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SYMPOSIUM ON PUBLIC SERVICE MOTIVATION

“Not Just for the Money?” How Financial Incentives Affect the Number of Publications at Danish Research Institutions

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ABSTRACT

Do public employees work “for the money?” Do financial incentives determine their work effort? The literature gives conflicting answers, but Frey (1997) offers a possible explanation: If financial incentives are perceived as supportive, they can “crowd in” intrinsic motivation and increase the work effort. But if financial incentives are perceived as controlling, the intrinsic motivation is “crowded out,” and the work effort decreases with increasing financial incentives to work. However, the empirical evidence concerning Frey's proposition is limited, and our article aims to fill part of this gap. We investigate how the introduction of financial incentives to publish affects the number of publications at 162 Danish research institutions (17 government research institutions and subunits of 10 universities) when the perception of the incentives is taken into

account. The results show that the more supportive employees consider the incentives to be, the more financial incentives motivate researchers to increase publication.

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Notes

Notes: Based on the coding of the local wage agreements. 20 institutions are excluded because we do not have information about the agreements.

Notes: Based on the coding of the local wage agreements. 2006. One component extracted with an Eigen value higher than 1 (2.67). Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. N = 124 units with agreements.

Notes: Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis. One component extracted with Eigen value higher than 1 (1.89). N = 67 union representatives (some of whom represent more than one unit).

Notes: *p < 0.1, **p < 0.05, ***p < 0.01.

The calculation of the relative change is:

The Danish Centre for Studies in Research and Research Policy kindly provided the data.

Additional information

Notes on contributors

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