managers in the present-oriented dimension of calling. Managers in both organisations performed role modelling. They referred to their professional identity and strong identification with fellow professionals. Key differences concern how hospital managers primarily served the patients rather than employees. The deans, in contrast, hardly addressed individual parishioners; rather they enabled local priests and parishes to find their own direction. This can be explained by the fact that all managers perform employer’ liability in their mundane and hectic everyday work-life. Management consists of generic tasks shared across contexts. Their middle managerial position places them close to the employees and the top management since these organisations are not very large. Whereas hospital managers saw challenges related to budgets, the deans expressed frustrations over increasing bureaucracy.

Overall, the two categories of managers differ somewhat on the biographical dimension of calling, yet are rather alike on the present-oriented dimension Table 2 illustrates how the classical and modern notions of calling blend differently in managers’ identity work.

Table 2: *Comparing managers’ themes of calling*

	<b>ASPECTS OF CALLING</b>	<b>Hospital (managers)</b>	<b>Church (deans)</b>
Biographical dimension	<i>Direction of calling</i>	From within and outside	From above, within and outside
	<i>Approach</i>	Discovery	Taken for granted
	<i>Professional calling</i>	Weak	Emphasized
	<i>Managerial calling</i>	Emphasized	Weak
	<i>Religious imagery</i>	Rare Personal	Implicit Institutionalized
Present-oriented dimension	<i>Challenges</i>	Economy, conflicts	Bureaucracy, conflicts
	<i>Fulfillments</i>		Successful employees Focusing core work
	<i>Commitment</i>		Organisational mission Orientation to serve
	<i>Ideal-types</i>		Classical Modern

## Discussion

Our aim is to theorise by comparing how two groups of managers understand their work as a calling, which like identity is central to the issues of meaning, motivation and commitments. By comparing, our aim is to show that notions of calling are flexible and differently constructed by actors, yet common patterns emerge. Based on the findings, we characterize themes of calling as *pluralistic*, *historical* and *present-oriented*. We now discuss how managers' identity work reflects these properties.

### Calling as a pluralistic phenomenon

*Themes of calling* reflect pluralism, given the tripartite direction of calling, and various ways of realizing calling. The hallmark of calling is *plurality* as it is no singular phenomenon. The managers considered their path into professionalism and management, which albeit diverse, essentially foregrounded identity. The accounts underlined that calling is situated and essentially contextual. All managers expressed feelings of commitments towards their employees, their organisation, and most importantly, their patients or parishes. Quality in treatment was prioritised among health managers. They confronted both professionals and the top management if they feared for patient safety. The hospital's values provided language to express commitments. By offering their undivided attention, they fulfilled their duty and calling. This means that certain tasks seemed more coherent with their calling. They drew on the values of the hospital when discussing organisational identity and their own commitment. This finding aligns with Askeland's (2015) study on faith-based hospital managers being carriers of values. A value-discourse seems to have replaced the traditional religious discourse (Pattison 1997). Additionally, some hospital managers connected to the Christian tradition, which is not a precondition to work as a doctor or nurse.

In contrast, the deans in Church of Norway articulated the classical calling from God. This is not surprising, due to ordination that presupposes faith. In addition to expressing the traditional calling explicitly, their talk shared many of the characteristics as that of the hospital managers. Both manager categories essentially participated in the same discourse on meaningful work, how to establish good relations and being caring employers. This finding aligns with previous studies underlining similarities between managers in religious organisations and those in other sectors (Hernes 2007, Askeland 2015).

Both the stable classical and modern fluid calling is present and intertwine with identity narratives in both organisations (Webb 2004). Contradicting Dik and Duffy (2013) and the

associated assumptions that church managers align more with the classical calling, whereas hospitals are more aligned with the moderne calling, we challenge the established dichotomy of classical and modern calling ascribed to different organisations and professions.

### Calling as a historical phenomenon

Calling has a *historical* dimension, by nature diachronic and integrated in biographical accounts serving as orienting devices, explicitly drawing on religion as in the church context, or implicitly as in the hospital. Like professionals, our data show how managers use themes of calling to accomplish their identity work. Successful stories generate feelings of authenticity and are validated by audience. Calling is not understood as a fixed characteristic, rather as a cultural resource in identity construction (Swidler 1986). Managers construct meaning from experiences by forging their understandings of calling to their own history and motivation.

Our interviews indicate that calling is understood as an orientating device by providing direction that alters their course of life. The ideal-typical classical calling and modern calling coexist in both contexts, as indicated by the threefold direction of calling and a certain level of religious underpinning to the meaning-making dimension. These life-changing experiences may be reflected in the three analytical classifications from above, within and outside. These are not mutually exclusive but may appear simultaneously and if so, reinforce the institution of calling, experienced as a transition, if not transformation. Calling concerns resonance. The call as summons echoes in the called and is enduring. The interrelation to everyday life is evident in fulfilment and challenges. The implications of the same calling may differ during life. In addition, these themes of calling possess traits of lived religion by explicitly or implicitly drawing on religion as a resource for managers (Ammerman 2016). Conventional Christian imagery appears in materialised forms, such as deans quoting Scripture. They may attend to mundane duties and then rapidly switch from the secular to the sacred. They did not mention returning to the life of a parish priest. The overall mission of the church and commitment to help clergy motivated them. Our data show that calling from above is institutionalised in the church context. Some hospital managers use this specific notion of calling, but on a personal level. This reflects a development in FBOs, contrary to religious organisations, where religious commitment is institutionalised rather than individually based (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2012).

Calling may be researched also on a psychological basis, emphasising the individual as an agent and focusing on personal choices, or in the frames of organisational ethos. In a modern society, one should expect a calling from within as individuals are given a role as actors that seek to develop their “reflexive self-identity” (Giddens 1994). Predominantly interviewees emphasised the calling from outside; the organisation and its hierarchy and society. This was the arena for launching commitments. The managers differed in emphasis of calling between professionalism and managerialism. The hospital managers have more distinctive calling into management, whereas the deans discussed their calling into priesthood, not management. The deans downplayed their own hierarchical position. This we explain by their strong professional identity and partly because of unease with exercising authority. This might be a characteristic of FBOs and religious organisations idealising the paradox of leadership as serving (Felter 2010), simultaneously showing that professions still have a thriving discourse of calling. This is a finding that clearly nuances previous studies that portray calling as a reminiscence (Tveit 2008, Christensen 2013), based on a singular classical definition of the construct. Our study contradicts the assumption that professions have “lost their soul” (Brint 2015), and instead underlines the need for professionals to articulate meaning in ongoing identity work.

#### Calling as a present-oriented phenomenon

We understand our data on calling as *present-oriented*, emphasising everyday work through relations and aiming at the greater good. The most salient feature in the interviews is the extent to which managers discuss relations. All managers engage in role modelling and the fundamental orientation to serve their employees and organisations. This reflects the context of FBOs and religious organisations that exist to serve the greater good and frequently embody the values of their founders (Jeavons 1992). This finding coheres with previous studies in Scandinavian folk-church contexts where managers’ work is portrayed as handling an array of mundane tasks and articulating values (Sirris 2018, Askeland 2015). Managers face a range of expectations, and their role is predominantly relation-oriented (Hansson and Andersen 2008, Hernes 2007). This points towards motivating leadership, which places management close to the professionals, to maintain dyadic relations and provide constructive feedback. This is a key feature of managers in general work life (Alvesson 2002). There are various explanations for why role modelling, which is part of relation-orientation, is crucial in our two organisations. The deans had a background as professionals and had not left this

identity, rather they were hybrids; organisational managers still identifying with their professional training and experience (Sirris 2018). As described, hospital managers focused more on the patients since they were at close counters to patients and there were advanced systems to supervise core work. In contrast, the dispersed church organization and lack of insight into clergy's work performance, resulted in deans ignoring the parishioners.

#### Themes of calling as site of identity work

We have discussed themes of calling as resources for managers helping them crafting work and constructing identity. They reframe challenges and interpret their work as a calling. The challenges faced by managers prompted identity work, which is key to managing strain (Sveningsson and Alvesson 2003). These situations enable identities to surface. When hospital managers were pressured by economic factors, their sense of mission seemed to emerge. The deans felt that the growing bureaucracy potentially threatened their mission. Our study illuminates managers' perception of their identity as a continuous process of role modelling, thus linking identity to role.

The theory section addressed the assumed orientation to serve expected of professionals that had moved into management in a diaconal and church context (Jeavons 1992). These managers' calling encompasses encouraging others to experience and follow their own calling. This theme centres on their commitment and alignment to organisational mission and values, towards which they have a strong sense of identification. Self-understandings ranged from mundane tasks as facilitators needed to sort out technicalities to relieving others' jobs and talking about the mission, God and society. The values of the ordination served as a glue that connected everyday practicalities with the mission. Finding meaning, or making sense of work, heavily drew on articulations of how they entered the profession; however, they did not consider the transition into management as a similar important move. The themes differ among managers and deans in accounts about issues perceived as the core objective of commitment and service. The managers considered the hospital a unity related to society and its inhabitants, whereas the deans identified with the church as the body of Christ and a community serving the world. Duty built on organisational identity and not personal achievements, outcomes or success.



The distinction of character and reflexive self, captures the duality of classical and modern calling. The data contradict that managers experience a “corrosion of character”, neither are they obsessed solely with career and self-identity. This implies that the classical identities related to calling thrive with the managers in our research contexts. Hybrid identities are not necessarily self-reflexive or corrosive, rather they balance between serving the profession, organisation, society – and in some cases God. From this discussion, we visualise themes of calling into a model integrating key insights and emphasising how the themes hybridize in manager’s identity work (Figure 1). The arrows signify the managers’ transition from professionalism into organisational management, between which they iterated due to their hybrid identity. Their personal calling narrative served as a resource and gave direction to their commitments of mission and serving. This dimension highlights the study’s title, *realising calling*, which is the process of recognising and accepting one’s calling and if possible, enacting it. Professionals becoming managers enter an arena to embody and practice their commitments, but they may soon discover that their freedom of action is limited. Managers nonetheless consider identifications central to their work (Ibarra 1999). All managers in the present study perform role modelling to sustain professional commitments. The historical dimension entails how themes of calling are used as central, distinctive and enduring identity resources (Pratt and Ravasi 2016). The present-oriented dimension is the site where themes of calling are contextualised in leadership practices and surface in fulfilments and challenges. Based on calling, the model shows mechanisms in the process of hybridising identities.

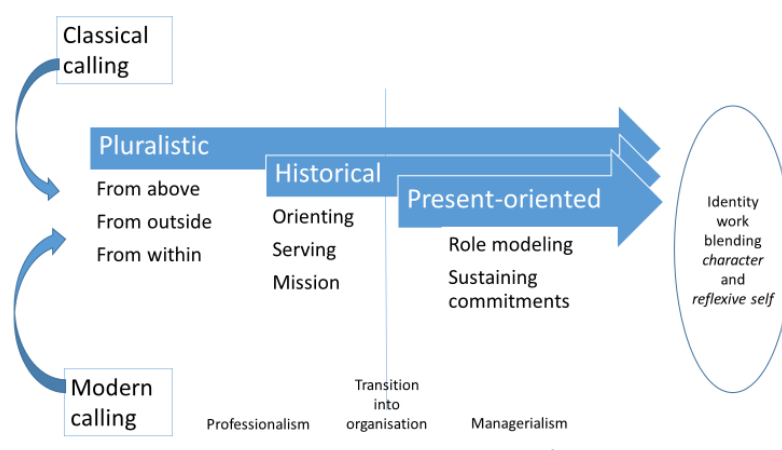


Figure 1: *Calling and hybridising identities*

## Conclusions

This study explores how managers in faith-based hospitals and the church understand their work as a calling and its intractable connections to their identity. First, our findings show similarities between the two categories of managers. This implies that both the deans and the hospital managers are adopting the managerial discourse of general and secular work-life. Calling is experienced not as static, rather as identity work, an evolving process of constructing meaning in work-life. It connects activities to God or the greater good and is oriented beyond the individual. Calling elevates work beyond rational utility and economic rewards to others-oriented or pro-social purposes. Second, we have analysed how the dichotomy of classical and modern calling blend differently in managers' identity work. It provides opportunities for maintaining and negotiating identities among professionals and managers in two kinds of organisations. Themes of calling reflect organisational ethos, values and identities in different ways. The main difference we find between deans and hospital managers is how deans, as expected, explicitly draw on religion. The church context displays the traditional notion of calling as the deans perceive themselves called by God into profession and some into management. Resonating with healthcare's values-discourse (Aadland and Skjørshammer 2012), the motivation of most hospital managers is instead to serve society. They conceive of organisations as arenas for professionals and managers where they can enact and realise calling. By asking about and exploring their transitions into profession or management we exposed calling as pluralistic, historical and present-oriented. In these dimensions, the established dichotomy of classical and modern calling blurs as managers combine elements. Ideal-types are analytically useful; they make us aware of how managers' identity work is of a hybrid character.

This study bridges calling and identity in a new conceptualisation. We have demonstrated that calling themes are not only personal in the individualistic sense but reflect institutionalized practices in organisations and draw from cultural norms and scripts. The people we interviewed had not given up their commitment to professional ideals and "the common good" when they became managers. Such accounts function as sources of legitimation and motivation in the everyday life of managers, offering fulfilment and challenges. We have shown how themes of calling reflect commitments towards local organisational purposes as well as cosmopolitan ideals of professionalism.

We suggest that further research on calling would benefit from in-depth, context-sensitive studies. Our research design compares highly professionalized faith-based and religious organisations. This conceptualisation of the connections between themes of calling and identity ought to have relevance for professionals and managers in other contexts, especially those historically committed to the public ethos, since they have traditionally incorporated notions of calling. The study of calling could be extended to more dissimilar organisational contexts where organisational reforms challenge established identities and roles.

Organisations with high versus low degree of professionalization, public versus private organisations, could be investigated. Organisations relying on economic rationality (for-profit) opposed to value-oriented rationality and voluntarism make interesting comparisons. A key insight from our study is that confessional and religious human service organisations may vary on a set of dimensions, such as the degree to which they rely on professional versus managerial values, or to what extent calling from above is adopted as legitimation.

Researching other contexts, we could find that calling plays a larger role in non-professional, less values-based organisations than has been proposed in current literature on organisational and management reforms.

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## Appendix 4:

### Observation scheme

Time	Activity	Place	Reference	Contents	Participants	Initiative	Duration (min)
1128	Telephone call	Office	1	UM (unit manager) calls head of storage of medical equipment	UN, head of storage	UN	2
1130	Mail	Office		Administration and distribution of summer vacation. An employee has sent wishes for summer vacation	UN	Surgery nurse	3
1133	Walk	Corridor and elevator	2	Going to another floor to talk with storage personnel about missing surgery equipment	UN	UN	2
1135	Talk	Storage office		Talk with head of storage. There have been complaints from the surgeons and the surgery nurses about missing equipment. This is supposed to be packed before each surgery and placed in the surgery unit. UN informs, and the conversation concerns the root of the problem.	UN, head of storage	UN	10
1145	Telephone call	Storage Office		From assistant UM who asks about a upcoming meeting.		Assistant UM	1
1146	Talk continues	Storage Office	3	They talk about a conflict and about proper training of employees in the storage unit.	UN, head of storage	UN	2
1148	Inspection	Storage Hall			UN, head of storage	Head of storage	7
1155	Telephone call	Storage corridor		The department manager asks about postponing an operation. This concerns the staffing of nurses the day in questions and a planned seminar.	UN, department manager	Department manager	9
1204	Talk with employees	Storage lunch room		UN initiating small talk, and then asking questions about the working conditions. Addressing the misplacements of goods, and employees' views	UN, head of storage, 5 employees		6

1UM points out the lack of an effective computer program for logistics. The right equipment is needed tomorrow for a patient from Alta. UM: "I am fed up complaining to people. How am I supposed to get these basic things ok? It is a problem with un-skilled employees that are not sufficiently trained and do not understand the medical terminology. Besides, we are short in staff in the storage unit. It is not a very popular job, and one of the key persons is placed there by the NAV."

2UM talks to me about dealing with conflicts, and particularly an evolving tension in the storage department. She has had a talk with the HR-department about this, and is eager to solve the situation. When the storage is not

functioning, is messes things up for the surgeries. The UN is clearly frustrated, and exclaims: “This is not what I want to use my time for!”

3The UN asks the storage manager about courses and training in a computer program. She also wants to know whether a specific employee has finished this course, and what the results were. They are also talking about the upcoming work appraisal interview, and informing the employee in question about change in position.

## Appendix 5:

### Example of analysis

#### Hospital leaders' identity

Exemplary quote	First order concept	Second order concept	Category	Theme
I am the leader of this unit. Above me is the department manager and above him the CEO. I am employer and in charge of 60 persons.	I am leader	Hierarchic line management	Primary: Managerial identity	Hospital managers' identity
I do not have any clinical practice myself. I rust in my profession. My job is to make others perform. The old version is the medical doctor who works clinically and only part time as a leader.	Old part time	Full-time management		
I am a technical facilitator who get other people to do their job in the system. I am in service, available for them. They do the core work.	Technical	Facilitating		
I cannot delegate more administrative work. If I delegate economy, I lose the control of the budget. Instead, I delegate professional issues. I have responsibility for more than my own department; instead, I must view the hospital as a total.	Delegate profession Responsible for the total	Responsibility and delegation	Secondary: Professional and organizational knowledge	
The new version means understanding the budget and the overall goal for the hospital.	Understanding budget	Economy		
My overall aim is to ensure the best possible treatment and care for patients. Top quality in all we do.	Best possible	Quality and patient care		
Additionally, to management, my profession is nursing with specialization. Be an informed professional. I go to conferences and discuss. However, I do not do clinical work myself. I do not need to, I have many years' experience. Within my profession, I am just as updated as those I lead.	My profession	Updated in profession		
Having experience from their work, I can discuss with authority. I have had their life. A leader can't lead anything. Dealing with strong professions, you must know what is going on and understand it, participating in the discussions to get information when deciding.	I have had their live	Training and experience		



## Appendix 6:

### Approval from Norwegian Centre for Research Data (Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste)

Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS  
NORWEGIAN SOCIAL SCIENCE DATA SERVICES



Harald Hårfagres gate 29  
N-SOO" Bergen  
Norway

Tel: +47-555B 21 1 7  
Fax: +47-55 sg 96 SO  
nsd>sdub.ro  
www.rsd ub.no

org.nr. gas 321 884

Stephen Sirris

Senter for diakoni og profesjonell praksis Diakonhjemmet høgskole  
Diakonveien 14-18

0370 OSLO

Vår &to: 16.12.2015

var 45841 13 'AGL

Deres dato:

Deres rer:

#### TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 26.11. 2015. All nødvendig informasjon om prosjektet forelå i sin helhet 15.12.2015. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

45841 Rasjonaliteter, legitimitet og verdikonflikter mellom profesjon og organisasjon. En kvalitativ studie av mellomledere i helse og kirke  
Behandlingsansvarlig Diakonhjemmet Høgskole AS, ved institusjonens øverste leder Daglig ansvarlig Stephen Sirris

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger er meldepliktig i henhold til personopplysningsloven § 31. Behandlingen tilfredsstiller kravene i personopplysningsloven.

Personvernombudets vurdering forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, <http://www.nsd.ulb.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html>. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, <http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt>.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 30.09.2019, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Vigdis Narntvedt Kvalheim

Audun Løvlie

Kontaktperson: Audun Løvlie tlf: 55 58 23 07

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent Ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Avdelingskmtoror / Oiserict Office

## Appendix 7:

### Interview guides

# Intervju/temaguides i prosjektet

## 1. Intervju/temaguide for avdelingssjefer i sykehus

1. Hva er dine hovedoppgaver som avdelingssjef?
2. Hva motiverer deg som sykehusleder?
3. Hvordan vil du beskrive tidsbruken din på ulike oppgaver?
4. Hvem avgjør hva du skal gjøre i jobben?
5. Hvordan forstår du begrepet «ledelse»?
6. Hvordan forstår du «helseledelse»?
7. Hvilke oppgaver og hvor mye tid brukes på fag eller organisasjon?
8. Hvilke forventninger møter du som avdelingssjef fra arbeidsgiver?
9. Hvilke forventninger møter du som avdelingssjef fra medarbeiderne?
10. Møter du motstridende krav og forventninger, evt hvor og hvordan?
11. Hvordan ble du leder?
12. Hvordan vil du beskrive din identitet som avdelingssjef – hva er viktig for deg?
13. I hvilke situasjoner opplever du et konfliktfylt forhold mellom å være fagperson og leder?
14. Hva gir deg legitimitet som avdelingssjef?
15. Hva er dine samarbeidsrelasjoner?
16. Hva er dine viktigste verdier i din stilling?
17. Hvordan bidrar ledelse til at organisasjon fyller sitt oppdrag?

## 2. Intervju/temaguide for proster i kirken

1. Hva er dine hovedoppgaver som prost?
2. Hva motiverer deg som kirkelig leder?
3. Hvordan forstår du begrepet «ledelse»?
4. Hvordan forstår du «pastoral ledelse»?
5. Hvordan vil du beskrive tidsbruken din på ulike oppgaver?
6. Hvilke oppgaver og hvor mye tid brukes på fag eller organisasjon?
7. Hvilke forventninger møter du som prost fra arbeidsgiver?
8. Hvilke forventninger møter du som prost fra medarbeiderne?
9. Møter du motstridende krav og forventninger, evt hvor og hvordan?
10. Hvordan vil du beskrive din identitet som prost – hva er viktig for deg?
11. I hvilke situasjoner opplever du et konfliktfylt forhold mellom å være fagperson og leder?
12. Hva gir deg legitimitet som prost?
13. Hvordan ble du prost?
14. Hva er dine samarbeidsrelasjoner som prost?
15. Hva er dine viktigste verdier i din stilling?
16. Hvordan bidrar ledelse til at organisasjon fyller sitt oppdrag?

### 3. Intervju/temaguide for prostenes ledere

1. Hva er dine hovedoppgaver?
2. Hva motiverer deg som kirkelig leder?
3. Hvordan forstår du begrepet «ledelse»?
4. Hvordan forstår du «pastoral ledelse»?
5. Hvilke rolle har ledelse i bispedømmets organisasjon?
6. Hva er prostenes oppgaver?
7. Hvordan vil du beskrive prostenes tidsbruk på ulike oppgaver?
8. Hvilke oppgaver og hvor mye tid bruker prostene på fag eller organisasjon?
9. Hvilke forventninger møter arbeidsgiver prostene med?
10. Hvilke forventninger møter du fra prostene du leder?
11. Hvilke forventninger mener du prostene møter fra andre?
12. Møter du motstridende krav og forventninger, evt hvor og hvordan?
13. Hvordan vil du beskrive prostenes identitet?
14. I hvilke situasjoner kan kirkelige ledere oppleve et konfliktfylt forhold mellom å være fagperson og leder?
15. Hva gir legitimitet som prost?
16. Hva er prostenes samarbeidsrelasjoner?
17. Hva er dine viktigste verdier i din stilling?
18. Hvordan bidrar ledelse til at organisasjon fyller sitt oppdrag?

#### 4. Intervju/temaguide for avdelingssjefenes ledere

1. Hva er dine hovedoppgaver?
2. Hva motiverer deg som helseleder?
3. Hvordan forstår du begrepet «ledelse»?
4. Hvordan forstår du «helseledelse»?
5. Hvilke rolle har ledelse i sykehusets organisasjon?
6. Hva er avdelingssjefenes oppgaver?
7. Hvordan vil du beskrive deres tidsbruk på ulike oppgaver?
8. Hvilke oppgaver og hvor mye tid bruker avdelingssjefene på fag eller organisasjon?
9. Hvilke forventninger møter arbeidsgiver avdelingssjefene med?
10. Hvilke forventninger møter du fra avdelingssjefene?
11. Hva slag forventninger har enhetslederne og andre ansatte til sine ledere?
12. Møter du motstridende krav og forventninger, evt hvor og hvordan?
13. Hvordan vil du beskrive avdelingssjefenes identitet?
14. I hvilke situasjoner kan sykehusledere oppleve et konfliktfylt forhold mellom å være fagperson og leder?
15. Hva gir legitimitet som avdelingssjef?
16. Hva er avdelingssjefenes samarbeidsrelasjoner?
17. Hva er dine viktigste verdier i din stilling?
18. Hvordan bidrar ledelse til at organisasjon fyller sitt oppdrag?

## 5. Intervju/temaguide for fokusgrupper kirken

1. Hvilke forventninger har dere til prosten?
2. Hvordan forstår dere begrepet «ledelse»?
3. Hvordan forstår dere «pastoral ledelse»?
4. Hvilke oppgaver og hvor mye tid bruker dere på fag eller organisasjon?
5. Hvilke oppgaver og hvor mye tid bruker prostene på fag eller organisasjon?
6. Hvilke forventninger møter du som prest fra prosten?
7. Hvilke forventninger møter du som prest fra bispedømmenivå?
8. Møter du motstridende krav og forventninger, evt hvor og hvordan?
9. Hvordan vil du beskrive prostens identitet – hva er viktig for han/hun?
10. Hva gir legitimitet som prost?
11. Hva er prostens samarbeidsrelasjoner?
12. Hvordan bidrar prosten til at kirken fyller sitt oppdrag?

## 6. Intervju/temaguide for fokusgrupper sykehus

1. Hva er enhetsledernes hovedoppgaver?
2. Hva motiverer dere som helseleder?
3. Hvordan forstår dere begrepet «ledelse»?
4. Hvordan forstår dere «helseledelse»?
5. Hvilke rolle har ledelse i sykehusets organisasjon?
6. Hvordan vil dere beskrive avdelingssjefenes oppgaver?
7. Hvordan vil du beskrive avdelingssjefenes tidsbruk på ulike oppgaver?
8. Hvilke oppgaver og hvor mye tid bruker avdelingssjefene på fag eller organisasjon?
9. Hvilke forventninger møter avdelingssjefen enhetslederne med?
10. Hvilke forventninger har enhetsledere til avdelingssjefer?
11. Møter du motstridende krav og forventninger, evt hvor og hvordan?
12. Hvordan vil du beskrive avdelingssjefenes identitet?
13. I hvilke situasjoner kan sykehusledere oppleve et konfliktfylt forhold mellom å være fagperson og leder?
14. Hva gir legitimitet som avdelingssjef?
15. Hva er avdelingssjefenes samarbeidsrelasjoner?
16. Hva er de viktigste verdier i din stilling?
17. Hvordan bidrar ledelse til at organisasjon fyller sitt oppdrag?

Med vennlig hilsen

## **Appendix 8:**

### **Example of letters to the organizations**

Stephen Sirris

Diakonhjemmet høgskole

Postboks 184 Vinderen

0319 Oslo

M: 95792797/ A: 22451816

[stephen.sirris@diakonhjemmet.no](mailto:stephen.sirris@diakonhjemmet.no)

....

Oslo, 18. november 2015

### **INFORMASJON OG FORESPØRSEL OM TILLATELSE TIL GJENNOMFØRING AV FORSKNINGSPROSJEKT**

Jeg er ansatt som ph.d.-stipendiat ved Diakonhjemmet høgskole i en prosjektperiode fra 01.10.2015-31.09.2019. Arbeidstittelen på prosjektet er: *Rasjonaliteter, legitimitet og verdikonflikter mellom profesjon og organisasjon. En kvalitativ studie av mellomledere i helse og kirke.* Veileder en professor Harald Askeland. Denne henvendelsen inneholder informasjon om prosjektet, samt forespørsel om tillatelse til å gjennomføre dette i ....

#### **Informasjon om prosjektet**

Prosjektet undersøker ledelse av profesjonell praksis i kunnskapsorganisasjoner. Problemstillingen er: *Hvordan forhandler mellomledere i sykehus og i Den norske kirke profesjon og organisasjon i sin praksis?* Helse og kirke er sektorer med høyt kompetente profesjonsutøvere. Sentralt står mellomlederne som balanserer organisatoriske krav og profesjonelle hensyn. Mellomlederne utgjør krystalliseringspunktet mellom ulike rasjonaliteter eller logikker som innrammer og setter vilkår for profesjonell praksis i moderne organisasjoner.

Jeg er interessert i hvordan dette komplekse mangfoldet håndteres i organisasjoner gjennom å studere et bestemt fenomen; mellomledere som kan karakteriseres som hybridledere (en profesjonell med en formell organisatorisk ledelsesposisjon). Begrepet er analytisk og brukes av forskere, men innholdsmessig svært praksisnært. Prosjektets mål er å frembringe detaljert empiribasert kunnskap om profesjonell praksis og ledelse, og hvordan dette kombineres av



mellomlederne i en tid preget av endringer. På bakgrunn av dynamikken mellom sektorer og i de enkelte felt, vil studien identifisere nye ledelses- og praksisformer.

Prosjektet undersøker sentrale ledelsesfaglige og profesjonssosiologiske spørsmål belyst av institusjonell teori: I hvilken grad preger fagets og arbeidets karakter ledelsespraksiser innenfor sektorer der kompetanse er avgjørende for virksomhetens tjenester? Blir ledelse og fag integrert eller motsetninger? Hvilke former for styring og ledelse utøves? Hva blir lederes og profesjonsutøveres roller mellom ulike logikker? Det teoretiske grepet er å analysere forhandlinger mellom tre sentrale elementer hybridledere håndterer i spenningen mellom faglige og ulike organisatoriske logikker: rasjonaliteter, legitimitetskonstruksjoner og verdier. Disse begrepene er viktige både for profesjonelle og for ledere, og helt sentrale for hybridledere.

Studien er relevant både for ledere og profesjonelle i feltet, samt i profesjons- og ledelsesutdanningene. Den gir ny kunnskap om lederroller og ledelsespraksis, verdier som preger samhandling og vilkår for ledelse av profesjonalisert velferd. For ytterligere informasjon om prosjektet viser jeg til vedlagte prosjektbeskrivelse.

Kort oppsummert omhandler den delen av studien hvordan avdelingssjefer kombinerer det å være profesjonsutøver og leder. Jeg vil undersøke hvordan disse integrerer profesjonell identitet og lederoppgaver i praksis, og hvilke spenningsfelter som finnes. Faglig sett blir studien en videreutvikling av tidligere forskning ved ....

## **Gjennomføring av forskningsprosjektet**

Undersøkelsen gjennomføres i tre avdelinger ved et sykehus og tre prostier i Den norske kirke. En flercasestudie bestående av dokumentanalyser, dybdeintervjuer og observasjon («shadowing») av mellomledere i helse og kirke er ikke tidligere gjennomført.

Jeg planlegger å gjennomføre studien i tre sykehusavdelinger i ett og samme sykehus. Fortrinnsvis ønsker jeg å gjennomføre undersøkelsen i april-juni 2015. Etersom studien er metodisk tredelt, innebærer deltakelse følgende:

### **1. Dokumentanalyse**

Siden jeg ønsker å forstå avdelingssjefene i organisatorisk kontekst, forutsettes tilgang til dokumenter i virksomheten. Dette er sakspapirer og referater fra ledermøter, og andre skriftlige kilder som regulerer og legger føringer for hvordan avdelingssjefene skal utføre sin tjeneste. Jeg bruker også offentlig tilgjengelige kilder som sakspapirer fra sykehuset og det som ligger tilgjengelig på sykehusets nettsider. Jeg håper sykehusets administrasjon kan være hjelpelige slik at jeg får tilgang til materialet.

### **2. Observasjon**

For å undersøke praksis, vil jeg observere 3 avdelingsledere gjennom en vanlig arbeidsuke hver. Observasjonen medfører at jeg fotfølger dem gjennom daglige gjøremål og aktiviteter. Jeg noterer ned i skjema og gjør notater underveis. Dette innebærer en viss dialog underveis, slik at jeg informeres kort om ulike aktiviteter. I samråd med ..... sin ledelse vil jeg gjerne

drøfte hvem av avdelingssjefene som det kan være hensiktsmessige å observere. Sentrale kriterier er at det blir en viss variasjon hvor begge kjønn er representert, og at profesjonsbakgrunn og lederroller er noe ulike. Når en hensiktsmessig sammensetning er avklart, vil jeg spørre avdelingssjefene direkte om de er villige til å delta i studien, og gjerne møte dem for å avklare nærmere innhold og finne tidspunkter. Jeg ønsker i minst mulig grad å ekskluderes fra aktiviteter, slik at observasjonene gir et mest mulig dekkende bilde av faktisk arbeid.

### 3. Intervjuer

For å komme til rette med avdelingssjefenes forståelse av egne lederroller og praksis, er det nødvendig å intervju dem. Det skjer fortløpende dialog gjennom observasjonen, men det er også aktuelt med et eller to dybdeintervjuer på anslagsvis en til halvannen time. Undersøkelsen er videre en 360-graders studie, hvilket betyr at jeg intervjuer personer på overordnet og underordnet ledelsesnivå. Det siste medfører at jeg fokusgruppeintervjuer av 4-6 underordnede ledere hos hver avdelingssjef, samt ansatte ved ...; administrerende direktør, HR-direktør med flere. Intervjuene tas opp på bånd og transkriberes.

## **Forskningsetikk**

Jeg understreker at prosjektet ikke omhandler hva som er god eller dårlig ledelse, og det er ingen evaluering verken av .... eller av avdelingssjefene. Jeg innhenter opplysninger om ledelse og organisering. Prosjektet samler ikke inn personopplysninger eller personsensitive opplysninger. Avdelingssjefene og de jeg intervjuer ved i administrasjonen informeres skriftlig og muntlig, og de undertegner samtykkeskjema. Elektroniske lydfiler blir lagret på et kryptert sted på server hvor bare jeg har tilgang. Transkriberte intervjuer vil bli aidentifisert ved hjelp av tallkoder som viser til en navneliste som oppbevares adskilt fra intervjuutskriftene. Begge datakilder blir slettet når doktorgradsavhandlingen er ferdigstilt. PC-en hvor materialet registreres og oppbevares er i nettverkssystem tilhørende virksomheten. Det er lagret på pc som er beskyttet med brukernavn og passord, og står i låsbart rom. Jeg anonymiserer informantene og observandene, og praktiserer taushetsplikt. Jeg gjør oppmerksom på at indirekte identifisering kan finne sted gjennom gjenkjenning av stillingsnivå i organisasjonen. Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og informanter/observander kan når som helst trekke sitt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom noen trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om vedkommende bli anonymisert. Studien meldes til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS. Forskningen er tenkt publisert i form av 3-4 artikler i norske og internasjonale tidsskrifter innenfor ledelse- og organisasjonsfaget, og samles i ph.d.-avhandling som trykkes.

På denne bakgrunnen ber jeg om en avklaring om taushetsplikt er til hinder for å gjennomføre studien. Som forsker praktiserer jeg taushetsplikt, jeg vil også minne informantene om deres taushetsplikt slik at jeg ikke får del i taushetsbelagte opplysninger. Det vil videre være mulig for informantene/observandene å ekskludere meg fra møter eller samtaler hvor taushetsbelagte opplysninger vil framkomme. Ettersom jeg følger avdelingssjefen gjennom en

arbeidsuke, vil jeg be vedkommende om å informere personer vi møter observasjonsdagene om forskningsprosjektet.

Jeg håper på innvilgning av min forespørsel. Dersom det er ønskelig, møter jeg dere gjerne for nærmere drøfting av prosjektet og gjennomføringen.

Med vennlig hilsen

Stephen Sirris

Vedlegg: Prosjektbeskrivelse

## Appendix 9:

### Example of consent of middle manager



Stephen Sirris

Ph.d.-stipendiat

Prost i Den norske kirke

Oslo, 15.02.2016

### Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet

Jeg er ansatt som ph.d.-stipendiat ved Diakonhjemmet høgskole i en prosjektperiode fra 01.10.2015-31.09.2019. Arbeidstittlen på prosjektet er: *Rasjonaliteter, legitimitet og verdikonflikter mellom profesjon og organisasjon. En kvalitativ studie av mellomledere i helse og kirke.* Veileder en professor Harald Askeland. Denne henvendelsen inneholder informasjon om prosjektet, samt forespørsel om du vil delta i forskningsprosjektet gjennom et intervju. Informasjon er gitt ledelsen i ... bispedømme ved stiftsdirektør, og det er gitt tillatelse at jeg kan gjennomføre prosjektet.

#### Informasjon om prosjektet

Prosjektet undersøker ledelse av profesjonell praksis i kunnskapsorganisasjoner. Problemstillingen er: *Hvordan forhandler mellomledere i sykehus og i Den norske kirke profesjon og organisasjon i sin praksis?* Helse og kirke er sektorer med høyt kompetente profesjonsutøvere. Sentralt står mellomlederne som balanserer organisatoriske krav og profesjonelle hensyn. Jeg er interessert i hvordan dette komplekse mangfoldet håndteres i organisasjoner i praksis. Prosjektets mål er å frembringe detaljert empiribasert kunnskap om profesjonell praksis og ledelse, og hvordan dette kombineres av mellomlederne i en tid preget av endringer.

Kort oppsummert omhandler denne delen av studien hvordan proster kombinerer det å være profesjonsutøver og leder. Jeg vil undersøke hvordan disse integrerer profesjonell identitet og lederoppgaver i praksis, og hvilke spenningsfelter som finnes. For ytterligere informasjon om prosjektet viser jeg til vedlagte prosjektbeskrivelse.

#### Gjennomføring av forskningsprosjektet

Undersøkelsen gjennomføres i tre avdelinger ved et sykehus og tre prostier i Den norske kirke. En flercasestudie bestående av dokumentanalyser, dybdeintervjuer og observasjon («shadowing») av mellomledere i helse og kirke er ikke tidligere gjennomført.

Jeg å gjennomfører studien i tre proster i ett og samme bispedømme. Fortrinnsvis ønsker jeg å gjennomføre undersøkelsen i januar-mars 2016. Etersom studien metodisk består av observasjon og intervjuer, innebærer deltakelse for deg følgende:

Undersøkelsen er videre en 360-graders studie, hvilket betyr at jeg intervjuer personer på overordnet og underordnet ledelsesnivå. Det siste medfører at jeg fokusgruppeintervjuer av 4-6 prester hos hver prost, samt ansatte ved ... bispedømme og enkelte i fellesrådslinjen. Intervjuene tas opp på bånd og transkriberes. Dersom du samtykker i å være med på intervjuet, avtaler vi nærmere tid og sted. Omfanget er omtrent en time. Sentrale temaer som vi snakker om er forventninger til prostens leder, samarbeid og prostens rolle i prosti og overfor fellesrådslinjen. Det er interessant å høre mer om hvordan du vurderer integrasjonen av fag og ledelse på ulike nivåer i kirken.

## **Forskningsetikk**

Jeg understreker at prosjektet ikke omhandler hva som er god eller dårlig ledelse, og det er ingen evaluering verken av ... bispedømme eller av prostene. Jeg innhenter opplysninger om ledelse og organisering.

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Informantene informeres skriftlig og muntlig, og de undertegner samtykkeskjema. Elektroniske lydfiler blir lagret på et kryptert sted på server hvor bare jeg har tilgang. Transkriberte intervjuer vil bli avidentifisert ved hjelp av tallkoder som viser til en navneliste som oppbevares adskilt fra intervjuutskriftene. Begge datakilder blir slettet når doktorgradsavhandlingen er ferdigstilt. PC-en hvor materialet registreres og oppbevares er i nettverkssystem tilhørende virksomheten. Det er lagret på pc som er beskyttet med brukernavn og passord, og står i låsbart rom. Jeg anonymiserer informantene og observandene i publikasjonene. Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og informanter/observander kan når som helst trekke sitt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom noen trekker deg, vil alle opplysninger om vedkommende bli anonymisert. Studien meldes til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS. Forskingen er tenkt publisert i form av 3-4 artikler i norske og internasjonale tidsskrifter innenfor ledelse- og organisasjonsfaget, og samles i ph.d.-avhandling som trykkes.

Som forsker praktiserer jeg taushetsplikt, jeg vil også minne informantene om deres taushetsplikt slik at jeg ikke får del i taushetsbelagte opplysninger.

Dersom du ønsker å delta eller har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med undertegnede.

## **Samtykke til deltakelse i studien**

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

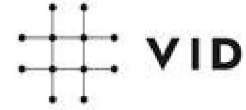
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(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Med vennlig hilsen

Stephen Sirris  
Høgskolelektor, Institutt for diakoni og ledelse /  
Ph.d.-stipendiat, Senter for diakoni og profesjonell praksis  
Diakonhjemmet Høgskole  
Postboks 184 Vinderen, Diakonveien 16, 0319 Oslo  
T: 22451816 / M: 95792797  
stephen.sirris@vid.no

## Appendix 10:

### Example of information letter to employees at hospital ward



Stephen Sirris

PhD-stipendiat

VID vitenskapelige høgskole, Diakonhjemmet

Til ansatte ved ....

Oslo, 18.05.2016

#### Informasjon om forskningsprosjektet

Jeg er ansatt som PhD-stipendiat ved VID vitenskapelige høgskole, Diakonhjemmet. Arbeidstittelen på prosjektet er: *Rasjonaliteter, legitimitet og verdikonflikter mellom profesjon og organisasjon. En kvalitativ studie av mellomledere i helse og kirke.* Informasjon er gitt ledelsen ved ... ved administrerende direktør, og det er gitt tillatelse at jeg kan gjennomføre prosjektet.

En av sykehuslederne som har samtykket til å delta i studien, er enhetsleder .... Dette informasjonsskrivet sendes ut i forståelse med ham. Studien innebærer at jeg forfølger han gjennom noen arbeidsdager i mai og juni, samt intervjuer han, overordnet leder og noen medarbeidere.

#### Informasjon om prosjektet

Prosjektet undersøker ledelse av profesjonell praksis i kunnskapsorganisasjoner. Problemstillingen er: *Hvordan forhandler mellomledere i sykehus og i Den norske kirke profesjon og organisasjon i sin praksis?* Helse og kirke er sektorer med høyt kompetente profesjonsutøvere. Sentralt står mellomlederne som balanserer organisatoriske krav og profesjonelle hensyn. Jeg er interessert i hvordan dette komplekse mangfoldet håndteres i praksis i organisasjoner. Prosjektets mål er å frembringe detaljert empiribasert kunnskap om profesjonell praksis og ledelse, og hvordan dette kombineres av mellomlederne i en tid preget av endringer. Den gir ny kunnskap om lederroller og ledelsespraksis, verdier som preger samhandling og vilkår for ledelse av profesjonalisert velferd.

Kort oppsummert omhandler denne delen av studien hvordan ledere kombinerer fag og ledelse. Jeg vil undersøke hvordan ledere ivaretar fag, samt integrerer profesjonell identitet og lederoppgaver i praksis, og hvilke spenningsfelter som finnes. Faglig sett blir studien en videreutvikling av tidligere forskning ved ....

## **Gjennomføring av forskningsprosjektet**

Undersøkelsen gjennomføres i tre avdelinger ved et sykehus og tre prostier i Den norske kirke. En komparativ flercasestudie bestående av dokumentanalyser, dybdeintervjuer og observasjon («shadowing») av mellomledere i helse og kirke er ikke tidligere gjennomført.

Jeg planlegger å gjennomføre studien i tre sykehusavdelinger i ett og samme sykehus. Ettersom studien metodisk består av observasjon og intervjuer, innebærer deltakelse følgende:

### *1. Observasjon*

For å undersøke praksis, vil jeg observere 3 ledere gjennom en vanlig arbeidsuke hver. Observasjonen medfører at jeg fotfølger dem gjennom daglige gjøremål og aktiviteter. Jeg noterer ned i skjema og gjør notater underveis. Dette innebærer en viss dialog underveis, slik at jeg informeres kort om ulike aktiviteter.

### *2. Intervjuer*

For å komme til rette med ledernes forståelse av egne lederroller og praksis, er det nødvendig å intervjuer deg. Det skjer fortløpende dialog gjennom observasjonen, men det er også aktuelt med et eller to dybdeintervjuer på anslagsvis en time, et før og et etter observasjonsuken. Undersøkelsen er videre en 360-graders studie, hvilket betyr at jeg intervjuer personer på overordnet og underordnet ledelsesnivå. Fokus er ikke personlige lederegenskaper, men forventninger til fag og ledelse.

## **Forskningsetikk**

Jeg understreker at prosjektet ikke omhandler hva som er god eller dårlig ledelse, og det er ingen evaluering verken av ..., ansatte eller lederne. Jeg rapporterer heller ikke til sykehusets ledelse, men opptre som ekstern forsker med taushetsplikt. Jeg innhenter opplysninger om ledelse og organisering i skjæringspunktet mellom fag og ledelse.

Alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Jeg anonymiserer informantene og observandene i publikasjonene. Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS. Jeg undertegner også taushetserklæring ved sykehuset.

Jeg ser fram til å få innblikk i arbeidet og ledelse ved en sykehusavdeling.

Med vennlig hilsen

Stephen Sirris  
Høgskolelektor, Institutt for diakoni og ledelse /  
PhD-stipendiat, Senter for diakoni og profesjonell praksis  
VID vitenskapelige høgskole, Diakonhjemmet  
Postboks 184 Vinderen, Diakonveien 16, 0319 Oslo  
T: 22451816 / M: 95792797  
stephen.sirris@vid.no

## Appendix 11:

### Examples of word frequency and word clouds

# Notater etter word frequency sykehusmateriale (alle transkripsjoner)

AKTØRER ORD	Alle intervjuer (0,xx%)	Allober ser	Sykehusledelse	Avdelingssjef	Enhetsleder	Assnivå	Kirurgisk	Medisinsk	Psykiatrisk
Jobb, jobbe	85	65	25 Lite	48	77	73	65	86 Høy	65
Leder, ledelse	47	57	53	42	27	42	47	20	57 Høy
Sykehus	48	21	76 Høy	55	22	17	19	55	21
Pasient	39	22	25	38 Høy	19	20	22	30	22
Ansvar	16	17	14	22 Høy	12	17	14	20	
Hele	23	18	27 Høy	27 Høy	16	17	25	17	18
Faglig	17	33		23	15	29 Høy	14	14	33 Høy
Avdsjef	13	28	15	19					28 Høy
Enhetsleder	13				18	32 Høy	18	22	
Viktig	15	31		17	15				31 Høy
Tiden	16		21 Høy		11		15	15	
Leg	15	14		28 Høy	21		17		14
Bedre	13		18 Høy		13		12		



Avdelingen	14	22	14	13				14	22 Høy
Sammen, hverandre		37		16	22		10		37 Høy
Vanskelig		17				23 Høy		18	17
Ansatt	21	19	16	18		21	25 Høy	20	19
Oppdraget				15 Høy					
Kvalitet			18 Høy	15				14	
Større			13	15					14
Forskjellig				13					14
Møter					14		10		
Sykepleier, sykepleier					26	20	10	26	
Personale					15		10		15
Drift						25	14	13	
Økonomi						15			
Posten						14			
Oppgave						16			
Fagsykepleier						20		13	

Direktør			19						
Verdi			30 Høy						
Ville, ønske			31 Høy					16	
Gode			16						
Operasjon							17		
Riktig							10		
Turnus								15	
Behandle									14

Kommentarer:

Stort sett de samme ordene som går igjen over hele sykehuset, og noe ulik vektning. Kun noen få særord de ulike stedene.

Sykhusledelse	Avdelings sjef	Enhetsledere	Assnivå	Kir	Med	Psyk
<p>Mye: sykehus, hele, tid, bedre, kvalitet og verdi. Verdi brukes nesten bare her. Lite: jobb</p>	<p>Mye: Pasienter, ansvar, hele, leger, oppdrag. Lite: operative begreper som sykepleier, drift,</p>	<p>Mye: jobb, viktig, sykepleier, personal, sammen/hverandre. Lite: leder, sykehus, pasient (!), ansvar, hele</p>	<p>En rekke særord som drift, økonomi, post, oppgave, fagsykepleier. Mye: leder, faglig,</p>	<p>Mye: tid, ansatt, hele, lede. Lite: sykehus, avdeling, en,</p>	<p>Mye: jobb, sykehus, fag, pasient, vanskelig, kvalitet, ansatt, sykepleier.</p>	<p>Mye: Leder, fag, avdelingssjef, viktig, avdeling, sammen/hverandre. Lite: ansvar, og nesten ikke operative begreper.</p>

# Alt maskide



The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions. It emphasizes that every entry, no matter how small, should be recorded to ensure the integrity of the financial data. This includes not only sales and purchases but also expenses and income. The document provides a detailed list of items that should be tracked, such as inventory levels, supplier payments, and customer orders. It also outlines the procedures for reconciling accounts and identifying discrepancies. The second part of the document focuses on the analysis of the recorded data. It describes various methods for interpreting the information, such as comparing current performance with historical trends and industry benchmarks. The document also discusses the implications of the data for decision-making, highlighting the need for timely and accurate reporting. Finally, the document concludes with a summary of the key findings and recommendations for future actions. It stresses the importance of continuous monitoring and adjustment to ensure the organization remains on track with its financial goals.