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Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Public service motivation and ethics: from theory building to theory testing

A thesis submitted to the Autonomous University of Barcelona for the degree of Doctor
of Philosophy in the Faculty of Political Science and Sociology

May 2019

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Acknowledgements

Although there are many ways to write the acknowledgements of a PhD thesis, I would like to start with those people who are close to me in my personal life, and then move to those important in the academic life. For the sake of transparency in showing my gratitude, I will shift from English to Spanish and Catalan.

Papa, mama, Maria Magdalena i Tomeu, aquí me'n vull enrecordar de s'estiu del 2010. Després d'una selectivitat més que justa (tot i treure un 10 a Filosofia) i d'uns dies de festa per Ciutadella, me va arribar sa notificació de que havia estat acceptat a s'Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona per començar es estudis de Ciència Política i Gestió Pública. Ja ho havíem xerrat vàries vegades, havíem de fer contes per saber si sa família podia soportar que me n'anés a estudiar i viure a Barcelona. Record que estàvem a punt de deixar-ho fer ja que ses contes no sortien. I, clar, sa tristesa mos encongia a tots. Per sort, en Rafel i n'Isabel mos van ajudar a treure'ns sa por d'intentar-ho. En família, vam acordar tirar endavant i veure com evolucionava es primer any. Gracis a Déu, me van becar, vaig encaixar i poguérem aguantar. I gracis a tots voltros estic aquí, escrivint aquest agraïments. Gracis de tot cor.

Dunia, mos vam ajuntar just començant tercer de carrera. Ja fa 7 anys, casi 8. Eren temps una mica moguts a nivell social... al cap i a la fi tots érem xavals, animals. Però junts vam créixer tant a nivell personal com acadèmic. No puc recordar totes ses converses i discussions que hem tengut sobre temes lligats a nes món acadèmic (seria impossible!), però m'has enriquit sempre. No seria com sóc si no fòs per tu. Segurament tampoc seria aquí. He intentat fer es doctorat amb una mica de sa força i alegria en sa que vius tu. Amb una mica ha bastat, en lo de més estic segur que faràs coses molt grans. Vull ser allà per veure-les. Gracis per sa teva generositat. Junts serem més i millors.

M'agradaria encordar-me també de tota sa meva família. Som molts, no puc fer una llista de noms. Tots sou importants, padrins i padrines, cosines i cosins, tios i ties (postissos també), sogres, cunyat... Sigueu de Lloseta, Binissalem, Sant Llorenç, Palma o Fraga, gràcies a tots voltros per ajudar-me sempre que heu pogut. Sí que me vull aturar un moment amb tu Bernat, hem crescut junts, m'has ensenyat i protegit sempre que has pogut. Gràcies per ajudar-me a passar es primers mesos a Barcelona, no va ser fàcil i sempre estaves allà. Esper que mai mos facem massa enfora.

Amics i amigues. Sou moltíssims també. Perdonau es que vos deix defora. No és que no vos estigui agraït, però se faria massa extens. Espe, som amics des d'antes que poguéssim pensar, tenc tant de records que no seria just agafar-ne un, simplement gràcies per conrear dins meu ses ganas d'aprendre com funciona el món. Lluís, gràcies per ses partides de ping-pong, per ses xerrades, per ses rialles, per ses marxex, i per aparèixer a sa meva vida. Tot i que no ho sàpigues, ser amic teu sempre m'ha fet créixer. Tenim històries per contar, però més mos n'esperen. Estar aprop teu és sinònim de viure. Lluç, sa nostra amistat tampoc té límits temporals ni per davant ni per darrera, has estat sempre un gran suport per jo, i no només dins es camp de futbol. Cafeteres, moltes gràcies a tots voltros també. Tià, tot i que no anéssim a sa mateixa classe a primària, des d'allà que mos tenim un a s'altre. Record un abraç sa primera vegada que vaig tornar de Barcelona, me va recordar lo units que esteim, i estarem sempre. A tots es Aios, sou molt importants tant per riure com per anar d'excursions. Toni, sempre mos hem tengut ben aprop, però degut a ses teves experiències futbolístiques per Barcelona, Albacete, etc. no mos hem fet més fins a nes darrers anys. Gràcies per ses rialles a Mallorca, es entrenaments, i sobretot pes viatges a Marrakech i Amsterdam. Ara fes bonda, i d'aquí un temps mos tornarem a moure. Bascollaes y Bascollados, muchas gracias a todos y todas. Me habéis acogido de forma indescriptible. Cada vez que he bajado a Fraga me habéis dado alegría y diversión en

todos los sentidos, pero lo que más valoro es que me hayáis abierto las puertas de vuestra amistad. Soy muy feliz por haberos encontrado. Espero que lo seamos siempre, y que la distancia sólo nos una. Biel, Pep, Pedro i tots es altres, devora voltros vaig fer es pas de nin a jove, i de jove a adult. Gracis per cuidar-me i per preocupar-vos sempre pes meu bé. Gracis també pes consells i ses xerrades. M'heu fet créixer, sóc com sóc en part gracis a voltros. Jorge, has estat una gran ajuda no només per córrer, sinó per aconsellar-me i guiar-me en lo personal i professional. Esper que sa distància no mos allunyi, i que ses curses mos segueixin unint. A tota sa gent des Running, gracis a voltros també. Rubén, nos conocimos hace ya casi 8 años. Cruzamos dos palabras, de forma muy tímida, justo antes de empezar esa clase de inglés, sin saber que lo que de verdad empezaba era una gran amistad. Gracias a ti y a Bea por entrar en mi vida (y en la de Dunia), por acogernos en Budapest, y por hacer lo mismo en Pamplona. Lo que nos espera seguro que es maravilloso (¡y sin necesidad de hacer magia!).

After showing my gratitude to those people who are really close at a personal level. It is time to focus on those people surrounding me in the academic life. Francesc, te vaig veure i vaig saber que havíem de conviure junts. Gracis per ses rentadores, per ses recerques sobre qüestions de guerra i política, per aquells entrenaments a la vila, i per sempre tenir ses paraules justes per fer-me pensar com hauria. Dani, ets increïble. Gracis per mirar-me després de que en Ramos fallés es penal de sa Champions, me va bastar per entendre lo que m'aprecies i lo que t'importa que actuï correctament. Gracis també per ensenyar-me a cuinar, a esperar, a ser pacient i a relativitzar lo negatiu. Gracis per ses discussions amb dues copes de més, sempre m'han guiat. Juan Carlos, cómo hablarte... ¿cantando? Si estoy a tu lado “que vinguin els anys, aquí em té la calma” (Manel 2011). Gracias por ese telediario del que nos acordaremos toda nuestra vida, por las ensaladeras, por los pastelones, las comidas de navidad, pascua o verano... gracias por vivir a mi lado. No te

vayas nunca, me haces mejor. Arnau, t'hauria d'agrair totes aquelles vegades que m'has arreglat un ordinador o m'has donat consells d'informàtica o de traducció, però sobretot vull agrair-te es dos anys que vam viure junts. Sempre sumes. Sé que me deix persones en ses que he conviscut a la Vila o a Cerdanyola, també estic agraït per haver-vos conegut.

Diego, es dos sabem que no tot va de primeres impressions. Lo important és allò que trobam dins nostre després de conèixer-nos. M'has acompanyat des de primer de carrera, menys aquell any que vas marxar a Paris. Sempre que has pogut m'has ajudat. Junts fèiem un molt bon equip, esper que poguem retrobar aquella sensació, encara que sigui cuinant un bon arròs. No te'n vagis gaire enfora, jo estaré aquí. Joan, qui mos ho diria. Record aquell dia a primer de carrera que estàvem fent coa per comprar es menú de sa cívica. Tímidament vaig interrompre una conversació entre tu i en Miquel, i allà iniciarem una relació que s'ajunta i s'allunya a mesura que ho necessitam. No hagués pogut tenir millor company de despatx per fer es doctorat. Es destí mos ha unit tants de cops, que estic segur que no mos allunyarà. Hi ha molts altres companys i companyes de carrera amb es que he compartit grans moments (Abi, Xavi, Edu, David...), per desgràcia esteim ja una mica lluny, però en part gracies a voltros també estic avui aquí.

I also would like to show my gratitude to my PhD colleagues in Utrecht University. I know I am not the most open person in the world. But all of you were so kind to include me in your group. Marija, thank you again for the generous feedback on the theoretical article, and for the tips to avoid a boring run session. Arend, thank you for those beers and pizzas before the PhDs party in Amsterdam. Maurits, thank you for the dinner conversation we had some months ago. Rosanna, I still remember when we first met in Hong Kong and had a really interesting discussion about PSM. It was nice to meet you again. Thank you for the tips about how to do (properly) experiments in public administration. Julia, Alex, Marij, Minou and all the others, I am pleased to have met all

of you. Carina, although you are not a PhD student, I would like to include you in the group of people I met in Utrecht. Our academic profiles are so similar. We probably face almost the same doubts when doing research. Thank you for showing me that I have to always look for a simple solution. Working together, I am sure that good things are ahead. Thank you.

També tenc unes paraules per es companys i companyes de doctorat de s'Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona. Sofia, tot i fer temes molt similars, no hem treballat mai junts. Una pena! Segur que acabaràs fent una tesi de 10, i que a nes futur tendrem oportunitat de fer alguna cosa junts. Què sàpigues que encara m'enrecord d'aquell sopar a Budapest amb es teu amic italià, vam riure moltíssim. Gracis per aquests anys, amb tu se m'ha fet menys dur fer es doctorat. Jordi, m'acompanyes des de primer any, record converses a Budapest però també tornant des tren o a sa biblioteca de Sant Pau. Tens tanta devoció per treballar en lo que t'agrada, que te mereixes tot lo bo que te passi. Gracis sobretot per ajudar-me a sa part final de sa tesi. Marina, has estat molt bona companya de despatx, de doctorat i d'alguna conversa hora de dinar. Sempre estàs disposada a ajudar, fins i tot quan tens coses importants a fer. Estic content d'haver-te conegut, esper que poguem seguir en contacte. Molta sort, i moltes gracis. Ángel, aunque hayamos coincidido poco, gracias por siempre traer una sonrisa al despacho. Con alegría lo vemos todo mejor. Joan, Seda, Katjuscia, Irina, esper que tots esteu molt bé, segur que ens trobarem aviat. Moltes gracis per ajudar-me a nes meus inicis.

M'agradaria també donar ses gracis a tot es personal administratiu i logístic de sa facultat de Ciències Polítiques i Sociologia, ja que ells i elles són una peça clau per poder desenvolupar sa nostra feina com a recercadors i docents. En particular, Josep, té molestat moltes vegades perquè me solucionis dubtes d'una manera casi instantània. Andrés, he

tingut força dubtes d'informàtica durant aquests anys, però tu sempre m'has pogut orientar per tal de trobar una solució. Moltes gràcies a tots dos per atendre'm sempre.

Quique, vas venir fa gairebé dos anys i no has aturat d'ajudar-me sempre que ho he necessitat, ja sigui per processar dades, revisar enquestes i experiments, o dubtes teòrics. Moltes gràcies. Berta, també fa poc que mos coneixem, sempre he après alguna cosa de twitter xerrant amb tu, esper que de mi hagi après almenys es consells sobre com menjar taronges. Gràcies també per ajudar-me sempre que tingué un dubte. Gràcies també a tots voltros (i a nes/ses que me deix) per es consells i ses xerrades extra-oficials a s'hora de dinar.

Marga, gracias por hacerme creer en mi cuando era un estudiante en cuarto de carrera. No olvidaré las clases sobre el estado del bienestar, las discusiones abiertas sobre el fin (o no) de las ideologías, y el feedback recibido en mi trabajo sobre la LOMCE. Y gracias por creer en mi hace apenas un año, cuando dudaba del valor de mi artículo teórico. Me has hecho ganar confianza, y cultivar mis preocupaciones sociales. Eva, I still remember when I worked as a research assistant in your group. Together with Irina, you showed me how I should work in an academic environment. I learned so much. I still try to apply that knowledge in my day to day. Thanks for this.

Marc (Esteve), fa poc que ens coneixem, però vull agrair-te haver-me ajudat quan ho he necessitat, i haver intentat treballar en alguna cosa junts. Per motius diversos, encara no hem pogut. Però estic segur de que s'acadèmia mos acabarà juntant tard o d'hora. Gràcies també per ensenyar-me una visió més informal de s'acadèmia ("how it really works"). Ets un exemple a seguir. Marc (Guinjoan), moltes gràcies per s'exemple que sempre has mostrat a s'hora de fer recerca (i esport!). Record que sa primera revisió d'un article me la feres tu. Es consells que me donares (simplicitat i ordre, sobretot) no se van traduir automàticament en una versió publicable d'aquell article. De fet, per lo que han servit és

per cultivar una manera de fer recerca, per donar forma a nes meu perfil acadèmic. Esper que tenguis tota sa sort que te mereixes, i que no mos allunyem gaire. Guillem, he de reconèixer que més d'un cop m'han enviat un correu que anava destinat a tu. Sa veritat és que és complicat trobar una persona amb sa que comparteixes es nom i ses dues primeres lletres des cognom! Moltes gracies per totes ses vegades que m'has solucionat dubtes metodològics, per sa visió pragmàtica que m'has mostrat a s'hora de fer recerca, i per tants de dinars compartits. Tot i marxar, crec que me vendrà bé tenir es número des teu despatx aprop per cridar-te quan ho necessiti. Tot i no mencionar-vos específicament, moltes gracies a tots es professors i professores que m'heu envoltat dins sa Facultat de Ciències Polítiques i Sociologia. Ja sigui per compartir classes, seminaris o dinars, sempre he intentat aprendre alguna cosa vostra.

Jessica, we met in Hong Kong three years ago. Nowadays, you are very important in my academic life, and also a friend. I can honestly say that I learned so much working with you. You are probably the person with who I interchanged more e-mails doing this PhD. This means a lot. I really like to work with you. And we are tied for all our projects for many years. Thank you for all the tips, friendly reviews, chats, conference travels and beers. You are so inspiring.

Wouter, I spent four months with you in Utrecht and I learned a lot. You immersed me in the theoretical grounding of PSM research, your broad knowledge can only be explained by my frustration when you come out with a new super interesting idea that forced me to change a previous model, and to spend many days developing a new (also better) one. And then, the circle started again. Honestly, thank you for making my academic profile stronger. Besides, I will always remember that dinner in Utrecht. Apart from the drinks and the food (which were really nice), we had different discussions in relation to politics, academia or personal life. All were helpful. Thank you for enriching me.

Xavier, no hi ha paraules per agrair-te aquests anys. Des de tercer de carrera nos coneixem, i sempre vaig tenir sa sensació de que encaixàvem bé. Treballant amb tu, però també viatjant, dinant o de conferència, aquests 4 anys simplement m'han confirmat allò que pensava. No hagués pogut triar millor director de tesi. Quan m'has hagut d'avisar sobre es perill d'una idea o has fet, quan m'has hagut d'animar també ho has fet, i per felicitar-me també has estat allà. Apart, m'has fet veure s'importància de sa dedicació, de treballar dur, de no complicar-se, i de mirar endavant amb il·lusió però sense confiar-se. Potser no cal que t'ho digui perquè t'ho imagines. Però, per jo ets es meu pare acadèmic. Llavors, tot i emancipar-me, vull seguir treballant amb tu. Estic segur de que coses bones mos esperen.

Antes de finalizar este apartado y dar comienzo a la tesis doctoral, me gustaría agradecer la oportunidad que me ha brindado la Universidad de Navarra para seguir formándome y crecer como docente e investigador en la Facultad de Ciencias Económicas y Empresariales. La confianza depositada en mi para servir en vuestra universidad me ha ayudado a finalizar esta tesis con una gran ilusión. La ilusión de un nuevo comienzo y, con él, la oportunidad de crear una mejor sociedad.

Per últim, gracies a Déu.

Abstract

This article-based compilation thesis revisits the link between public service motivation (PSM) and ethics. PSM, or the motivation to give back to society, and ethics, or the study of what is morally right and wrong, are two crucial topics in public administration and management. Although being originally interrelated, past research mainly examined the role PSM plays in shaping the likelihood of whistle-blowing and making donations. However, very little efforts have been devoted to insert PSM in ethics philosophy theories, to explore the ethical dark-side of PSM, to insert PSM in moral psychology theories, to connect PSM with integrity violations theory, to differentiate the effects of PSM on un/ethical outcomes from those of other work-motivations, and to assess the indirect impact of PSM-antecedents on un/ethical outcomes. To fill all these gaps, this thesis puts individuals' values and identities at the centre of the discussion about how ethical attitudes and behaviours can be encouraged. Four articles have been developed following this idea. The first article offers a theoretical framework to examine the relationship between PSM and ethics by combining ethics philosophy, identity, moral psychological and self-determination theories. The second and third articles link PSM to integrity violations literature, and provide empirical analyses showing the distinct effects of PSM and other work-motivations on the acceptance of unethical acts. Moreover, they assess the direct impact of basic psychological needs satisfaction and goal clarity on PSM, and the indirect one on the judgement of integrity violations. The fourth article provides initial empirical support to the conceptualization of PSM offered in the first article by examining the distinct effects of transactional and transformational leadership, and the basic psychological need of relatedness on PSM. In sum, by theoretically developing and empirically testing the importance of how individuals 'are,' this thesis orders previous research in the PSM-ethics field, and encourages new avenues.

Resum

Aquesta tesi realitzada per compilació d'articles revisa la relació entre la motivació pel servei públic (PSM) i l'ètica. La PSM, o la motivació per servir a la societat, i l'ètica, o l'estudi del que moralment és correcte o incorrecte, són dos temes fonamentals dintre de l'administració i la gestió pública. Tot i estar relacionats originalment, les investigacions realitzades fins ara s'han centrat principalment en examinar el paper que juga la PSM en la probabilitat de denunciar fets no ètics o fer donacions. No obstant, s'han dedicat molt pocs esforços a inserir la PSM en teories de filosofia ètica, a explorar el costat ètic fosc de la PSM, a inserir la PSM en teories de psicologia moral, a connectar la PSM amb la teoria de violacions d'integritat, a diferenciar els efectes de la PSM en els resultats ètics i no ètics dels efectes provocats per altres motivacions laborals, i a calibrar l'impacte indirecte dels antecedents de la PSM en resultats ètics i no ètics. Per tal d'omplir tots aquests buits, aquesta tesi posa els valors i les identitats dels individus al centre de la discussió sobre com es poden fomentar les actituds i els comportaments ètics. S'han desenvolupat quatre articles seguint aquesta idea. El primer article ofereix un marc teòric per examinar la relació entre la PSM i l'ètica combinant filosofia ètica, teories d'identitat, psicològiques i d'autodeterminació. El segon i el tercer article enllacen PSM amb la literatura sobre violacions d'integritat, i proporcionen anàlisis empírics que mostren els diferents efectes de la PSM i altres motivacions laborals en l'acceptació d'actes no ètics. A més, avaluen l'impacte directe de la satisfacció de les necessitats psicològiques bàsiques i de la claredat dels objectius sobre la PSM, i l'impacte indirecte sobre el judici de les violacions d'integritat. El quart article proporciona suport empíric inicial a la conceptualització de PSM proporcionada en el primer article. Per fer-ho examina els diferents efectes del lideratge transaccional i transformacional, i la necessitat psicològica bàsica relacional en la PSM. En resum, a través del desenvolupament teòric i la comprovació empírica de la importància de com 'són' els

individus, aquesta tesis ordena la investigació prèvia realitzada en el camp de la PSM i l'ètica, i s'encoratgen noves vies.

Resumen

Esta tesis realizada por compilación de artículos revisa la relación entre la motivación por el servicio público (PSM) y la ética. La PSM, o la motivación para servir a la sociedad, y la ética, o el estudio de lo que es moralmente correcto o incorrecto, son dos temas fundamentales dentro de la administración y la gestión pública. A pesar de estar relacionados originalmente, las investigaciones realizadas hasta ahora se han centrado principalmente en examinar el papel que juega la PSM en la probabilidad de denunciar hechos no éticos o hacer donaciones. No obstante, se han dedicado muy pocos esfuerzos a insertar la PSM en teorías de filosofía ética, a explorar el lado ético oscuro de la PSM, a insertar la PSM en teorías de psicología moral, a conectar la PSM con la teoría de violaciones de integridad, a diferenciar los efectos de la PSM en los resultados éticos y no éticos de los efectos provocados por otras motivaciones laborales, y a calibrar el impacto indirecto de los antecedentes de la PSM en resultados éticos y no éticos. Con el fin de llenar todos estos huecos, esta tesis pone los valores y las identidades de los individuos en el centro de la discusión sobre cómo se pueden fomentar las actitudes y los comportamientos éticos. Se han desarrollado cuatro artículos siguiendo esta idea. El primer artículo ofrece un marco teórico para examinar la relación entre la PSM y la ética combinando filosofía ética, teorías de identidad, psicológicas y de autodeterminación. El segundo y el tercer artículo enlazan la PSM con la literatura sobre violaciones de integridad, y proporcionan análisis empíricos que muestran los diferentes efectos de la PSM y otras motivaciones laborales en la aceptación de actos no éticos. Además, evalúan el impacto directo de la satisfacción de las necesidades psicológicas básicas y de la claridad de los objetivos sobre la PSM, y el impacto indirecto sobre el juicio de las violaciones de integridad. El cuarto artículo proporciona apoyo empírico inicial a la conceptualización de PSM proporcionada en el primer artículo. Para ello examina los diferentes efectos del liderazgo transaccional y transformacional, y la

necesidad psicológica básica relacional en la PSM. En resumen, a través del desarrollo teórico y la comprobación empírica de la importancia de cómo 'son' los individuos, esta tesis ordena la investigación previa realizada en el campo de la PSM y la ética, y se alientan nuevas vías.

INTRODUCTION

Socrates: We have already said that drunkenness is to be avoided. The last thing we can allow is that a guardian should be drunk and not know where in the world he is.

Glaucon: Yes, it is absurd that a guardian should need to be guarded.

(Plato trans. 1954, 87)

Trust or not to trust the guardians? Public service motivation as an answer

Envisaged in 'The Republic' (Plato trans. 1954), Kallipolis, a utopic city-state divided by castes and ruled by the philosopher king, was the culmination of Plato's discussion about the meaning of justice and the best regime to protect this idea. Ruler guardians, one of the castes, were in charge of safe-guarding the city, the constitution, and therefore responsible to protect the common good. Ruler guardians were expected to be virtuous and adhere to the highest standards of ethical conduct (i.e. to do what is morally right). This idea is perfectly expressed in the short dialogue presented above. When discussing guardians' education, Socrates says that guardians should abstain getting drunk to avoid incoherencies or problems in developing their tasks. To which Glaucon, replies that it would be absurd to suppose that a guardian require oversight. By stressing this, Plato, through Glaucon, expressed the optimistic and idealistic view that one should be able to trust the ruler guardians of the city to behave in a proper way (i.e. just, ethic). In other words, Plato conceived an ideal corps of public workers which naturally behave ethically in the name of the public interest or common good.

Although inspiring, reality unveils the practical limitations of this ideal. A quick look at the news shows many concerns about the behaviour of people exercising public power. In fact, high integrity standards of public workers have become unusual in public administrations all over the world (Farazmand 1999, Lawton et al. 2013). This leads to reconsider if it is absurd to guard the guardians. Five-hundred years or so after Plato,

Juvenal, a satirical roman poet, asked “*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*” (Juvenal trans. 2008, Satire VI, lines 347–348). In its original context, the phrase addresses how to cope with marital infidelity. Since guardians (i.e. *custodes*) are corruptible, they cannot be useful to enforce ‘moral’ behaviour on women. Instead of Plato’s idealism, Juvenal expresses a more pessimistic and practical view that one cannot trust the guardians to behave ethically. Beyond the original meaning, this phrase has many different applications in modern language. Hence, it is used in the public power sphere to suggest that public workers need to be controlled by codes and additional watchdogs to assure that they behave ethically (Hurwicz 2008).

Plato’s ideal seems too abstract and incomplete because it lacks the negative of experience, trial and error. Juvenal’s antithesis contradicts, if not negates, the thesis. However, his view is a generalization. It has indeed limited explanatory power to account for exceptional public workers, and therefore has universality problems. Moving beyond the limitations of the two approaches, it is possible to reach a synthesis by examining the role of education. Plato’s ruler guardians are supposed to behave ethically because of the education they received and, in consequence, the virtues they developed (Steinberger 1989). By contrast, Juvenal’s argument does not assume that guardians have a set of virtues developed by a special type of education. Thus, the main difference between the two kinds of guardians is that some have cultivated a pack of virtues and interiorized the perceived duty to serve the public, while the others not. Because of being adhered to a public service ethic, Plato’s guardians can be trusted to behave ethically, while Juvenal’s ones not. This idea has travelled across all the history laying “the foundations for all subsequent considerations on the common good and ideas of public service” (O’Toole 2006, 20). However, it “has not been formally articulated and studied under the rubric of public service motivation until recently” (Perry and Hondeghem 2008, 9).

Public service motivation: roadmap and departure points

Public service motivation (PSM), or the motivation to contribute to society (Perry and Hondeghem 2008), is one of the topics with bigger substantial impact in public administration and management research (Ritz et al. 2016). This scholarly interest is illustrated by the steady increase in the number of publications and quotations (Vandenabeele and Skelcher 2015, Ritz et al. 2016). According to Vandenabeele et al. (2018), there are multiple reasons behind this apparent popularity. First, PSM can be an answer to one of Behn's (1995) big questions in public management: how can public managers motivate public employees to pursue public purposes? In addition, PSM accounts for unselfish motivational components, bridges the gap between individual and institutional levels of analysis, and is connected to other fields thanks to its methodological rigor (Vandenabeele et al. 2018).

The PSM research universe has three main singularities: definition, conceptualization and measurement of the concept. First, PSM seminal definition states that it is "an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations" (Perry and Wise, 368). However, many other researchers redefined PSM without reaching a universal definition (Bozeman and Su 2015). In this thesis, PSM is understood as "the belief, values and attitudes that go beyond self-interest and organizational interest, that concern the interest of a larger political entity and that motivate individuals to act accordingly whenever appropriate" (Vandenabeele 2007, 547). Apart from capturing the interactive, unselfish and public components common in most PSM definitions, the rationale behind this choice relies on the link between a set of value-laden behavioural determinants and the fulfilment of the interest of a social collective.

Second, since the original work from Perry and Wise (1990), PSM has been usually conceptualized as a motivation. However, a growing number of scholars offer an alternative view, which this thesis also adopts. PSM can also be understood as a social identity grounded in public institutions or organizations (Perry 2000, Vandenabeele 2007, Perry and Vandenabeele 2008, Schott et al. 2015, Bednarczuk 2018). Hence, PSM is a self-concept imbued with public content that moves individuals to bring the acquired public values to multiple decision situations (Stazyk and Davis 2015). On top of that, another issue with engenders discussion in terms of conceptualization are the similarities between PSM and terms such as altruism or prosocial motivation. Scholars argue that PSM is a specific prosocial motivation aimed at serving the society at large or the public interest (i.e. unidentified beneficiaries), and it can be found in all individuals tied to public service-oriented organizations, regardless of their sector (Ballart et al. 2016, Ballart and Rico 2018, Vandenabeele et al. 2018, Schott et al. 2019). Consequently, in this thesis PSM is interpreted as a social identity providing motivational power to serve the public interest.

Third, due to the vagueness around the definition and conceptualization of PSM, many efforts have been done to develop a specific and tangible measure. Perry (1996) did the first attempt to calculate individuals' PSM. Built on the distinction of affective, normative and rational motives embedded on PSM, he developed a list of 40 Likert-type items. 24 of these items converged into four dimensions of PSM: attraction to policymaking, commitment to civic duty or public interest, compassion and self-sacrifice. The growing use of this scale raised generalizability problems due to cultural differences (Kim et al. 2013). Therefore, researchers further refined the original measure adapting it to political contexts, incorporating new dimensions or adjusting the existent ones (e.g. Vandenabeele 2008, Kim et al. 2013, Ballart and Riba 2017). However, a vivid debate exists about the

need for, and added value of, a dimensional approach (Wright et al. 2013, Vandenabeele and Penning de Vries 2016, Kim 2017). Recent arguments stress that PSM research would be more easily advanced having an overall measure of PSM capturing the essence of the concept without preselecting certain behavioural inclinations (Vandenabeele et al. 2018). Although acknowledging the different motives embedded in PSM, this thesis understands PSM as a singular and unified concept.

Causes, consequences and usefulness of PSM

As argued above, PSM can be understood as a public service identity grounded in public institutions or organizations (Vandenabeele 2007). These institutions, defined in line with Peters (2000), adjust individuals' social identities by transmitting their public institutional logics (Meyer et al. 2014). The degree of internalization of these logics depends on individual-environment interactions. Vandenabeele et al. (2014) proposed that socializing influences to cultivate individuals' public service identity, or PSM, can be classified across three main groups: micro-level (e.g. work relationships, leadership and volunteering experiences), meso-level (e.g. church membership, education and professional associations), and macro-level interactions (e.g. country citizenship, employment sector and cultural belonging). These influences can be explained using social-cognitive, self-determination, predisposition-opportunity or goal-setting theories (Perry and Vandenabeele 2008).

Although scholars have made substantial efforts to explain how PSM can be developed, the bulk of the research has focused on the consequences of PSM (Ritz et al. 2016). This emphasis can be partly explained because the three main propositions raised by Perry and Wise (1990) are oriented to possible outcomes, and because consequences "give PSM its practical value" (Vandenabeele et al. 2018, 268). PSM has been reported to increase, among others, job satisfaction, individual and organizational performance, public sector

job choice, organizational commitment and ethical behaviour (Ritz et al. 2016, Vandenabeele et al. 2018). Next to this rather positive outcomes, recent research also examined the potential dark sides of PSM. Beyond the negative attitudinal outcomes such as stress or burnout emerged because of person-organization or person-job misfits (e.g. Gould-William et al. 2013, Van Loon et al. 2015), there are also theoretical arguments connecting PSM to negative decision-making and behaviours such as blind loyalty, inflexibility and even unethical behaviour (e.g. Schott and Ritz 2018).

Another issue is to explain how the knowledge generated so far can be translated into specific practice recommendations. PSM is important for practice because organizations can take advantage of all positive outcomes PSM promotes, but also prevent the negative ones (Paarlberg et al. 2008). In fact, PSM can guide recruitment processes, inspire management practices, promote ethical and transformational leadership, reinforce public service-oriented cultures, and be an alternative to pay-for-performance reward systems (Ritz et al. 2016). In addition, PSM can be further integrated into human resources management (HRM) practices through the job demands-resources model (c.f. Bakker and Demerouti 2017). Hence, PSM can be conceived as a predisposition affecting individuals' daily job resources and demands (Bakker 2015). Although interesting, all these insights need to be taken with caution because PSM is institutional in its origins, consequences and outcomes, which means that "only if an environment judges PSM to be appropriate, or calls out for the public service motive, will PSM be able to realize its full potential in terms of outcomes" (Vandenabeele et al. 2018, 269).

Ethics, public administration and PSM

This dissertation is related to a specific sub-field within PSM literature. In particular, the aim of this thesis is to further understand the relationship between PSM and ethics. As exemplified in the introduction, ethics has been a concern for centuries. This is partly

because ethics are a prerequisite for flourishing good individuals, organizations and societies (Koven 2015), and partly because big and small unethical acts committed by public officials have always been a motive of concern. Although many disciplines in social sciences (e.g. business, psychology or economics) have devoted a lot of effort to study the determinants of ethical and unethical outcomes, i.e. awareness, judgement, intention and behaviour (Rest 1986), public administration research remains largely paused (Adams and Balfour 2010, Menzel 2015, Bellé and Cantarelli 2017). This scarcity contrasts with the idea that ethics rests at the heart of public administration as a professional field (Perry 2015). In the coming lines, a brief review about ethics, ethics in public administration, and ethics in PSM research is offered.

Ethics are broadly defined as a set of values and norms working as standards to assess the morality of certain attitudes, decisions and behaviours (Lasthuizen et al. 2011). To examine the morality of an outcome, there is a difference between the *content* and the governance *process* of that outcome (Huberts 2018). The *content* focuses on the essence or subject of a certain outcome (e.g. policy A instead of B), and it usually differs across cultures or institutions. By contrast, the *process* refers to acting with or without making integrity violations such as improper use of authority or manipulation of information (Lasthuizen et al. 2011), and it aims to move beyond cultural or institutional borders approaching universal application. In this dissertation, these two approaches towards morality are used to explore the link between PSM and ethics.

Apart from describing two situations (i.e. *content* and *process*) in which ethical issues are in play, it is also important to know how ethical outcomes can be deduced or judged in these situations. Philosophical studies usually differentiate between quandary (or foundational) and character (or anti-foundational) ethics. Although making different claims, both character and quandary theories agree on demanding a certain degree of

unselfishness to be ethical (Rachels and Rachels 2015). On the one hand, because of the steady increase of the power of reason during the Enlightenment, some philosophers stated that individuals must deduce or judge ethical behaviour in line with an internalized set of universal rules (Fox 2000). Within the quandary sub-field there is a classic distinction between teleological and deontological theories. Teleological defendants (e.g. Bentham) argue that ethical behaviour occurs when acts produce more good than adverse consequences (Lawton et al. 2013). By contrast, deontological authors (e.g. Kant) justify ethical behaviour when it is logically deduced from some higher self-justifying principle (Fox 2000). On the other hand, instead of searching rules, character theorists focus on which traits are needed to be ethical (Lawton et al. 2013). Virtue ethics (e.g. Aristotle), which is the main doctrine, states that ethical acts naturally arise if individuals cultivate certain virtues.

These theories represent ideal types which are rarely observed. In public administration literature, although there is agreement on the fact that public servants go beyond their self-interests to act on behalf of the common interests (Frederickson 1996), it is less clear which of these three ideal types is predominant. Teleological defendants affirmed that public administrators inevitably consider the consequences towards which they orient their actions. For example, because of public servants respond to citizen needs elaborating certain policies, ethical actions are those which outcomes satisfy citizen demands (Pops 2000). However, public servants are also constrained by a huge amount of principles, precepts, rules and regulations in their day to day work (Chandler 2000). Therefore, deontology, usually in the form of classical bureaucratic ethic, is also present. On top of that, various scholars described how a virtuous public servant should be. For example, Hart (1984) stated that public administrators require a special ethical obligation and character which are: superior prudence, ethical heroism, caring or love for humanity, trust

in citizenry, and a never-ending quest for ethical improvement. Similarly, MacIntyre (1984) affirmed that virtuous public servants are those who promote the achievement of internal goods such as justice, freedom or equality, and not external ones as money, power or fame. More recently, Josephson (2006) listed six desirable virtues for public servants: truthfulness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring and citizenship.

Emerged from calls for a recommitment to values associated with the duty to serve the public interest, PSM crystallized the old ideal of a public service ethic (Horton 2008). When first elaborated by Plato or Aristotle, this ideal was tied to ethics philosophy. However, research in PSM did not fit the concept in these debates (Prebble 2016). In fact, most articles focus on describing the relationship between PSM and certain ethical (e.g. whistle-blowing) or unethical (e.g. corruption) outcomes. Brewer and Selden (1998) were the first researchers who linked PSM to an ethical behaviour: whistle-blowing. These two concepts were connected through the shared devotion to act to pursue the common good and further the public interest. Extending these findings outside the job place, Houston (2006) demonstrated that PSM promotes charitable contributions (e.g. blood donation) because they embody “the essence of the public service motive in terms of public interest, service to others, and self-sacrifice” (71). Relying on similar theoretical arguments, additional works supported these findings, explored the cognitive relationship between the two concepts, and examined the indirect effects of transformational and ethical leadership (Choi 2004, Kwon 2014, Stazyk and Davis 2015, Caillier 2015, Wright et al. 2016). Although this research demonstrates a positive effect of PSM on ethical outcomes and negative on unethical ones, recent studies suggest that the link between PSM and ethics is at least more complex than has been supposed (Esteve et al. 2016, Christensen and Wright 2018). From a theoretical perspective, PSM may lead to both ethical and unethical outcomes (Maesschalck et al. 2008, Schott and Ritz 2018). This dissertation

departs from these apparently mismatches to first detect the void in PSM-ethics research, and then move forward to partially fill it.

Void in PSM-ethics research

The brief review of PSM-ethics literature presented above suggests that there is a growing number of studies that examine this relationship. Although relevant, these studies also have some clefs. To advance knowledge in this sub-field, I propose six possible lines of further research. In the next sub-section, each of these avenues will be transformed in a specific research question.

First, although borrowing concepts close to ethics theories, PSM has not been unambiguously inserted in these debates (Prebble 2016). In fact, some scholars stated that PSM and ethics reflect similar values (e.g. Liu et al. 2011, Yung 2014, Stazyk and Davis 2015), but the origin of this affinity has not been explained in detail. However, to understand the effect of PSM on ethical and unethical outcomes, it is important to first investigate the underlying theoretical mechanisms linking PSM and ethics. This can be done by linking PSM to ethics philosophy and therefore examining whether PSM is simply a description of a prevailing ethos, a set of normative propositions about how individuals giving a public service ought to behave, a pack of virtues, or something in between. This knowledge will be useful to know to what extent PSM is related to both ethical and unethical outcomes.

Second, as stressed above, some articles pointed to the fact that PSM may have a dark-side, which implies that it may lead to both ethical and unethical outcomes (Le Grand 2010, Schott and Ritz 2018). At first glance, it seems that if both ethical outcomes and PSM reflect similar logics tied to the same conception of the public interest, then their relationship cannot be inconsistent. However, since the public content of public institutions or organizations is open to change (Perry and Vandenabeele 2008), PSM may

be interpreted differently, i.e. relying in a different interpretation or meaning of the public interest (Schott et al. 2015). Therefore, there is a need to expand the theoretical argument linking PSM and ethics by integrating the fact that PSM may have different interpretations. This will be useful to understand if PSM is a double-edged sword (Le Grand 2010, Steen and Rutgers 2011). In other words, it will clarify the conditions affecting the extent to which PSM leads to ethical and unethical outcomes.

Third, Choi (2004) and Stazyk and Davis (2015) studied the psychological process by which PSM leads to ethical judgement. The two articles proposed that individuals with higher levels of PSM are more likely to reflect around different principles or rules, and balance them, prior to judge a situation. Although sound, the two studies found limited evidence of this claim. This indicates that new research needs to examine this topic. An avenue of further research stems from linking PSM with moral psychology theories, a stream of literature which has already explored intuitive and reflective reactions to ethical issues (for a review see Brand 2016). Therefore, a deeper understanding of the cognitive relationship between PSM and ethics could be offered.

Fourth, apart from the theoretical work sorting out the relationship between PSM and ethics, it is necessary to further demonstrate it empirically. To attain this aim, three actions are taken. First, most extant PSM-ethics literature focuses on the effect of PSM on whistle-blowing behaviour (e.g. Brewer and Selden 1998, Caillier 2015, Wright et al. 2016). However, it is also important to broaden the scope of the studied ethical and unethical outcomes by including integrity violations literature (c.f. Lasthuizen et al. 2011). Apart from connecting both streams of research, this will provide practice-oriented insights by examining if PSM predicts public workers' responses to ethical issues faced in a daily basis. For example, when public workers face favouritism by supervisors or other employees, or conflict of interests through gifts.

Moreover, since most PSM-ethics articles use PSM as the only independent motivational variable, it is convenient to differentiate the effects of PSM on ethical outcomes from those of other work motivations. As it is well known, public administration literature has an on-going and vivid discussion about the drivers of individuals' attitudes and behaviours at work. One of the classic distinctions is between extrinsic (i.e. put effort in a job task in exchange for something) and intrinsic (i.e. put effort in a job task because of enjoying it) work motivation. Since these work motivations have been found to have a unique impact on key variables such as individual performance, job satisfaction or organizational commitment, it is necessary to also calibrate their role in predicting the acceptance of integrity violations. Furthermore, the differentiation of the effects between work motivations and PSM have both theoretical and practical implications.

In addition, past research examined if certain micro-level antecedents of PSM such as transformational or ethical leadership indirectly affect whistle-blowing through PSM. However, it is necessary to investigate if other micro-level variables can also play this role. This is important to isolate specific techniques that public managers and institutions can use to increase the levels of PSM and also enlarge its positive ethical consequences. For example, the effect of transactional leadership on PSM has still not been examined. Also, although basic psychological needs satisfaction (Vandenabeele 2007, 2014, Jensen and Bro 2018), goal clarity (Caillier 2016) or economic stressors (Taylor and Taylor 2015) have been found to impact PSM, these antecedents have not been studied in conjunction with ethical or unethical outcomes. Because of these concepts can provide interesting theoretical and practical insights, their indirect effects on the acceptance of integrity violations need to be examined.

Object of the thesis

To facilitate the understanding of the object of this dissertation, it is important to stress the main theoretical departure point: PSM and work motivation relate to the idea of identity. Identity theory, a well-known sociological and psychological theory, focuses on the relationship between the self and society to explain certain attitudes, decisions and behaviours (Burke and Stets 2009). Therefore, the focus in this thesis is on how individuals 'are,' and on what ethical implications it has. As stated in the previous subsections, PSM is conceptualized here as a public service identity, which is acquired through the interaction between individuals and public institutions. Similarly, motivation refers to the forces that energize, direct and sustain behaviour (Perry and Porter 1982) and it is also driven by individuals' identity formation by interacting with other individuals or institutions (Vallerand 1997, Deci and Ryan 2000). Hence, work motivation depends on whether individuals' identity has been cultivated in line with the institutional values and norms of their working institution or organization (Gagné et al. 2015).

All in all, this dissertation aims to increase our understanding of the link between PSM and ethics. To attain this aim, six research questions address the need for both theoretical and empirical work.

Research question 1: To what extent is PSM related to ethical and unethical outcomes?

Research question 2: What conditions affect the extent to which PSM leads to ethical and unethical outcomes?

Research question 3: What is the cognitive relationship between PSM and ethical and unethical actions?

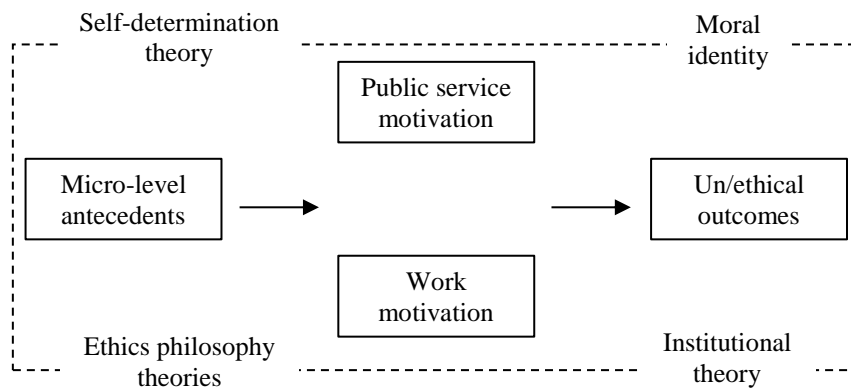
Research question 4: What is the relationship between PSM and integrity violations?

Research question 5: To what extent does the effect of PSM in judging integrity violations differ from those of work motivations?

Research question 6: What micro-level antecedents of PSM indirectly decrease the acceptance of integrity violations?

In order to answer these six research questions, I use the following research model (figure 1). Overall, it is examined if individuals' distinct capacity to self-regulate their attitudes and behaviours in line with the institutional public values and norms affects the likelihood of promoting un/ethical outcomes. And, how certain micro-level antecedents of PSM level this relationship by supporting identity development. To study these processes, I mainly combine PSM literature with insights from self-determination, ethics philosophy, institutional and moral identity theories.

Figure 1. Research model

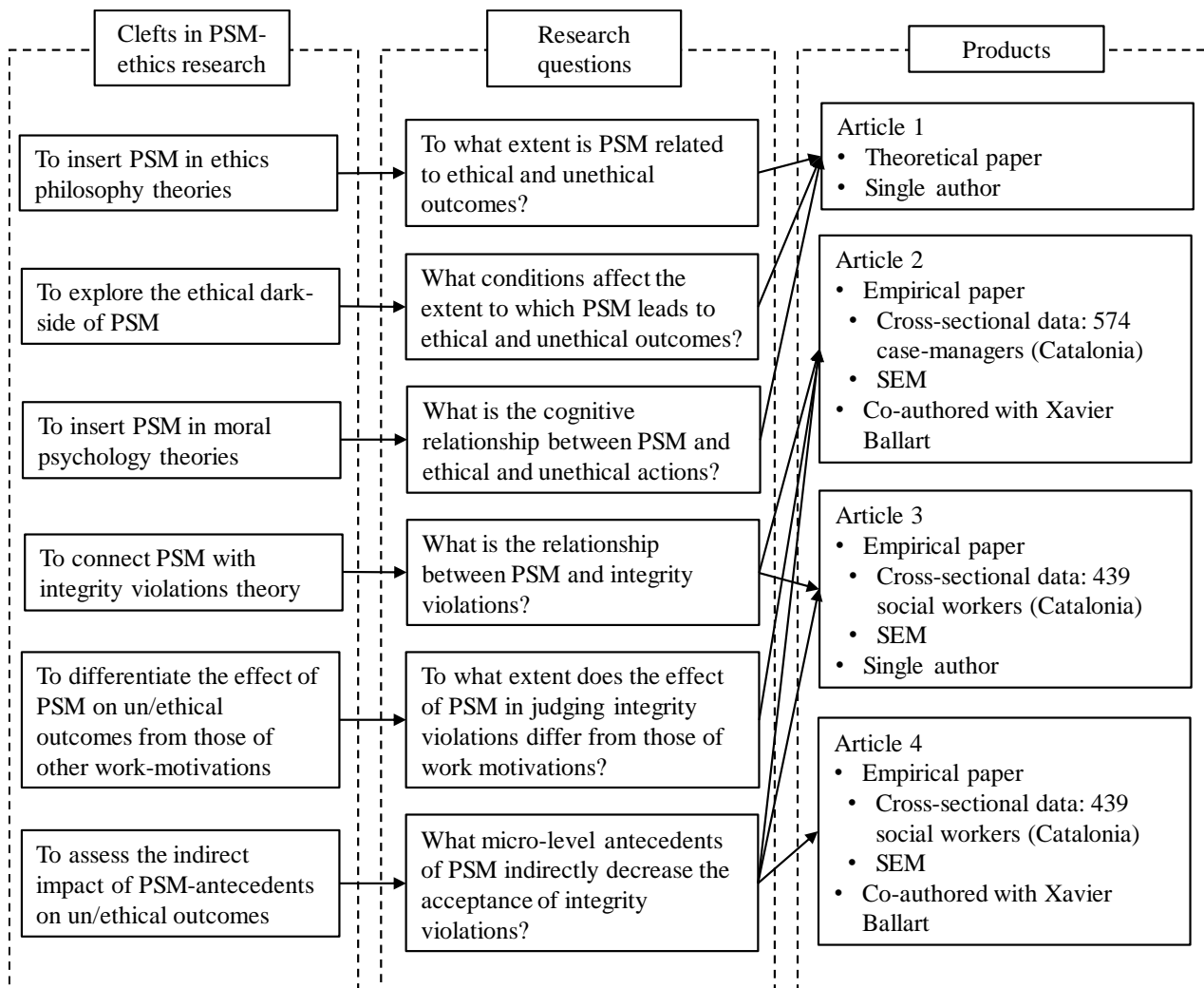


In each article, different parts of this model are studied. This model simplifies both the reality and the theoretical arguments presented in the articles. Nonetheless, it offers a comprehensible and schematic approach to understand the object of this thesis. The emerged knowledge is more than the sum of each article, and it cannot be entirely fitted inside this model.

Content of the thesis

This PhD project will answer the six research questions in four different articles. Each article contributes to explain a part of the research model presented above. Because of this, they can be read in isolation. However, there is also a common mission: understanding the relationship between PSM and ethics. I contribute to this aim by formulating a theory and testing parts of it through different resources. This sub-section summarizes the main contents of each article (see also figure 2).

Figure 2. Implementation of the thesis: clefs, questions and products



The first article focuses on developing a theoretical framework to understand the relationship between PSM and ethics. It answers the first three research questions and serves a guide to develop the empirical papers. Combining Arendt’s approach to ethics,

self-determination theory (SDT) and moral identity, PSM is inserted in previous ethics philosophy debates, and an explanation emerges about why it leads to ethical outcomes. Then, two-system reasoning approach is added to understand the psychological process by which PSM leads to ethical outcomes. Last but not least, institutional variety, identity salience and person-environment fit theories complete the theory and explain the conditions affecting the extent to which PSM leads to ethical and unethical outcomes.

The second article tackles the research questions four, five and six. First, it explores the distinct relationships between PSM and external motivation with judging integrity violations. Moreover, it assesses the importance of basic psychological needs satisfaction directly in cultivating PSM and external motivation, and indirectly in judging integrity violations. To falsify each hypothesis, this article applies a full structural equation model using data from 570 case managers working on a program that integrates health and social services in Catalonia (Spain).

The third article elaborates on the fourth and sixth research questions. It first tests the link between PSM and judging integrity violations, which provides stronger support to understand the impact of PSM on judging integrity violations. Then, attention is paid to a micro-level determinant of PSM: goal clarity. Looking at the institutional origins of PSM, this article explains the role goal clarity plays in promoting PSM but also decreasing the acceptance of integrity violations. The two hypotheses are tested applying a full structural equation model in a sample of 439 social workers in Catalonia (Spain).

The fourth article aims to answer a small but important part of the research question number six. According to the first article, PSM can be interpreted as a public service identity which can be controlled or autonomously regulated, and this variation may have

implications for the relationship between PSM and ethics. However, previous studies investigating the validity of this idea does not exist. Therefore, this article offers initial evidence in this direction by calibrating the impacts of transformational and transactional leadership in cultivating PSM, both directly and indirectly through the basic psychological need of relatedness. To test these relationships, a full structural equation model is applied in the same sample of the third article.

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ARTICLE 1

Disentangling the relationship between public service motivation and ethics: an interdisciplinary approach

This article has been published as: Ripoll, Guillem. 2019. "Disentangling the Relationship Between Public Service Motivation and Ethics: An Interdisciplinary Approach." *Perspectives on Public Management and Governance* 2 (1): 21–37. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ppmgov/gvy008>.

Abstract

Although studies linking Public Service Motivation (PSM) and ethics are on the rise, there is still a need to scrutinize the ethical content of PSM. Driven by previous works from various theoretical strands, this article seeks to address this void by clarifying *why*, *how* and *when* PSM leads to ethical outcomes. In examining these questions, a set of propositions emerge that synthesize the underlying mechanisms linking PSM and ethics. This then gives more order to previous studies and provides avenues for further research.

Introduction

Although the ideal of a public service ethic based on advancing the public interest, a higher order commitment, has existed for quite a long time, and has been theorized and developed by ancient philosophers and other research traditions under the label of the public service ethos^I, it was not formally studied until Perry and Wise (1990) coined the term public service motivation (Horton 2008). Emerged from calls for a recommitment to values associated with public service, public service motivation (PSM) went beyond self-interest perceptions and captured a unique public service ethic that motivates individuals to provide meaningful public service both in and outside the public sector (Perry and Wise 1990, Perry 1996, Brewer and Selden 1998).

However, the founders of the concept were cautious in delineating its ethical^{II} content. The explanation for this can be found in the fact that the classic texts establishing the foundations of PSM acknowledge that good (i.e. ethical or moral) needs to be defined (c.f. van Riper 1958, Appleby 1965, Bailey 1965, Mosher 1982). In fact, the founders affirmed that PSM, or what was historically defined as the public service ethic, may take different forms: as many forms as the ways one conceives the public interest (c.f. Rainey 1982, 1991; Perry and Wise 1990; Brewer and Selden 1998). Recent theoretical developments have further stressed that PSM is useful to the extent that one understands what it means, towards which public service values, such as the public interest, it is oriented (Vandenabeele 2007, Schott et al. 2015, Schott and Ritz 2017). Although relevant, this original approach to PSM has been little examined in PSM-ethics research, and not much is known regarding how it actually works.

Relying on the idea that highly public service motivated individuals possess a public service ethic, past research provided evidence of the positive effect of PSM on ethical

outcomes^{III} (e.g. Brewer and Selden 1998, Choi 2004, Houston 2006, Maesschalck et al. 2008, Moynihan 2010, Kwon 2014, Caillier 2015, Stazyk and Davis 2015, Wright et al. 2016). However, newer studies suggest that this link is at least more complex than has been argued (c.f. Esteve et al. 2016, Schott and Ritz 2017, Christensen and Wright 2018); this reveals a need for disentangling the relationship between PSM and ethics. Thus, in line with the suggestion of prioritizing theoretical goals over methodological ones in PSM research (Hatmaker et al. 2017, Pandey et al. 2017), the aim of this article is to identify the underlying theoretical mechanisms connecting PSM and ethics by bringing back the original non-normative and cautious position, understanding what PSM means.

Turning back to the mainstream argument linking PSM and ethics, it has usually been assumed that individuals with high levels of PSM are expected to exhibit ethical attitudes and behaviours, because both PSM and ethics reflect similar public values and promote the public interest against behaviour driven by self-interest. Although concise and neat, this argument needs to be expanded to provide a more plausible theoretical account. First, by defining individuals' self-concepts (i.e. identity), institutional values indirectly drive the behaviour and obligations of public service motivated individuals (Perry 2000). Past research has shown that PSM and ethics reflect the adherence to similar values or are even interrelated (c.f. Maesschalck et al. 2008, Liu et al. 2011, Yung 2014, Stazyk and Davis 2015), and it has also explained the process (e.g. social learning) by which they are internalized (c.f. Wright et al. 2016). However, although values do matter in the PSM-ethics relationship, it is convenient to specify which values are embedded in PSM, and to explain how they contribute to attaining ethical outcomes. Moreover, it is still unclear if all PSM-related values provide normative orientations to an equal measure (Pandey et al. 2017). Thus, it is also convenient to identify the precise role of each PSM-related value, and the identity they form to produce ethical outcomes.

Second, according to Stazyk and Davis (2015) and Wright et al. (2016), by means of a self-regulatory process the values located in PSM increase the need for maintaining self-consistency between individuals' self-concept and their ethical outcomes. However, there is still the need to describe and theorize how the self-regulatory process happens. In fact, since the public interest can provide ethical guidelines (Lawton et al. 2013), but it is also a definitional value in PSM (Brewer and Selden 1998, Schott et al. 2015), it serves as a moral compass (Wright et al. 2016). However, is the public interest the original source of moral obligation? And if it is, why is this so?

Third, alongside studies examining the impact of PSM on ethical outcomes, Choi (2004) and Stazyk and Davis (2015) investigated the psychological process by which PSM leads to ethical outcomes. Choi (2004) proposed that individuals with high levels of PSM are more likely to judge a situation after an accurate balancing of principles and rules. Similarly, Stazyk and Davis (2015) considered that PSM reinforces an intuitive reflection and that it does not rely on external rules, regulations and codes to provide a judgement. However, both articles found limited evidence for their claims, signalling a lack of theoretical and empirical congruence. Therefore, it is convenient to further inspect the cognitive relationship between PSM and ethical outcomes.

Last but not least, although public institutions^{IV} are guided by common public values (Jørgensen and Bozeman 2007), their specific public content is open to change (Perry and Vandenaabeele 2008). Being grounded in public institutions, PSM reflects institutional values and norms (Perry and Wise 1990). Thus, since there is institutional variation, PSM can be interpreted as a dynamic concept congruent with the public organizations in which individuals are embedded (Brewer and Selden 1998, Meyer et al. 2014, Schott et al. 2015, Molonoey and Chu 2016, Pandya 2017). Therefore, there is a need to expand the theory

considering that PSM, as suggested by the founders, can take different forms. Apart from bridging the gap between abstract and practical theory, this also enlarges the understanding of the dark side of PSM (c.f. Le Grand 2010, Schott and Ritz 2017).

By filling in these gaps, the resulting set of testable propositions clarifies the ethical content of PSM by responding to *why*, *how*, and *when* it leads to ethical outcomes. The *why* question delves into the interconnectedness between PSM and ethics by focusing on their shared values and calibrating the specific function of the public interest. Updating past research that examines the cognitive process linking PSM and ethics, this article explains *how* public service motivated individuals produce ethical outcomes. *When* complements the theory developed and adds a fresh view on the dark side of PSM when it relates to ethics by bringing in institutional variation, considering that PSM may take different forms. To attain these goals, this article first reviews philosophical ethics, specifically Arendt's moral theory, to lay the foundations for examining the ethical content of PSM.

Framing the study through Arendt's moral theory

Past and recent research studying the link between PSM and ethics borrows arguments and concepts from philosophical ethics theory (e.g. Perry and Wise 1990, Maesschalck et al. 2008, Liu et al. 2011, Yung 2014, Stazyk and Davis 2015), however PSM has not been unambiguously inserted in these debates (Prebble 2016). Since this is essential in order to clarify the ethical content of PSM, this sub-section offers a philosophical approach that articulates this inspection.

Philosophical studies usually differentiate between quandary and character ethics (Pincoffs 1986). Quandary ethics assume that there is a set of rules "by which appropriate

behaviour may be deduced or judged” (Fox 2000: 108). These authoritative commands promote ethical outcomes by either focusing on the consequences of an outcome (i.e. teleology), or adhering an outcome to a rule, which is self-justifying (i.e. deontology). On the other hand, rather than answering ‘what is the right thing to do?’, character or virtue theories focus on being, not doing (Lawton et al. 2013). According to these theories, there is a set of identity traits that must be acquired and cultivated, and that involve a tendency to produce ethical acts (Cooper 2012, Koven 2015).

Even though quandary and character theories are sound, they suffer severe drawbacks. While the former has often been criticized due to its inflexibility and the impossibility of reaching a universal status (Fox 2000), the latter faces difficulties in specifying the list of desirable virtues, or defining them, without relying on a higher rule. Acknowledging the main drawbacks of these theories, Arendt (1978) proposed a different perspective on studying morality.

Arendt reflected on moral thinking and action (c.f. Young-Bruehl 2006). Contrary to previous efforts in moral theory, Arendt (1963, 1978) proposed that moral judgement may be deductive or reflective, and that virtues are at the service of each way of thinking. While deductive thinking relates the general to the particular (i.e. classic quandary ethics), reflective thinking relates the particular to the general. Both differ in the degree of scrutiny of one’s own judgements. When individuals think using a deductive approach, they are not able to question their own judgements. In contrast, they deduce ethical outcomes by applying an accepted existing rule. However, not all individuals applying reflective thinking are capable of questioning their judgements, because some of them silence objections. Therefore, Arendt (1978) concluded that moral judgement only occurs

when one's 'enlarged mentality' is shared in those spheres within which one socially interacts.

In short, according to Arendt (1963, 1978), morality depends on how individuals think prior to producing ethical outcomes, and how their community influences them in this process. This view of morality provides an analytical framework for understanding ethical behaviour, not merely one that suggests how it should be. In addition, it is particularly relevant to examine the ethical content of PSM because Arendt's approach dissolves the concepts of community, virtues, thinking and action, which are also central in the study of PSM.

On the one hand, Arendt's concept of community refers to the sphere in which one is located that provide frames of thinking, but also to all the elements with which one interacts in this space. With regard to PSM, it is intrinsically tied to institutions which are situated in the public sphere, and therefore connected with public institutional logics (Perry and Wise 1990), which provide the frames of thinking. Moreover, according to Perry and Vandenabeele (2008) PSM is cultivated through the interaction between individuals and public institutions and their elements (e.g. leaders and colleagues). On the other hand, Arendt's approach suggests that virtues, either applied to reflective or deductive thinking, stimulate action. This formula implies that some virtues encourage the use of certain values, which if correctly applied, promote ethical outcomes. Similarly, PSM also reflects a set of values that motivates individuals to act accordingly to do public service-oriented behaviour (Vandenabeele 2007, Stazyk and Davis 2015).

In the light of these similarities, this article is articulated through four research questions linking Arendt's approach to morality with the current needs in the study of the

relationship between PSM and ethics. First, do public service motivated (PSM-ed) individuals think deductively or reflectively in terms of morality? And, what is the role of the community in this process? By connecting motivation and ethics to the institutional level through the concept of moral identity, there emerges a schema that explains *why* PSM leads to ethical outcomes. Second, by which cognitive processes do PSM-ed individuals think in terms of morality? This is explored by blending the previous answer with the two-system approach (Kahneman 2003) and the social intuitionist model (Haidt 2001); it therefore explains *how* PSM-ed individuals produce ethical outcomes.

Third, since communities are neither unique nor uniform (Arendt 1978), how do the existence of multiple communities influence PSM-ed individuals' ethical outcomes and thinking? Adding institutional variety, identity salience, and person-environment fit literatures to the previous propositions, this article provides a detailed clarification about *when* PSM leads to ethical outcomes, and a more tangible answer to the questions *why* and *how*. Finally, since Arendt proposed how the community should be in order to question an individual's initial position, the last research question is: how do/es the homo/heterogeneity of community/ies influence/s the way of moral thinking of individuals with high levels of PSM? After discussing the positive and negative consequences of homo/heterogeneous environments through the Attraction-Selection-Attrition model, the answer further elaborates on the question *why*.

Having provided the philosophical approach within which the ethical content of PSM is explored, the following sections address the stated research questions. This article then provides a recap of the main claims, and illustrates their relevance. Finally, new avenues for research are proposed.

PSM and ethics: delineated by the public interest

This section answers the first research question by integrating a philosophical and behavioural approach to ethics with previous works on PSM using identity, institutional and motivational theories. For analytical purposes, this paper assumes here and in the following section that public institutions are constant.

Moral identity, institutions, motivation and ethics

Even though there is agreement regarding the main pillars of the concept (self-sacrifice, affective, normative, and rational dimensions), a universal definition of PSM does not exist (Bozeman and Su 2015). In this article, PSM is defined as “the belief, values and attitudes that go beyond self-interest and organizational interest, that concern the interest of a larger political entity and that motivate individuals to act accordingly whenever appropriate” (Vandenabeele 2007: 547). The chosen definition embraces an open notion of PSM which ties a set of value-laden behavioural determinants to the fulfilment of the interest of a certain social collective (i.e. community or institution). Moreover, it assumes that PSM is institutionally framed but that its scope is unlimited. This unrestricted conception in terms of antecedents and consequences allows for a better understanding of the complex relationship between PSM and ethics.

Since the initial works by Rainey (1982) and Perry and Wise (1990), PSM has relied on motivational, identity and institutional theory to describe its nature and the processes by which it promotes certain outcomes. Thus, to examine the relationship between PSM and ethics, one must first comprehend how institutions, identity, motivations and ethics can be connected. In order to do this, this sub-section first links motivation and ethics to social identity, which shows that both concepts infer identity regulation processes depending on the extent to which a set of institutional logics have been internalized. Then, behavioural

ethics literature is used to reveal that moral identity brings together all the previous elements.

Emerging from the interaction between individuals and complex social structures (Burke and Stets 2009), social identity provides the link between the individual and the institutional level. It is defined as a “part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership in a social group” (Tajfel 1982: 24). Thus, when social identity is applied in a given situation, individuals use the frames of reference provided by institutional logics (Meyer et al. 2014), which are defined 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” (Thornton and Ocasio 1999: 804).

Because of the dialectical nature (individual-environment) of Self-Determination Theory (SDT), it connects institutional logics with an individual’s identity and motivation. In contrast with dichotomy theories of motivation, SDT differentiates a continuum of motivations dependent on the extent to which individuals self-regulate their attitudes and behaviour in line with an identity that reflects a set of institutional values and norms (Deci and Ryan 2000). Identity regulation varies depending on whether institutional logics have been internalized; this occurs when an institution is able to satisfy three basic universal psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness (Deci and Ryan 2000; Gagné and Deci 2005). Thus, identity regulation and motivation are shaped by individual-institution interactions (Ryan and Deci 2004).

When basic needs are satisfied, individuals possess a self-regulated identity because the institutional values and norms have been internalized, and therefore they are autonomously motivated (i.e. integrated or identified motivation) to maintain consistency with the institutional logics. In contrast, when internalization does not take place, individuals' attitudes and behaviours are driven by external incentives to maintain coherence with the institutional logics, which implies that the regulation of individuals' identity is controlled by these stimuli (i.e. introjected or external motivation).

Ethics are also linked to social identity. First, since virtues are traits embedded into one's identity, identity development is an essential element in virtue ethics (Koven 2015). As far as they are cultivated inside an institution, virtues reflect the institutional values (Kernaghan 2000). Second, in quandary or deductive theories social identity reflects, apart from virtues, those rules that have been acquired from an institution, and which need to be followed to produce morally 'right' behaviour inside the institutional umbrella. Third, despite not guiding behaviour by following a higher rule, reflective thinking also requires identity development by promoting those virtues that allow individuals to have an 'enlarged mentality.'

Insights from behavioural ethics literature underpin the need for identity cultivation by showing that the individual capability for self-regulation determines the promotion of ethical outcomes (Eisenberg 2000, Forte 2005, Treviño 1986). According to Bandura (1999) this process of moral self-regulation occurs when individuals align their behaviour with an acquired set of moral standards in order to avoid self-condemnation, a situation that emerges when one violates them. One of the most relevant mechanisms by which this self-regulatory process takes place is moral identity.

Emerged from social identity, moral identity is a self-concept that reflects a set of moral values connected to a social referent (Blasi 1984, Aquino and Reed 2002). Its usefulness relies on the fact that a moral identity entails moral schemas for interpreting and responding to social situations (Gibbs 2009, Lapsley and Narvaez 2004). Thus, moral identity motivates individuals to produce ‘right’ moral outcomes by maintaining self-consistency with the acquired institutional values. From Arendt’s point of view, one could easily assume that a moral identity reflects virtues which are applied either to deductive or reflective thinking, and the motivation to be committed to them.

Moral identity varies depending on the degree of internalization of its moral values. In this sense, a moral identity is central to the self when their schemas have been actively appropriated into the core self, implying that individuals experience a sense of unity between self and morality (Hardy and Carlo 2011). Thus, by means of internalization, moral values are integrated into the self-concept (Aquino and Reed 2002). Moral education, personality characteristics, social interaction, participation in moral actions, and community or institutional context, have all been detected as antecedents of moral identity and its degree of centrality (Shao et al. 2008; Misangyi et al. 2008, Hardy and Carlo 2011). In terms of consequences, moral identity influences the thoughts, emotions and outcomes of individuals (Higgins 1996). Moreover, since it promotes self-consistency, it decreases moral disengagement (McFerran et al. 2010) and has a positive influence on all stages of ethical decision-making (Garcia et al. 2010, Rupp and Bell 2010).

As Hardy and Carlo (2011) suggested, the nature, formation and consequences of moral identity can be inspected through SDT. Since the centrality of moral identities is determined by the degree of internalization of their moral values (Aquino and Reed 2002),

it can easily be argued that moral identity regulation also rests in a continuum (from autonomous to controlled). On top of that, the cultivation process of moral identity depends on the interaction between individuals and institutions, which is also the case in SDT.

The purpose of this sub-section was to examine how motivations, ethics, institutions and identity could be linked in order to inspect the PSM-ethics link. Framed inside the SDT, moral identity has been identified as one theory capable of guiding this analysis. In this sense, it is proposed that a moral identity supplies a set of moral values, acquired from institutional logics, that provide the guidelines to obtaining ethical outcomes and the motivation to be adhered to these standards. The degree of self-regulation of this moral identity varies depending on the extent to which the moral values have been internalized or not. How this process applies to PSM is outlined in the following sub-sections.

PSM as a moral identity

Although PSM is usually operationalized as a motivation, it can also be understood as a public service identity (Vandenabeele 2007), a micro representation of a macro-logic (Meyer et al. 2014). Inspected through SDT, PSM can be defined as a specific self-concept, which includes a set of rules, norms and values with public content that have been acquired by exposure to public institutions (Vandenabeele 2007, Vandenabeele 2014, Pedersen 2015). Being a public service identity that reflects public institutional logics, PSM motivates individuals to behave accordingly (Vandenabeele 2007, Perry and Vandenabeele 2008). However, to further scrutinise its ethical content, it is important to examine if PSM can also be understood as a public service moral identity.

There are several similarities between PSM and moral identity. First, both concepts rely on social identity to explain their nature and consequences. Second, although the social referent from which institutional logics are acquired differs for moral identity (a non-specified institution) and PSM (public institution), they are cultivated through micro, meso and macro interactions between individuals and institutions, and explained using similar theories (e.g. SDT). Third, PSM and moral identity infer identity regulation processes depending on the extent to which institutional logics have been integrated into individuals' self-concepts. Lastly, both concepts have strong motivational power to predict self-consistency between one's self-concept and one's behaviour and attitudes.

Considering this closeness, PSM and moral identity are clearly interrelated. When an individual has high levels of PSM, s/he adheres to a set of public institutional logics (Perry and Vandenberg 2008). In terms of moral identity, these logics include a set of moral values that tie individuals to institutions (i.e. social collective or community), establish the framework of 'right' actions for PSM-ed individuals, and provide the needed motivation to be adhered to these standards. Thus, PSM-ed individuals are likely to produce outcomes which are in line with the acquired public institutional logics because by doing so they are being self-consistent with their moral identity. However, how is this moral identity regulated? What are the moral values entailed in PSM as a moral identity? And, which way of moral thinking are they oriented towards?

With regard to its regulation, Vandenberg and Braugh (forthcoming) further integrated PSM inside the SDT framework and stressed that although PSM is closer to autonomous forms of motivation, it can also be related to controlled ones. This implies that somebody could be PSM-ed without having internalized the public institutional logics. For example, PSM-ed people may report high levels of PSM because they think that it is their duty or

because they will be socially rewarded. Thus, whether public institutional logics have been fully internalized (i.e. autonomous regulation of a public service moral identity) or not (i.e. controlled), PSM-ed individuals regulate their behaviour and attitudes following them.

In relation to the moral values that PSM entails, it should be first considered that PSM is intrinsically connected to public institutions. Since public institutions uphold and transfer public values, it is essential to examine their moral content. Public values provide identity, motivation and give meaning to public service (Andersen et al. 2013), and they are defined as “the rights, benefits and prerogatives to which citizens should (and should not) be entitled; the obligations of citizens to society, the state and one another; and the principles on which governments and policies should be based” (Bozeman 2007: 13). Hence, public values can embody and transfer moral content.

According to Andersen et al. (2013), each PSM dimension includes public values to a varying degree, values such as looking after the public interest, empathy, altruism or duty. This is reinforced by Stazyk and Davis (2015) who showed evidence that public values such as equity, representation and individual rights are related to PSM. However, not all public values are equally relevant. One important distinction is between intrinsic public values, which are ends in themselves, and instrumental values, which are important as a means to achieve another value (Bozeman 2007). In addition, public values can be instrumental at one point in time and intrinsic at another (Bozeman 2007). These differentiations are useful in order to obtain a more nuanced picture of the link between PSM and ethics through the concept of moral identity.

Following the idea that PSM reflects clusters of interrelated values (Perry 1996, Kim and Vandenberghe 2010), this article proposes that PSM can be interpreted as a moral identity composed of five value-based dimensions, of which one is a purely public value. First, self-sacrifice acts as an unmoved mover. This means that individuals are able to sacrifice their self-interests in order to fulfil their affective, normative or rational motives (Kim and Vandenberghe 2010). Second, there are three mediating instrumental values which correspond to the motivational bases raised by Perry and Wise (1990). Rational motives are grounded in the idea of doing good for others through participating in the policy process. Norm-based motives refer to the willingness to act in line with internalized institutional values. And, affective motives are grounded in the emotional basis of helping others. Finally, these motives aim to serve the public interest, which is the hidden public value-based dimension in PSM.

Regarding the moral functions of these five value-based dimensions and how they interact, it is suggested that the public interest connects individuals with the institutional moral standards, and therefore it defines the framework of 'right' actions of PSM-ed individuals. Next to this, the four instrumental values, which are oriented to nurture the public interest, reflect the virtues that PSM-ed individuals have (e.g. ethical heroism, self-discipline, loyalty, or justice). Virtues alone do not have meaning and do not offer guidance, however. Therefore, it is proposed that, apart from drawing moral guidelines, the public interest provides meaning and direction to PSM-related virtues. On the one hand, the public interest acts as an instrumental public value and defines the content of self-sacrificial, rational, normative and affective values. On the other hand, once these values have meaning, they are instrumental to furthering the public interest (now an intrinsic public value). Thus, as far as the public interest defines the moral standards and the content of PSM, some consistency between the two is expected. Figure 1 shows the

interconnectedness among PSM value-based dimensions by further developing Kim and Vandenberg's (2010) one.

Figure 1. PSM value-based dimensions

Self-sacrifice	Rational	The public interest
	Normative	
	Affective	

An example can also help to illustrate this. Consider a woman with high PSM that is embedded in a public institution which firmly defends transparency. This public interest defines her moral standards (i.e. to be transparent). At the same time, it provides content to PSM instrumental values, which can be translated into a negative emotional reaction towards favouritism among co-workers (i.e. affective motive), a predisposition to safeguard and apply the norms that promote transparency (i.e. normative), and a willingness to start new initiatives in order to increase her institution's degree of openness (i.e. rational). She will be ready to self-sacrifice to fulfil these motives. By doing so, she will act by promoting her public interest (i.e. being ethical).

Throughout this sub-section, PSM has been examined in terms of moral identity. Inspecting PSM moral values, it has been detected the key role of the public interest, but also the importance of virtues. By intersecting quandary and virtue ethics, this article proposes that PSM fits into the deductive approach to morality offered by Arendt, because it reflects a collection of virtues which are normatively oriented to further the public interest. This is in step with recent research indicating the key role of this public value in understanding PSM. Steen and Rutgers (2011) conceive PSM as a set of values likely to be aligned with the public interest, Schott et al. (2015) define PSM as “a personal

orientation or commitment toward the public interest” (296), and Wright et al. (2016) state that the public interest serves as the moral compass. But what is the public interest and why is it able to provide moral standards, meaning and guide?

The public interest and the public service moral identity

According to Denhardt and Denhardt (2007) the public interest combines elusive and crucial elements that promote the rise of different conceptualizations. This article considers the public interest as a public institutional value encompassing normative (c.f. Cassinelli 1962), political process (c.f. Smith 1960) and consensualist (c.f. Stone 1988) orientations. Thus, it is defined as contextually (time and place) dependent institutional ideal resulting from a political process that is able to guide the actions of the social collective it represents. Therefore, although the public interest is acquired from institutional logics, it is played out at the individual level. The chosen position shares the two commonalities of the dimensions of publicness: normative and community (Benn and Gauss 1983).

This approach stresses that a set of logics regulates individuals’ behaviour according to the higher moral obligations defined by an institution (Scott 2007). Thus, this article proposes that the public interest delineates the framework of ‘right’ actions of individuals embedded in a specific public institution. At the same time, it can regulate their behaviour by constituting the meaning of PSM motives and regulating them towards fulfilling the public interest. This is because institutions frame the public interest both as a constitutive and regulative norm; while the former “creates the very possibility of certain activities”, the latter influences behaviour by manipulating sanctions and incentives (Searle 1995: 27).

In the light of the present conceptualization of the public interest, and its role in the relationship between PSM and ethics, it is worth noting that in terms of morality, the public interest limits the moral freedom of PSM-ed individuals, while at the same time it provides a moral framework that serves the greater good of the public institution in which they are embedded. In short, people with high levels of PSM are prisoners and servants of their public interest at the same time.

PSM and ethics: cultivation and outcomes

This sub-section provides two propositions indicating how PSM-ed individuals think in terms of morality and what the role of the community is in this process (the first research question); this responds to *why* PSM leads to ethical outcomes. In line with the theoretical arguments presented, this article proposes that PSM-ed individuals have a public service moral identity (which varies depending on the degree of self-regulation), reflecting a set of institutional logics that have been acquired from a public institution. The content of this moral identity, as well as the degree of internalization of its moral values can be explained by antecedents from moral identity literature. According to them, these processes depend on the interaction between one individual and the institution in which s/he is located, taking into account the public space and the elements embedded in it. This is in step with PSM cultivation research under the SDT framework (c.f. Perry 2000, Vandenberghe 2007, Perry and Vandenberghe 2008, Vandenberghe 2014, Vandenberghe and Braugh forthcoming).

Regarding its ethical outcomes, a public service moral identity provides a set of moral values to individuals. The public interest gives meaning to instrumental values (i.e. virtues), and the opportunity of using them. At the same time, it defines the moral standards determining which actions are in line with institutional moral obligations. Thus,

individuals with a public service moral identity pursue the public interest by acting in a way that respects it, because this enables them to maintain self-consistency.

In short, PSM-ed individuals apply a deductive approach to morality in which the rule that they follow is to further the public interest. The fuel to apply this rule is provided by the virtues that they possess. In consequence, as PSM increases, the expectations of ethical outcomes also increase. Therefore:

Proposition 1: The possession of a public service moral identity, as well as the degree of internalization and meaning of its moral values, depends on the interaction between an individual and the public institution in which s/he is embedded.

Proposition 2: Highly PSM-ed individuals produce ethical outcomes because they regulate their behaviour and attitudes in line with their public service moral identity.

Opening the black box: a psychological approach to PSM and ethics

Once it has been explained *why* PSM-ed individuals produce ethical outcomes, it is convenient to inspect *how*, through which cognitive processes, this happens. This is done by first reviewing existing behavioural ethics and decision-making theories, which mainly rely upon psychological research, and then identifying the most promising theories for this article. By applying them to the propositions and arguments discussed above, the second research question will be answered.

Psychological grounding in ethics

Psychological studies emerged during the Cognitive Revolution of the 1960s (c.f. Kohlberg 1969, Gilligan 1982) treated ethical outcomes as the result of an inner

reasoning through a rational process of reflection. Turiel (1983) codified this view into his definition of the moral domain: “prescriptive judgements of justice, rights, and welfare pertaining to how people ought to relate to each other” (3). However, researchers have not always thought that reason is the only source of ethical judgement (De Cremer et al. 2011). New theories have emerged indicating that judgement is strongly or mainly influenced by intuitive and emotional factors (c.f. Haidt 2001, 2007, Haidt and Joseph 2004, 2008), and therefore individuals have a much more automatic response than was presupposed by rational models.

Since both views have been reconciled through Simon’s (1955) bounded rationality approach (c.f. Barraquier 2011), the psychological examination of the link between PSM and ethics departs from an integrated framework. Simon (1955) suggested that people sometimes think carefully about which action they are going to perform. However, people often replace these calculations by satisfaction motives. Departing from this argument, dual process theories emerged (c.f. Epstein 1994, Sloman 1996, Stanovich and West 2000, Haidt 2001, Kahneman 2003), which have been applied in different strength to moral psychology (for a review c.f. Brand 2016). Among them, this article selects the two-system approach (Kahneman 2003) because of its impact in science, but also for its promising outcomes in PSM, which could go beyond exploring its ethical content. However, due to the narrow focus on the individual level, it is convenient to supplement this approach with the social intuitionist model (Haidt 2001), a dual process ethical decision-making theory that adds social elements and therefore allows to combine psychological exploration with institutional theory.

The two-system approach

Kahneman and Tversky proposed an alternative to simple and precise models of rational-agents. The basic idea of the two-system approach is that there are two modes of thinking, which correspond to the concepts of reasoning and intuition (Kahneman 2003). These modes were labelled as system 2 and system 1 respectively (see table 1), and they reflect the two poles of the decision-making continuum. Thinking in system 2 mode is done deliberately and effortfully, while system 1 thoughts come spontaneously to the mind without any effort (Kahneman 2003). Regarding their efficiency, system 1 has usually been associated with inferior performance. However, Kahneman and Tversky disagreed with that simplistic idea. In fact, Kahneman (2003) stressed that “intuitive thinking can also be powerful and accurate. High skill is acquired by prolonged practice, and the performance of skills is rapid and effortless” (1450).

Table 1. Two-systems comparison (Kahneman 2003)

System 1 = Intuitive	System 2 = Reasoning
Fast	Slow
Automatic	Serial
Effortless	Effortful
Emotionally charged	Deliberately controlled
Governed by habit	Rule governed
Difficult to control/modify	Flexible

Social intuitionist theory as a completion of the two-system approach

Although identifying the psychological process that leads individuals to make certain outcomes, the two-system framework remains unconnected to the institutional level (i.e. Arendt’s notion of community). The Social Intuitionist Model (SIM) fills this gap.

As it is originally conceived, SIM has three core concepts. First, moral intuition, which can be interpreted as system 1, refers to “the sudden appearance in consciousness of a

moral judgement, including an affective valence ..., without any conscious awareness of having gone through steps of searching, weighing evidence, or inferring a conclusion” (Haidt 2001: 818). Second, moral reasoning, which can be translated as system 2, is defined as “conscious mental activity that consists of transforming given information about people in order to reach a moral judgement” (Haidt 2001: 818). Third, moral judgement describes the evaluation of a situation “made with respect to a set of virtues held to be obligatory by a culture or subculture” (Haidt 2001: 817). This refers to the outcome which is susceptible to ethical analysis, and without challenging the theory, it could be substituted by awareness, intention or behaviour.

Apart from explaining how intuition and reasoning promote ethical outcomes, SIM brings social elements into the equation to explain the formation of intuitions. In fact, it is suggested that others’ moral judgements and reasonings may influence one’s moral intuition (Haidt 2001). In addition, SIM also proposes that culture shapes moral intuitions through socialization and internalization processes (Haidt 2001). Therefore, by assuming that intuition is just one of the two poles of the decision-making continuum, it can be affirmed that both thinking through system 1 and through system 2 are open to institutional influences.

Fitting the psychological approach to the theory

Before exploring the cognitive relationship between PSM and ethics, it is essential to analyse the theoretical bases of this connection through a psychological lens. Therefore, this sub-section first examines how Arendt’s approach to morality can be seen from the proposed cognitive framework. After that, moral identity is included in the inspection.

As explained before, Arendt (1978) understood morality as dependent on the way individuals think and the community that they have around them during this process. Deductive judgement can occur either through system 1 or system 2, while reflective judgement can only result from system 2^V. Deductive judgement relies on the application of a general rule. Therefore, depending on individuals' acquaintance with a general rule, individuals can compare a situation with it either slowly or quickly. In contrast, reflective judgement forces individuals to make judgements after an accurate balancing of different points of view, which undoubtedly requires time and effort. On top of that, since institutions are able to shape the system of thinking, Arendt's idea of community is also captured by the chosen psychological approach.

Under the psychological lens, there are two elements of moral identity which require special attention: the meaning and the degree of internalization of moral values. On the one hand, according to SIM, intuitive thinking (i.e. system 1) arises when cultural logics are internalized through socialization processes (Haidt 2001). In addition, thinking through system 1 reflects high skill and intuitive practice (Kahneman 2003). Thus, it is proposed that the degree to which the values tied to a moral identity have been internalized shapes how it works psychologically. This is in line with past research in moral identity, that stresses that a higher degree of centrality is associated with more spontaneous moral outcomes (Perugini and Leone 2009, Hardy and Carlo 2011, Pohling et al. 2017). On the other hand, as previously suggested, moral identity may take different forms depending on which moral values it reflects: a set of virtues oriented to promote deductive or reflective thinking. In this sense, the psychological mechanism varies depending on its meaning.

Bringing the two elements together, the following scheme emerges. In terms of deductive thinking, if individuals have a self-regulated moral identity, they are able to intuitively follow it. Of course, they are also capable of thinking through system 2 if the situation requires this. However, if the internalization process has not taken place (i.e. controlled regulation), individuals are more likely to reason, to carefully balance how values are applied, prior to producing ethical outcomes.

In contrast, internalization of higher moral values does not promote intuitive ethical outcomes when a moral identity reflects virtues applied to reflective thinking. This is because this way of thinking requires time and effort, which are not accessible through system 1. And, although slower and probably less efficient, if the integration does not occur, this moral identity stills forces individuals to reason through system 2.

PSM and ethics from a psychological point of view

This sub-section offers two propositions that explain *how*, through which psychological processes, PSM-ed individuals produce ethical outcomes. In reviewing previous studies in the field, it was found that Choi (2004) and Stazyk and Davis (2015) investigated whether PSM-ed individuals weigh up some principles prior to deciding their ethical intention. Although this links PSM to the use of system 2, their evidence does not fully support these claims. This suggests that PSM may not be constrained to only one system of thinking. In this regard, Perry (2011) stressed that PSM implies both reason and passion, which can be respectively linked with system 2 and system 1. Thus, it seems that an alternative explanation is available.

The inspection of *why* PSM leads to ethical outcomes revealed that PSM can be interpreted as a public service moral identity, which promotes a deductive approach to

morality that consists in a normative orientation to look after the public interest. In line with proposition 1, institutions influence the possession of the public service moral identity, as well as the meaning and degree of internalization of its moral values. Since these two processes are key to understanding the cognitive mechanism by which a moral identity promotes ethical outcomes, the implications of proposition 1 are extended.

Regarding the use of system 1 or 2, one could expect that when the values tied to a public service moral identity have been internalized (i.e. autonomous regulation), PSM-ed individuals tend to apply the general rule more automatically. In contrast, if this process does not occur, then PSM-ed individuals are not be able to think through system 1, meaning that they need to reflect on how their moral values should be applied in a concrete situation. On top of that, this article suggests that even if the public institutional logics have been internalized, and thus the public service moral identity is self-regulated, the characteristics of a situation (e.g. a complex ethical dilemma) may force them to use system 2 rather than system 1. Therefore:

Proposition 3a: Highly PSM-ed individuals are more likely to think through system 1 or system 2 depending on the degree of self-regulation of their public service moral identity.

Proposition 3b: Highly PSM-ed individuals with a self-regulated public service moral identity are able to think through system 1 or system 2 depending on the characteristics of a situation.

Institutional variety as a completion of the theory

The two sections above have assumed that public institutions are constant. However, there are many public institutions, which vary from one to another. In the lines that follow, this

article first explains how the variety of public institutions affect the conception of PSM as a public service moral identity. After that, research questions three and four are answered, and the response to the first two is refined.

Do multiple public service moral identities exist?

According to Scott (2007) institutions are manifold and exist at distinct levels (world-system, society, organizational field, organizational population, organization and organizational subsystem), which are different in terms of space, time and number of persons affected. Although they are at different levels, institutions are interconnected and interdependent (Vandenabeele and Breugh, forthcoming), and therefore their content can cross boundaries, but also be isolated. Thus, similarities and divergences are likely to exist at both inter and intra-levels. On top of that, one individual can be in a different institution in relation to another individual, and in multiple levels and institutions at the same time.

In this sense, the values attached to a moral identity change depending on the institution from which they are derived. As stressed before, PSM's moral values are acquired from public institutional logics. However, these logics may vary from one public institution to another. Thus, since the content of public institutions varies (Perry and Vandenabeele 2008), public service moral identities are also multiple. This implies that although PSM reflects a set of virtues which are normatively oriented to further the public interest, these values are open to being diverse (i.e. to have different meanings). In other words, PSM may take different forms because it varies depending on the public institutional logics (Rainey 1982, 1991, Perry and Wise 1990, Brewer and Selden 1998, Brewer et al. 2000, Vandenabeele and van de Walle 2008, van Loon et al. 2013, Meyer et al. 2014, Wright et al. 2017).

In order to better understand this, consider the following example. One could easily affirm that the Nazis were not PSM-ed because they suffered from a lack of affective values. In line with the theory presented, the public interest provides meaning to this motive. Among other things, this implies identifying a group with which an individual is emotionally attached, and therefore feels the need to help them. The Nazis did not have affective ties to Jews, but there are no reasons to believe that they did not have affective ties to other Nazis. Thus, although the Nazis were guided by an evil public interest, this does not mean that they were unable to possess a public service moral identity. The offered non-normative perspective allows to conceive PSM as something dependent on public institutional logics. Thus, as soon as the transferred logics are public, a public service moral identity is cultivated regardless of its content.

It is worth noting here that in acknowledging the importance of institutions in defining the meaning of PSM, this article does not fall into cultural relativism. In contrast, what is proposed is that PSM-ed individuals are encapsulated in a moral microcosm (c.f. Brief et al. 2001) which tends to morally exclude (c.f. Opatow 1990) those who are not aligned with the values embedded in their public service moral identity.

PSM and (un)ethical outcomes

The second proposition stresses that PSM-ed individuals produce ethical outcomes because they hold a public service moral identity. However, this assumes that public institutions are constant, which simplifies the reality to excess. As stressed above, the ethical content of PSM may vary depending on the institution from which the moral values are obtained. On top of that, from the divergence between values at various levels emerges the concept of agency (Scott 2007), which implies that individuals embedded in one institution may not share its logics. Thus, differences are likely to exist between and

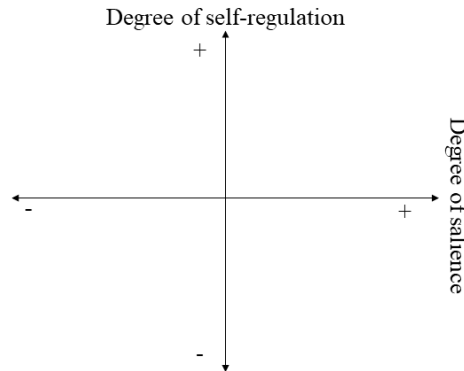
within institutions. To calibrate the impact of this diversity in the second proposition, identity salience and person-environment fit theories are brought in.

Due to the fact that individuals are situated in multiple institutional levels at the same time, they also receive the influences of many institutions. Therefore, one individual can have many moral identities simultaneously (Aquino and Reed 2002). Nonetheless, since some moral identities are more accessible than others, not all of them are uniformly decisive to the self (Hardy and Carlo 2011). The salience of each of these moral identities determines their order of influence. A salient identity is defined “as a readiness to act out an identity as a consequence of the identity’s properties as a cognitive structure or schema” (Stryker and Serpe 1994: 17). Its importance rests on the fact that a salient identity “is likely to be played out (activated) frequently across different situations” (Stets and Burke 2003: 135). Hence, moral schemas that are more salient (i.e. cognitively accessible) are more readily activated for use (Hardy and Carlo 2011). Past research on PSM also supports that its salience determines the likelihood of playing it out (c.f. Perry and Vandenberg 2008, Schott et al. 2015).

Thus, apart from self-regulation, salience is also important in understanding *why* PSM leads to ethical outcomes. By considering the salience of a certain public service moral identity, one can better predict the expected ethical outcomes in a diverse institutional context. However, it is convenient to clarify that salience and self-regulation are not synonyms; rather, they are two different but complementary aspects of moral identity. Salience focuses on the likelihood of applying a moral identity in a concrete situation, while self-regulation refers to the likelihood of autonomously regulate individuals’ behaviour and attitudes in line with a moral identity. Thus, moral identities vary in terms of their degree of centrality and salience. For example, an individual can have a salient

(i.e. highly accessible) public service moral identity which is not self-regulated, and vice-versa. Figure 2 shows how public service moral identities can be grouped across the continuums of self-regulation and salience.

Figure 2. Self-regulation, salience and public service moral identities



Apart from recognizing which salient public service moral identity motivates individuals' ethical outcomes, to examine their 'rightness' it is essential to know from which position the evaluation is performed. In this sense, individuals' public service moral identities may be more congruent with some public institutions or individuals than with others. Person-environment fit literature provides the necessary supplement to calibrate the degree of moral congruence.

Person-environment (P-E) fit^{VI} is defined as the degree of congruence between an individual and his/her organization (Kristoff-Brown et al. 2005). These attributes include, among other things, values and norms (Su et al. 2015), which are reflected in individuals' moral identities. Accordingly, moral congruence (i.e. fit) occurs when the values embedded in individuals' public service moral identities match those from one institution, job, or other individuals. If there is fit, the outcomes motivated by this moral identity are considered as ethical. In contrast, if there is a mismatch, the outcomes are considered as unethical. In short, outcomes are ethical if the moral values from which they are judged are equal to those values of the public service moral identity that motivated them.

The following example is useful for grasping the details of a mismatch between two different public service moral identities. Consider a public environmental protection agency being asked to work on the requalification of 5% of the 'Black Forest.' The original plan was designed by a sub-unit of the environment ministry, and approved by referendum. It consists of using this 5% as land for building a zoo with only endogenous species, together with an office oriented to specifically protect the 'Black Forest.' Among the workers of this agency, there is a woman who is also a member of an NGO which main goal is to save the 'Black Forest,' and it also considers that the implementation of this project would damage the forest. It could be the case that she has a salient public service moral identity based on this public interest, which motivates her to defend the forest by direct (even violent) action or lobbying. Due to this fact, her norm-based values would be tied to her duty towards her NGO, not towards the norms and rules of her agency. Thus, she would face an ethical dilemma if she had to act under the commands of the ministry. In this situation, it is expected that she would be more likely to follow the NGO's norms, and therefore take small actions oriented to boycott the process, possibly putting at risk the original plan but also the performance of this agency.

What this sub-section shows, and the above paragraph exemplifies, is when, under what conditions, PSM leads to ethical outcomes, and when it does not. Accomplishing the ministry's commands would be judged as unethical by those individuals who have the public service moral identity derived from the NGO's institutional logics as salient, but as ethical by those whose salient public service moral identity has been acquired from the public environmental protection agency. In both cases, individuals are morally excluding those who do not share their moral values (i.e. person-environment moral misfit). In other words, the degree of salience of one's public service moral identity and its fit with the environment determines the morality of certain outcomes. Therefore:

Proposition 4: PSM-ed individuals are likely to produce unethical outcomes when their salient public service moral identity does not fit with their environment.

Saliency shifts

Saliency has been detected as a key mechanism in understanding the relationship between PSM and ethics in a diverse institutional context. Therefore, it is important to examine the determinants of saliency of one public service moral identity over others.

According to Stets and Burke (2003), what determines identity saliency is the degree of commitment to an identity, which in the case of social identity has both a quantitative and qualitative dimension connected to a social collective (Stryker and Serpe 1994). While the former reflects the number of persons that one is tied to through a social identity (i.e. extensiveness), the latter reflects the depth of these ties (i.e. intensiveness). Thus, the interaction between individuals and institutions determines the saliency of moral identities (Hardy and Carlo 2011). In terms of PSM, institutions (i.e. communities or social referents) refers to public ones and their elements. Therefore:

Proposition 5: When the degree of commitment to one public service moral identity increases, its saliency also increases.

Proposition 6: The degree of commitment to a public service moral identity depends on the interaction between an individual and public institutions.

Community homo/heterogeneity

PSM-ed individuals and public institutions can interact in many ways to shape the saliency of public service moral identities. However, there is one element that deserves

special attention here. Arendt (1978) stressed that reflective judgement only arises when one is surrounded by a community with the ability of seeing reality from different points of view. Examining the fourth research question, this article reflects on whether the homo/heterogeneity of the community that PSM-ed individuals have around them may have an impact on their moral thinking by promoting (or not) a specific public service moral identity.

It is essential to extend P-E fit arguments to examine this issue. As further developments of the Attraction-Selection-Attrition model (Schneider 1987) suggested, good P-E fit (i.e. homogeneity) has both positive and negative outcomes. While it promotes higher levels of satisfaction, communication, cooperativeness, cohesion and fewer interpersonal conflicts, it also leads to the inability to change and to easily predictable decision-making (Schneider et al. 1995, van Knippenberg et al. 2004). In contrast, heterogeneity provides alternative perspectives that can stimulate flexibility to cope with change (Schneider et al. 1995), and therefore diverse groups have a larger base of support for their decisions (Ancona and Caldwell 1992). Bringing these arguments to the ethics field, it can be easily observed that Arendt's warning about the risk of high homogeneity is underpinned.

In line with the explanations above, the answer to the *why* question can be further elaborated upon. This article suggests that homogeneous environments contribute to the creation of the moral microcosm in which PSM-ed individuals are encapsulated, while heterogeneous ones challenge a unique public service moral identity. In other words, fit contexts increase the degree of salience of a public service moral identity by reinforcing the commitment to it. This argument partly goes in line with Schott and Ritz's (2017) warning of the risks of high homogeneity for PSM-ed individuals. Therefore:

Proposition 7a: PSM-ed individuals who have a homogeneous context around them which shares the public institutional logics^A tend to have a higher commitment to public service moral identity^A.

Proposition 7b: PSM-ed individuals who have around a heterogeneous context around them which does not share certain public institutional logics tend to have a lower commitment to a specific public service moral identity.

Salience and the psychological approach

As stated before, public institutions are able to shape the psychological mechanism by which PSM-ed individuals produce ethical outcomes. This is because PSM-ed individuals think through system 1 or system 2 depending on the degree of self-regulation of a public service moral identity. Although logical, this argument assumes that there is only one public institution, and therefore does not consider that individuals may hold many public service moral identities which vary depending on their degree of salience. Thus, it is important to consider the impact of a salient moral identity in explaining *how* PSM leads to ethical outcomes.

Apart from emphasizing the relevance of internalization through socialization or interaction processes, Haidt (2001) stressed that intuitive thinking may also depend on others' moral judgements and reasonings. This social persuasion promotes one specific perspective over the others, which directly creates own intuitive judgements (Haidt 2001). This process can be explained through the concept of salience, as it illustrates a readiness to act following a specific schema (Stryker and Serpe 1994), and is determined by the interaction of individuals and institutions. In this regard, Hardy and Carlo (2011) stressed that when a moral identity is highly accessible (i.e. salient), individuals are able to provide

automatic responses to moral issues. Thus, depending on the degree of salience of a public service moral identity, PSM-ed individuals think intuitively or after profound reasoning. However, similarly to what has been argued before, even if the public service moral identity is salient, the characteristics of a situation (e.g. a complex ethical dilemma) may force PSM-ed individuals to use system 2. Therefore:

Proposition 8a: Highly PSM-ed individuals are more likely to think through system 1 or system 2 depending on the degree of salience of their public service moral identity.

Proposition 8b: Highly PSM-ed individuals with a salient public service moral identity are able to think through system 1 or system 2 depending on the characteristics of a situation.

If P8a and P3a are taken together, these propositions seem to collide because they imply that a PSM-ed individual can think through system 1 even if s/he does not self-regulate his/her public service moral identity. However, in line with what has been argued above (see figure 2), rather than a limitation of the theory, this should be considered one of its strengths, one that permits to inspect the social reality by considering all the complexity it entails. The following example illustrates a conflicting expectation.

Consider a woman working in a public agency aimed to promote the transparency of public administration. This woman has a public service moral identity in line with the institutional logics. However, she still has not fully grasped the meaning and importance of the embedded values of this institution (which means that she has a controlled regulation). Imagine that she faces the following ethical dilemma: she is asked to perform a bureaucratic procedure that would generate large costs for the agency but ensure transparency. In this situation, the ethical outcome (i.e. to be transparent) would be

decided through two different mechanisms depending on the degree of salience. On the one hand, if the public service moral identity is salient, she would follow the system 1 logic, and would be more likely to intuitively do the bureaucratic procedure to ensure transparency at whatever cost required. On the other hand, if it is not salient, then she would be more likely to follow the system 2 logic and complete the bureaucratic procedure only after carefully balancing how the transparency values should be applied.

Conclusion

This theoretical framework is useful because it clarifies the ethical content of PSM by explaining *why*, *how* and *when* it leads to ethical outcomes. Previous research investigating some of these concerns has largely relied on a simplistic mechanism linking PSM and ethics. However, this article has taken the examination of this relationship further by bringing back the original non-normative approach to PSM, and by inserting the concept into the main philosophical ethics debate. Therefore, important contributions to the literature have been made. The following lines present this progress by providing a brief summary of the theory.

The first contribution determines *why* PSM-ed individuals produce ethical outcomes by exploring how PSM-ed individuals think and the role of the community in this process. Examining the interconnectedness between PSM and ethics, the theory explains that PSM can be meaningfully interpreted as a public service moral identity, which may vary depending on its degree of self-regulation and salience. The content of the moral values is determined by the public interest, a hidden public-value based dimension of PSM. Derived from the institutional level, the public interest provides meaning and orientation to PSM's instrumental values (i.e. virtues), and at the same time defines the ethical standards. Thus, it has been proposed that PSM-ed individuals possess a set of virtues that

prompt them to think deductively because they compare whether a given situation fits their higher moral rule (i.e. further the public interest). Therefore, individuals with high levels of PSM are more likely to produce ethical outcomes because by doing so they are self-consistent with their salient moral identity.

Second, considering the variation in public content of different institutions, this article draws the limits of the positive link between PSM and ethical outcomes. This provides a slightly different approach to the dark side of the concept by assuming that there are many ways of conceiving PSM. Just as there are multiple public institutions, whose content may vary from one to another, there are also many public interests, and therefore many public service moral identities. Thus, individuals can only produce ethical outcomes *when* their salient public service moral identity fits with their environment. However, a good fit can also have severe consequences. In fact, the environment's homogeneity may increase commitment to a specific public service moral identity, which reduces the likelihood of applying diverse points of view to achieve a larger base of support.

Finally, this article clarifies previous research on the cognitive relationship between PSM and ethics. Combining the explanations presented with ethical and general decision-making theories, it has been proposed that the psychological process by which PSM-ed individuals produce ethical outcomes depends on the degree of internalization and salience of a public service moral identity. More salient and autonomous forms of public service moral identity regulation are more likely to lead to automatic judgements. In contrast, more controlled and less salient forms of public service moral identity regulation are more likely to lead to thinking through system 2.

Avenues for further research

This theoretical framework provides various avenues for further research. First, this is only one theoretical effort to explain how PSM and ethics can be linked; therefore, the theory can be further advanced, and challenged. For instance, subsequent research can further investigate how individuals respond to a moral misfit between themselves and their institutions. In other words, do they exit or withdraw from the relationship, or communicate and propose change (c.f. Hirschman 1970)? Another example is to focus on the special commitment between PSM-ed individuals and the will to serve the public interest. Sociological studies (c.f. Collins 2004) can complement the presented theory and inspect PSM as something similar to a way of life (i.e. a religion in Durkheim's terms).

Second, work needs to be done in order to test the theoretical propositions that have emerged in this study; both quantitative and qualitative research is encouraged. For example, in the field of the measurement of PSM, this study revives the issue of how it is conceived. Although built on previous studies, the argument that self-sacrifice and the public interest are spread across the three motivational bases of PSM needs to be empirically tested. Also in this regard, the meaning of PSM can be connected with the assessment of moral identity (c.f. Aquino and Reed 2002). Therefore, further works should delve into this to improve the operationalization of PSM when it is applied to ethics.

Third, this is one of the first works in PSM research that links the concept to the psychological study of thinking. Since the analysis of this process has been made from a micro-level perspective of individual behaviour adding insights from psychology, it is connected to behavioural public administration, a very promising line of research early explored in public management and administration but relevant to related fields such as

economics, psychology and sociology (c.f. Grimmelikhuijsen et al. 2016). In this sense, neurological and purely psychological approaches could be relevant in order to explore PSM, and its antecedents and consequences. Moreover, it is also convenient to inspect how the traditional barriers that institutions put up to discourage the use of system 1 fits with the institutional promotion of self-regulation and salience of public service moral identities, and therefore increases the likelihood of using system 1.

In conclusion, as the theoretical framework suggests, PSM is open to serve to both good and evil purposes as long as these fit the public interest, which confirms the founders' cautious and non-normative approach to PSM. In this sense, Arendt correctly stressed the danger of thinking deductively in terms of morality. Mixing this theory with her most contested work (Arendt 1963), one could affirm that Eichmann did not have a self-regulated evil (i.e. Nazi) public service moral identity, but that it was extremely salient, which prompted him to intuitively produce 'ethical' outcomes. Moreover, he was in a context of high person-environment fit, which makes it unfeasible to consider different points of view. However, his deeds did not fit with a world ethic such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and that is why he deserved to be prosecuted. In a nutshell, PSM is a power that comes with great responsibility.

Notes

I. For a review of the differences and similarities between PSM and related concepts capturing the ideal of a public service ethic, see Vandenabeele et al. (2006), Horton (2008) and Rayner et al. (2011).

II. Ethics is defined as "the study of what is morally right and what is not" (Cambridge Dictionary 2018). Ethical and moral are used as synonyms. Specifically, ethical is a

synonym of morally 'right' (i.e. no integrity violations), whereas unethical is a synonym of morally 'wrong' (i.e. integrity violations).

III. Ethical outcomes may vary on decision-making ethical dilemmas where each option has pros and cons, and it can be captured in real life situations when individuals face manifest violations of integrity (Maesschalck et al. 2008). Also, they englobe the notions of ethical awareness, judgement, intention and behaviour (Rest 1986).

IV. Institutions are defined according to Peters (2000).

V. Although it is outside the scope of this article, it is important to note that a purely intuitive judgement is missing in Arendt's theory. It would reflect an almost innate unconscious judgement that uniquely occurs through system 1. This very first judgement would be further modelled by the socialization process and the acquired moral identity.

VI. Although P-E fit takes different forms (person-organization, person-job, person-group, and person-person) this article uses the unitary conception for simplicity.

Acknowledgements and funding

This work would not have been possible without the helpful comments and criticisms of Wouter Vandenabeele, Xavier Ballart, Marc Esteve, Marija Aleksovska, Jessica Breugh and the three anonymous reviewers. This article was funded by the FPU programme of the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (FPU 14/06498) to support the author to pursue his PhD in Politics, Policies and International Relations at the UAB, and by a project of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness on Public Service Motivation, Objective Performance and Citizen Satisfaction (CSO2017-86653-P). An

earlier version of this article was presented at the Behavioural Public Administration panel of NIG 2017 conference.

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ARTICLE 2

Judging unethical behaviour: the different effects of external and public service motivation

This article has been published as: Ripoll, Guillem, and Xavier Ballart. 2019. “Judging unethical behavior: the different effects of external and public service motivation.” *International Public Management Journal* 0 (0): 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10967494.2019.1588811>

Abstract

While the claim that Public Service Motivation (PSM) has a positive effect on ethical judgment is well established in the literature, this link is less clear for external sources of motivation. Little is also known about how these two types of motivation can be influenced to boost ethical judgment. This article addresses these two shortcomings studying the effects of PSM and external motivation on the judgment of unethical actions, and the process of assumption of institutional logics by individuals with more basic needs satisfaction. The empirical analysis applies full structural equation modeling testing the hypotheses on a sample of 574 case managers working on a program that integrates health and social services in Catalonia. The results illustrate the distinct relation of PSM and external motivations with the judgment of unethical acts. They also indicate that the satisfaction of basic psychological needs indirectly reduces the acceptance of unethical acts. However, this indirect effect only happens through PSM. These findings have important implications for academic research and for the prevention of the development of mild judgments of unethical behavior in the work place.

Introduction

Unethical behavior in public service is a subject that has attracted academic, professional, and public attention. Some scholars have asked to provide evidence regarding what causes unethical behavior in public service and the ways it can be reduced (Belle and Cantarelli 2017). Studying motivation is one possible avenue to improve our understanding of the processes that increase or reduce ethics violations. Since motivation induces individuals to bring their values to decision situations, it plays a role in shaping ethical judgments (Cramwinckel et al. 2013, Stazyk and Davis 2015). In this study we investigate how public service motivation (PSM) and external motivation (EM)¹ are related to the way unethical acts are judged.

Ethical behavior as a target is difficult to hit. It can be defined as the quality of acting in accordance with relevant moral values, norms, and rules (Lasthuizen et al. 2011). It can be a quality of individuals as well as of organizations (Klockars 1999, Solomon 1999). In this study, we differentiate unethical acts from more serious integrity violations like corruption and bribery. We focus on the judgment of unethical acts as they can have important consequences for employees when organizations act legally but unethically, for example, when they hire three people to cover work that was previously done by one full-time person, or for organizations when employees act similarly, for example, by taking a day of sick leave when they are not sick because it does not need to be justified or entering into minor wrong acts like taking petty cash or lying about work they did not do.

The first aim of this article is to scrutinize how PSM and EM are related to employees' judgments of unethical behavior. Most extant PSM literature, since Rainey (1982) and Perry and Wise (1990), points to the connection between PSM and ethical outcomes. Some studies have linked PSM to a whistle-blower attitude (Brewer and Selden 1998,

Caillier 2015). Other studies have found a relation between PSM and higher levels of ethical reasoning (Choi 2004, Stazyk and Davis 2015). More recently, Wright et al. (2016) have shown the potential positive effects of leaders with PSM and an ethical style of leadership on the PSM and ethical intentions of their subordinates. Therefore, it has been established that PSM has a positive effect on ethical outcomes (Maesschalck et al. 2008) but not how this happens.

As in the case of PSM, how EM influences the judgment of unethical behavior has not been sufficiently explored. Some studies reach the conclusion that incentives like pay for performance reduce corruptibility (Kwon 2014). Others suggest that individuals interested in money have more difficulty to make ethical decisions (Tang 2016). Similarly, Ims et al. (2014) argue that increasing levels of executive compensation have a negative influence on manager's ethic reflection and behavior. It is clear that more empirical research is necessary to understand the connection between EM and ethical outcomes.

Reviewing motivation theories, SDT differentiates a continuum of motivations depending on the extent to which individuals are able to self-regulate their behavior in line with institutional logics (Ryan and Deci 2003). According to various scholars (Vallerand 1997, Tremblay et al. 2009, Pedersen 2015), as motivation becomes more self-determined or autonomous it increasingly translates into positive behavioral outcomes, while less self-determined or more controlled motivation leads to negative ones. One of the basic assumptions of SDT is that the degree of internalization of institutional logics into an individual's identity depends on the extent to which people can satisfy the basic psychological needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness inside their institution (Deci and Ryan 2000).

Accordingly, the second aim of this article is to calibrate the indirect effect of having more satisfied basic needs - autonomy, competence and relatedness - in the rejection of unethical behavior through PSM and EM because these motivations reflect the degree of adoption of an identity that is closer to the logic of the institution where an individual is working.

Although previous studies have identified institutional antecedents of PSM (Vandenabeele 2014) and other SDT motivations (Gagné et al. 2010 Van den Broek et al. 2010), there are no studies tying these findings to the judgment of unethical behavior in the workplace. We believe that by linking ethical, motivational, and institutional theories through the concept of identity, this study provides a more comprehensive insight capturing how different motivations, PSM or EM, are associated with individuals' judgment of unethical behavior. By filling these gaps in the academic literature, this study also provides practical guidance for managers on the driving forces to keep ethical standards high when judging unethical behavior.

The results confirm that individuals with a higher level of PSM are less likely to judge unethical acts as acceptable. The opposite is true for individuals who possess higher levels of EM. Individuals who feel they have more satisfied basic needs also have higher levels of PSM and this has an indirect effect on a stricter judgment of unethical behavior.

In this paper, we first review the literature to construct the hypotheses. Following that, we present the data, the research design and the analysis. The last sections are dedicated to a discussion of the results and the conclusions for both academics and practitioners.

Theoretical framework

Ethics and the Public Servant

Corruption is a big concern all over the world and it attracts a lot of attention both in government and research. However, in many Western governments, there is a problem of unethical behavior, which is independent from corruption and other more serious integrity violations. Breaches of moral norms and values are an important concern that calls for attention (e.g. Rest 1986, Jones 1991) since they can have a significant impact in the legitimacy of public administrations (Putnam 1995).

Some studies differentiate between types of integrity violations and provide a conceptual framework to understand the ethical complexities of government (de Graaf 2010, Lasthuizen et al. 2011). We depart from the definition of ethics as the collection of values and norms, functioning as standards or yardsticks for assessing the integrity of one's conduct (Benjamin 1990), and we concentrate on the judgment of three categories of ethical violations. Our choice corresponds to the categories of favoritism, conflict of public and private interest through gifts and waste or abuse of organizational resources. They are minor integrity violations, as differentiated from major violations such as corruption or bribery. This is a valid approach because it reports evidence about where public servants "draw the line on tolerating misconduct" (Klockars 1999: 208).

Ethics studies in a broader sense provide the theories that explain the foundations of ethical judgments. The literature differentiates between foundational and anti-foundational theories. Within foundational theories, the classic distinction is between teleological and deontological theories. While the former argue that ethical behavior occurs when acts produce more good than adverse consequences (Lawton et al. 2013), the latter justify ethical behavior when it is logically deduced from some higher self-

justifying principle (Fox 2000). In anti-foundational theories, the emphasis is put on the traits or values that are needed to be ethical. The focus is rather on ‘being’ than ‘doing’ (Lawton et al. 2013). According to virtue ethics, acts reflect identity traits that imply a commitment to behave in a certain way (Cooper 2012). Although making different claims, these theories agree on the idea that being ethical demands a certain degree of unselfishness (Rachels and Rachels 2015).

The literature on government ethics departs from the assumption that some public servants may go beyond their self-interests to act on behalf of the common interest (Frederickson 1996). Public servants’ ethical standards have been examined by both teleological and deontological defenders (Pops 2000, Chandler 2000). Also, many scholars have written about the “virtuous” public servants, making reference to their moral qualities and mental attitudes (Bailey 1965, Hart 1984, Denhardt 1991), to the values they try to achieve, such as justice, freedom, or equality (MacIntyre 1984), or to their obligations and the virtues these obligations require (Cooper 1987). We can find lists of desirable virtues for public servants in recent studies (Josephson 2006).

Virtue-based approaches are relevant because they draw attention to how individuals ‘are,’ and on the implications their way of being may have. According to Cooper (2012), virtues are identity traits that involve a tendency to perform certain acts. Motivation, refers to the forces that energize, direct, and sustain behavior (Perry and Porter 1982), and it is also driven by the individuals’ identity formation interacting with other individuals or institutions (Vallerand 1997, Ryan and Deci 2003).

Both virtues and motivations refer to the idea of identity, which is the link between individuals and institutions. As we know from March and Olsen (1989), identity

development and behavior regulation processes occur through the logic of appropriateness because individuals internalize institutional values and norms.

Motivations according to SDT

With the development of SDT, Deci and Ryan (2002) proposed a different conception of the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Within extrinsic motivation, they differentiate among four types of motivation: external regulation, introjected regulation, identified regulation, and integrated regulation. The first two types are “controlled” motivations where individuals have not comprehended the significance of the action. The other two types are considered “autonomous” motivation because individuals have perceived the significance of the action and integrated it to their identities.

In the case of external regulation, the individual engages in an activity to obtain a reward or to avoid a sanction. The motivation to do an act disappears as soon as the threat or reward is removed. Introjected regulation is a type of motivation where the contingencies that derive from a certain behavior are internalized. In identified regulation, the individual identifies with the value of the activity that is internalized. In integrated regulation, the significance of the action is fully assimilated and it is congruent with the values that the individual already has (Deci and Ryan 2000).

Apart from differentiating individuals’ motivational states, SDT claims that each motivation is associated with different identities (Vandenabeele 2007). Individuals acquire identities either naturally or by interacting with other individuals or institutions (Ryan and Deci 2003). When identities are developed by means of social interaction, the internalization process of institutional logics depends on the degree of satisfaction of three

basic needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci and Ryan 2000, Gagné and Deci 2005). These basic needs can be applied to the work context. Autonomy refers to the desire to experience a sense of choice and psychological freedom when individuals work, competence reflects the desire to feel able and effective when interacting with the work environment, while relatedness illustrates the desire to feel a sense of mutual respect, caring, and reliance with coworkers. Therefore, individuals self-regulate their behavior according to different logics (Deci and Ryan 2000, Gagné and Deci 2005), and they differ in the degree to which institutional values and norms are interiorized into their identity depending on the satisfaction of their basic needs.

Public service motivation and the judgment of unethical behavior

According to the definition by Perry and Wise (1990), PSM is “an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations” (368). This definition implies that PSM originates in social structures infused with public values and norms that the individual internalizes as a public service identity (Vandenabeele 2007). Therefore, PSM’s outcomes should be consistent with the internalized public values and norms.

When using ethics terminology, the virtuous public servant is defined by his or her values (virtues and norms) which correspond to the values included in the concept and dimensions of PSM (Ripoll 2018). This is more evident in the case of ‘self-sacrifice’, which is the foundation of the concept (Perry 1996, Kim and Vandenabeele 2010) and ‘compassion’ which reflects benevolence (Kim et al. 2013) and captures the individual’s will to act in favor of those who are underprivileged. Public virtues are also manifest in the case of ‘attraction to policy making’. Originally designed to tap the individual’s commitment to the governance system (Perry 1996), it was changed in the international

scale developed by Kim et al. (2013) to capture the idea of a personal disposition to serve the public, helping others, getting involved in the community, and actively contributing to the common good. The attachment to a higher norm can be found in the case of ‘commitment to the public interest or civic duty’ (Perry 1996), which was partly changed in the international scale (Kim et al. 2013) to include the public values that individuals want to achieve.

PSM is predominantly considered an identified or integrated type of motivation within the framework of SDT theories because it triggers the identification and internalization of public service values (Pedersen 2015). As it is self-determined, rather autonomous, and based on internalized public logics, outcomes should be more consistent with public values and norms. When motivation reflects a public identity and the related virtues, it should have an influence on a negative judgment of unethical behavior. Therefore, our first hypothesis is:

H1. Individuals with a higher level of PSM are less likely to accept unethical behavior.

External motivation and the judgment of unethical behavior

Recognizing that all individuals can aspire to ethical behavior and they should be capable of ethical analysis, individuals with more self-enhancement values (Schwartz 1992), pursuing tangible rewards (Grouzet et al. 2005), giving priority to selfish interests (Feldman et al. 2015) or with a higher degree of love of money (Tang 2016) have ethical standards that do not correspond with the idea of public virtues.

This is relevant as, in conflict of interest situations, self-oriented individuals will be less concerned about the negative outcomes that they may cause to others, and, they will tend

to evaluate information in terms of their personal costs and the ways they can act to limit the negative consequences for themselves. From this perspective, they are more likely to accept ethics violations and judge unethical behavior more lightly (Reinders Folmer and De Cremer 2012).

This does not contradict the argument that the application of extrinsic motivators by the organization may lead to less corruptibility (Kwon 2014). Organizations can try to control corrupt behavior by offering rewards, including money, to people already working for them. In this study, however, we put the emphasis on how individuals are, their individual preferences, and their desire for external motivators.

Applying the SDT logic, motivation based on incentives like money or other rewards is a controlled motivation. These incentives constitute a classic type of external regulation (Deci and Ryan 2002, Gagné et al. 2010). Rather than guiding behavior based on perceived importance and voluntary choice, they direct behavior through a sense of organizational and external pressure (Pedersen 2015). From this perspective, selfish interest and related values control the individual's work motivation. In other words, the internalization processes of institutional public logics into the individual's identity is less likely and the individual's behavior is less consistent with public logics. Since, externally motivated individuals do not possess, to the same extent, a public service identity, they are less likely to have public virtues or to self-regulate their behavior in line with public values and norms. On the contrary, their identity reflects interests that drive unethical behavior (Wang and Murnighan 2011). According to these processes, EM will be associated with a higher level of acceptance of unethical behavior. Therefore:

H2. Individuals with a preference for external motivators are more likely to accept unethical behavior.

Basic needs satisfaction, motivation, and the judgment of unethical behavior

The satisfaction of the basic needs considered by SDT theories can be affected by multiple factors such as leadership, job design, coworkers' attitudes and behavior, or other environmental pressures (Gagné et al. 2010). Public service organizations can manage the work environment encouraging the decision-making power of professionals, improving their feeling of competence via training and other support activities, and encouraging the relational aspects of their work and the opportunities to interact with fellow workers promoting teamwork or other group activities. Variations on these aspects can influence the motivation of professionals.

There is no particular order in which the three basic needs of autonomy, competence, and relatedness have to be met. They are all important for individuals' self-determination (Van den Broek et al. 2010). Recent research finds that the satisfaction of basic needs contributes to the development of "autonomous" motivation (Van den Broek et al. 2010) and, more specifically, PSM (Vandenabeele 2014, Jensen and Bro 2018). What is less clear is the effect of basic needs on controlled forms of motivation. While Van den Broek et al. (2010) found a negative association between the two, Gagné et al. (2010) reported that the satisfaction of basic needs correlates positively with controlled motivation.

Following the arguments presented above, if public service professionals can satisfy their need for autonomy, competence and relatedness, this will favor the development of a public service identity. An increase in the feeling of satisfaction of these basic needs could also raise PSM and diminish EM. If this is true, public service organizations can indirectly

encourage ethical judgment in the workplace satisfying the basic needs of employees.

Therefore:

H3. Higher levels in the perception that basic needs are satisfied indirectly reduce the likelihood of acceptance of unethical behavior by increasing the level of PSM and decreasing the level of EM.

Data and methods

This study uses data from a survey to 574 case managers working in the ‘Catalan Plan for the Integration of Health and Social Services’ (PIAISS in its original acronym). The main goal of this program is to integrate the work of health and social services professionals with a double goal: (1) to provide better services to the population with complex needs (mostly elderly people) while increasing their satisfaction with public services, and (2) to increase the efficiency of health and social services so as to reduce the number of citizens who are institutionalized when they can stay in their homes.

This is an appropriate group of public service professionals because they have the authority to make decisions directly affecting the quality of life of citizens and the efficient use of public resources. For nearly a decade, they have had to solve tensions resulting from the reduction of public services funding and personnel cuts that together have increased workloads. They had to adjust to budget cuts at a time of major corruption cases in the broader political context. This situation could have transmitted the idea that it was acceptable to commit small ethics violations without weakening their self-image.

The researchers explained their project to the director of the program who facilitated contact with 1,100 professionals from social and health services involved in the

implementation of the pilot plan. A 73-item standardized questionnaire was distributed during the first months of 2016 with a letter of presentation signed by the director of the program.

The survey included questions on job and organization characteristics, work motivations, attitudes, behavior, employment behaviors, and leadership styles. The response rate was 72.73% or almost 800 responses. The number of questionnaires finally used was 574 (52.18%) after incomplete responses were discarded. The resulting sample was fairly representative of the larger professional population. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the final sample. Most (68%) were women in social and health services. Almost all had at least some university studies, 46% worked for a public organization, 39% were in the third sector, and 14% worked for a private organization.

Table 1. Sample characteristics

n = 574	%
Gender (female)	68.47
Age	
21-40	26.48
41-60	66.2
61-80	7.32
Level of studies (University)	92.16
Work sector	
Public	46.69
Private	14.11
Third	39.20

The survey items are included in the appendix. The questionnaire used a 1-7 Likert scale for most of the variables. The correlation matrix of study variables is presented in Table 2. Cronbach's alphas and Raykov's rhos can also be checked for each composite variable. To validate the measures, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed for each measure with two items or more. Next, a full measurement model was conducted (results are provided in the Appendix). Finally, regression paths were added to test the

hypotheses. Because the use of ordinal scales violates the assumption of multivariate normality, we used robust maximum likelihood estimation for all models (Yang-Wallentin et al. 2010).

A recurrent claim in social science research is the need to reduce the impact of common method bias. Respondents provide self-reported information on all key variables and common source bias may be present (Podsakoff et al. 2003). This study controlled the four broad sources of this type of bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003, 2012; Favero and Bullock 2014) using design procedures, such as psychological separation, protecting anonymity, reducing evaluation apprehension, and improving the scale items. Moreover, following van Loon (2017) and van Loon et al. (2015), we also applied a statistical remedy. Once we tested a full measurement model including all the constructs with two or more items, we loaded all the items into one common factor and then compared the fit indices of the two models. We report acceptable results as falling inside the cutoff points proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999). The common latent variable model showed a worse fit (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df = 324] = 2680.604, $p \leq 0.001$; CFI= 0.492, TLI= 0.450, RMSEA= 0.113, and SRMR= 0.114) compared to the full-measurement model (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df = 310] = 638.993, $p \leq 0.001$; CFI= 0.929, TLI= 0.920, RMSEA= 0.043, and SRMR= 0.054). Therefore, it is likely that results are not strongly affected by common method bias (Podsakoff and Organ 1986, Podsakoff et al. 2003).

Table 2. Correlation matrix.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Judgment of Unethical Behavior	–												
2. Gender (female)	0.026	–											
3. Level of Studies (University)	-0.051	0.025	–										
4. Tasks (no management)	0.198*	0.097*	-0.155*	–									
5. Job Tenure (more 3 years)	-0.027	-0.021	0.013	-0.114*	–								
6. Age (47)	-0.157*	-0.156*	-0.009	-0.250*	0.267*	–							
7. Public Sector	-0.163*	0.004	0.169*	-0.018	0.155*	0.298*	–						
8. Third Sector	-0.012	0.015	-0.151*	-0.052	-0.121*	-0.266*	-0.751*	–					
9. Private Sector	0.245*	-0.026	-0.031	0.099*	-0.052	-0.055	-0.379*	-0.325*	–				
10. Innovative Developmental Culture	0.143*	0.082*	-0.019	-0.187*	-0.094*	-0.040	-0.378*	0.237*	0.211*	–			
11. Public Service Motivation	-0.219*	0.115*	0.057	0.014	-0.009	-0.019	0.009	0.042	-0.055	0.167*	–		
12. External Motivation	0.236*	0.055	0.091*	0.155*	-0.054	-0.149*	-0.048	-0.036	0.119*	0.033	0.031	–	
13. Basic Needs Satisfaction	0.071	-0.001	-0.009	-0.222*	-0.074*	-0.048	-0.205*	0.103*	0.150*	0.821*	0.297*	-0.011	–

Note: The correlations of the latent variables have been calculated using their factor scores obtained in the full model with controls. n=574. *p≤0.1.

Dependent variable

The dependent variable of this study is the judgment of unethical behavior. Research on government ethics has produced some typologies of integrity violations (de Graaf 2010, Lasthuizen et al. 2011). Here, we use three categories corresponding to favoritism, conflict of public and private interest through gifts, and waste or abuse of organizational resources. We selected three items in the average of those more frequently observed from a list of ten violations proposed by Lasthuizen et al. (2011). The specific items are these: ‘When there is a vacancy, it is normal to contract a friend or a relative,’ ‘When a beneficiary is satisfied, it is normal to accept a tip or a gift,’ and ‘It is normal to use for oneself resources from the job such as printing, transport tickets, surplus food...’. They are adequate to the context since in social and health services for old people, there is often a need to contract substitute personnel to cover those who are sick, which could justify calling a friend or relative. Accepting gifts is not an extended practice but most of the beneficiaries are older people who are willing to show gratitude for the affection and help they receive. Using or consuming goods that belong to the job can be ambiguous when food is wasted or people indistinctively use their own resources for personal and professional matters. The three-item measure has a low Cronbach’s alpha (0.615) and Raykov’s rho (0.623), all factor loadings are significant (< 0.01) and above 0.5, which is considered to be an acceptable value (Byrne 2010).

Explanatory variables

PSM and EM are the two main explanatory variables. To measure PSM, this article uses the scale proposed by Kim et al. (2013). This scale includes 16 items and four sub-dimensions. A second-order CFA was performed to test the entire measure of PSM in our sample. The results of the model fit (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df=100] = 262.525 $p \leq 0.001$, RMSEA 0.053, CFI 0.940, TLI 0.927, and SRMR 0.048) are satisfactory except

for the significant χ^2 . However, this result should be taken with caution because this significance test is very sensitive to sample size. Moreover, all factor loadings are significant, and the standardized coefficients are above 0.5. Their internal reliability is correct as their Cronbach's alphas and Raykov's rhos indicate.

Individuals' EM to do their job was measured with three items: two related to the importance of a high salary and bonuses (Park and Rainey 2008) and a third referring to job stability. All nicely fit in the external regulation category of the SDT scale developed by Gagné et al. (2015). EM is the explanatory variable with a lower Cronbach's alpha (0.664) and Raykov's rho (0.672); however, all factor loadings are significant (<0.01) and above 0.05.

Each of the three basic needs was measured through an item. Respondents were invited to report on the extent they participate in the definition of work plans, the feeling that their opinion counts and the extent they can count on the help from their coworkers. The face validity of the three items is reasonable. If an employee does not participate in the definition of his or her work plan it means this employee does not have autonomy to decide what to do or when to do it. The opposite is true for someone who participates in the work plan he or she is supposed to implement. Employees who feel their opinion does not count will probably think they are not competent or that their supervisors think they are not competent because their opinion is irrelevant. Employees who feel they can count on the help of coworkers are necessarily more related to others than employees who feel the opposite. The selection of the items is based on the literature and more specifically on a scale of basic psychological needs at work (van den Broeck et al. 2010). Following Deci et al. (2001), Luyckx et al. (2009) and Weinstein and Ryan (2010) we aggregated the three items and measured a unique latent variable which indicates the degree of total basic

needs satisfaction. Cronbach's alpha (0.736) and Raykov's rho (0.734) indicate that its internal reliability is correct.

Control variables

Studying the motivating factors that lead individuals to judge unethical acts differently cannot be done without considering other factors that may have an influence. The analysis controls for gender (binary), age (centered on the mean), level of studies (binary), length of service (binary), and management responsibilities (binary). There is some evidence that women are more ethical than men and the young more ethical than the old (White 1999, Tobin and Hyunkuk 2012). In contrast, there is no clear evidence of a relationship between unethical behavior and the level of studies, length of service, or employment on management tasks.

As statistical controls, this study also includes two organizational characteristics: the sector (public, private, or third sector), and the development of an innovative and dynamic organizational culture. We are assuming that dynamic organizations with a clear goal to innovate will have more difficulties to avoid improper behavior because they need to decentralize (von Maravic 2007). The items used were adapted from Kroll and Vogel (2014): 'My organization is dynamic and innovative' and 'People working in this organization are encouraged to innovate in the provision of services.'

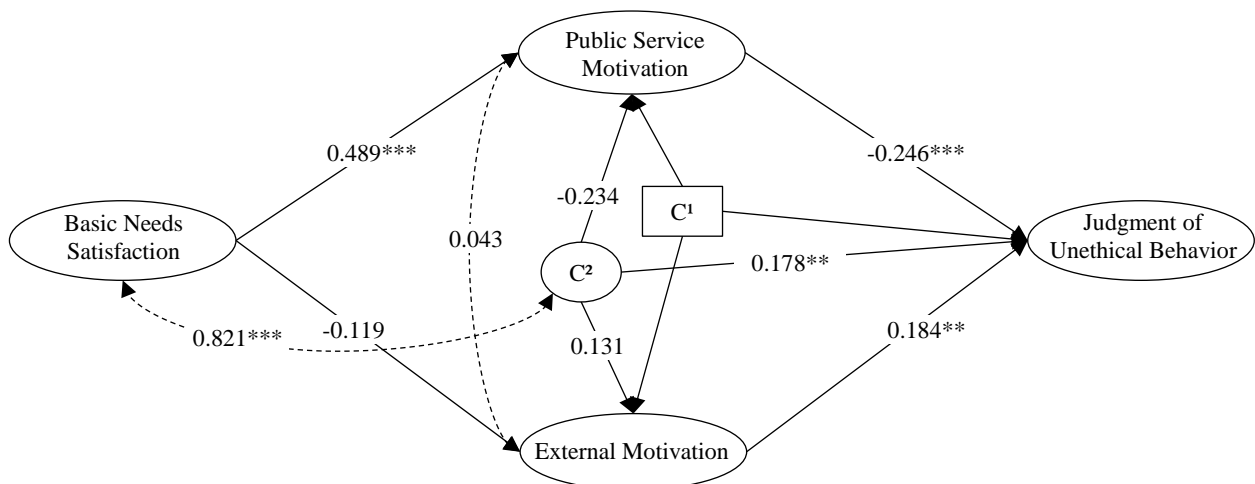
Finally, it is convenient to observe the effect of autonomy, competence and relatedness on PSM and EM for the same set of control variables following previous research on the effect of basic needs (Vandenabeele 2014) and other antecedents (Camilleri 2007) on PSM.

Results

Analyses were executed in Mplus v.6. To test the hypotheses, we applied full structural equation modeling using a robust maximum-likelihood estimation. This method corrects for non-normality of the observed items and simultaneously tests the effects of various dependent variables (Kline 2016). The structural equation model appears in Figure 1 including standardized coefficients. Table 3 provides effects of the control variables.

Overall, the model has an acceptable fit (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df=479] = 1019.433 $p \leq 0.001$, RMSEA 0.044, CFI 0.900, TLI 0.885, and SRMR 0.059) and explains 21.5% of the variation in the acceptance of unethical acts, 12.8% in PSM and 6.6% in EM.

Figure 1. Full model with controls



Note: C¹ = Gender, Level of Studies, Tasks, Job Tenure, Age, Job Sector.
C² = Innovative Developmental Culture *** $p \leq 0.001$, ** $p \leq 0.01$, * $p \leq 0.05$

The regression paths are in line with the correlations table. In order to rule out the possibility of confounding effects, we ran the full model without control variables as it can be checked in the Appendix. This model shows the same results and it fits better than the one with controls.

The analysis confirms the first two hypotheses. First, individuals with a higher level of PSM will be less likely to judge as acceptable unethical behavior (hypothesis 1). The opposite is true for individuals who possess higher levels of EM (hypothesis 2). The standardized coefficients indicate that the direct effect of PSM on the acceptance of unethical behavior is larger than the effect of EM.

Table 3. Control effects of observed variables

Variable(s)	Judgment of Unethical Behavior	PSM	External Motivation
Gender (female)	0.025 (0.052)	0.112* (0.046)	0.026 (0.052)
Level of Studies (university)	-0.018 (0.056)	0.062 (0.045)	0.112* (0.057)
Tasks (no management)	0.135* (0.057)	0.025 (0.048)	0.132** (0.052)
Job Tenure (more 3 years)	0.036 (0.049)	-0.009 (0.046)	-0.007 (0.055)
Age (47)	-0.077 (0.056)	0.021 (0.053)	-0.106* (0.053)
Public Sector	-0.308*** (0.082)	0.081 (0.070)	-0.145* (0.072)
Third Sector	-0.239** (0.078)	0.116 (0.066)	-0.151* (0.072)

Note: The standardized coefficients are reported. Standard errors in parentheses. People working in the private sector is the baseline category. n=574.
***p≤0.001, **p≤0.01, *p≤0.05

There were no statistically significant effects found for gender, age, level of studies, and length of service, with regard to acceptance of unethical behavior. However, employees performing management tasks were less likely to accept ethics violations compared to employees who do not perform management tasks. The opposite results can be observed for individuals with a perception that their organizations develop an innovative culture. Professionals working in the public and the nonprofit sector appear to have a lower level of association with acceptance of unethical acts than those working for private sector organizations.

The hypothesis concerning the effects of basic needs in the workplace is partly confirmed. As expected, individuals who perceive they have more autonomy, competence and

relatedness tend to have higher levels of PSM. The indirect effect on their judgment of ethics violations is negative and statistically significant ($\beta = -0.120, p \leq 0.001$). The effect of basic needs on EM is negative but not statistically significant ($p = 0.132$). Also, the indirect effect on acceptance of unethical acts is negative but not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.022, p = 0.397$). Thus, the indirect effect of basic needs satisfaction on the acceptance of unethical behavior only occurs through PSM, which partially supports hypothesis 3.

Women tend to have higher levels of PSM. Workers with university studies and those who do not perform management tasks are more likely to have higher levels of EM. In contrast, older employees and those working in the public or nonprofit sector tend to have lower levels of EM.

Discussion and conclusions

The distinct effects of PSM and EM on the judgment of unethical acts indicate the importance of individuals self-regulating their behavior in line with institutional values and norms. In other words, adherence to public service logics is a strong determinant of ethical judgment, while self-interest attitudes and values increase the acceptance of ethics violations. Selection of individuals that possess high levels of PSM and examination of PSM and EM levels of employees is a viable alternative to make sure they have a public service identity reflecting a pack of virtues and a motivational self-regulation that discourages the acceptance of unethical behavior.

These findings are coherent with the theory of PSM and with the discussion of the risks associated with the extensive use of financial incentives and other forms of monetary compensation as a way to motivate public employees (Perry et al. 2006). The results are

not contradictory with previous research by Kwon (2014) on the positive effects of using extrinsic incentives to curb corruption, since Kwon did not base his study on the virtues and preferences of individuals but on whether their organizations applied a policy that rewarded their performance. According to this study, organizations can pay more attention to the values and attitudes of individuals before they are selected or, according to Kwon's study (2014), they can try to control corrupt behavior by increasing their monetary compensation if they have the resources to do so.

The results also indicate that higher levels of autonomy, competence and relatedness in the workplace can increase PSM levels. Although negative, this effect is not statistically significant in the case of EM. The implications for the literature of PSM are important as we are describing the processes that take place when public service professionals experience higher levels of basic needs satisfaction: they are more likely to be stricter in their judgment of unethical behavior because they tend to develop a public service identity that is influenced by the concurrent effect on their PSM. These findings are in line with past research that indicates a positive association between basic needs satisfaction and PSM (Vandenabeele 2014) and with the studies that did not find a clear evidence linking the satisfaction of basic psychological needs and controlled forms of motivation (Van den Broek et al. 2010; Gagné et al. 2010).

At the more practical level, public service organizations can reduce the acceptance of unethical behavior by attracting and retaining individuals with higher levels of PSM and lower levels of EM. Investing more in broadening autonomy, competence and relatedness than in external incentives – given that the former is more directly linked to PSM – is another way to influence the views the personnel may have on ethics violations.

These findings need to be taken with caution because basic needs satisfaction only explains a small variance of the change in PSM (Vandenabeele 2014). In addition, humans are motivationally complex and any action oriented to increase individual self-determination should pay attention to global, contextual, and situational factors affecting other psychological needs and motivations (Vallerand 1997). In a case where the institutional context does not uphold public values and norms because unethical behavior is widespread, it can be dangerous to satisfy basic needs because it may encourage the development of an identity that is not in line with public logics.

It is important to note a few limitations of the current study. One of the main issues when dealing with unethical behavior is its definition and measurement. In contrast to other difficult-to-measure organizational outcomes like performance, unethical acts are difficult to define because they depend on a changing standard of conduct, and they are difficult to observe because they do not take place in the open (Rabl and Kühlmann 2008). This does not mean that such behavior cannot be measured quite successfully (Klockars 1999, de Graaf 2010, Lasthuizen et al. 2011). In addition, although not measuring unethical behavior directly, this study captures ethical judgment (Rest 1986). Using similar models, various studies confirm a strong symmetry between individual judgment, intentions, and behaviors (e.g., Armitage and Corner 2001, Nguyen and Biderman 2008). An additional limitation is that this study cannot consider socioeconomic and political context variables that could contribute to an explanation of individuals' motivation and their judgment of unethical acts. PSM has been shown to be culture specific (Wright et al. 2017). However, taking into account contextual factors would require another perspective that is outside the scope of this article. A final limitation is that the analysis is based on a sample of case managers involved in one specific plan to integrate health and social services. The unique characteristics of these employees may have an impact

on the findings. For example, the sample did not include employees who were young and poorly educated. Also associated with the use of one survey is the lack of evidence to prove true causal inference (Wright 2008). This is particularly the case with high-PSM employees who may perceive their working environment differently because of their PSM (Stritch and Christensen 2014).

Further research can be developed with regard to the development of PSM and ethical decision-making on the job. Beyond the PSM that employees may already have before they enter their jobs, employees can develop PSM during their professional careers (Vandenabeele 2014). Ethical leadership and others forms of intervention within the organization may change the employees' values and make them stricter with regard to unethical acts (Wright et al. 2016). This study points to another avenue of research: the relationship between satisfying basic needs and the preference for extrinsic motives has received less attention than the relation between basic needs satisfaction and PSM. Overall, experimental approaches could be very helpful in strengthening the internal consistency of the results with regard to both PSM and EM. Other studies in different professional sectors using cross-country data or with a longitudinal perspective would also be useful to determine whether the results can be generalized.

Notes

I. The term 'external' motivation is used instead of the most common term 'extrinsic' motivation to be coherent with the terminology of self-determination-theory (SDT) which is the base of the theoretical argumentation.

Acknowledgments and funding

This work would not have been possible without the helpful comments and criticisms of the anonymous reviewers and editors. This article was funded by the FPU programme of the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (FPU 14/06498) to support the author to pursue his PhD in Politics, Policies and International Relations at the UAB, and by a project of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness on Public Service Motivation, Objective Performance and Citizen Satisfaction (CSO2017-86653-P). An earlier version of this article was presented at the IRSPM conference 2016.

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Appendix

Measurement Model and Original Survey Items

Construct and Items	SFL	S-B SE
Judgement of Unethical Behavior , $\alpha = 0.615$ $\rho = 0.623$		
1. When there is a vacancy, it is normal to contract a friend or a relative	0.585***	0.049
1. Cuando hay alguna vacante es normal contratar a un familiar o amigo		
2. When a beneficiary is satisfied, it is normal to accept a tip or a gift	0.680***	0.049
2. Cuando un usuario está satisfecho es normal aceptar una propina o regalo de su parte		
3. It is normal to use for one-self resources from the job such as printing, transport tickets, surplus food...	0.519***	0.055
3. Es normal usar en beneficio propio recursos del trabajo: la impresora, títulos de transporte, comida sobrante...		
Innovative Developmental Culture , $\alpha = 0.874$ $\rho = 0.875$		
1. My organization is dynamic and innovative	0.858***	0.021
1. La organización es dinámica e innovadora		
2. People working in this organization are encouraged to innovate in the provision of services	0.906***	0.025
2. La gente que trabaja en esta organización es animada a innovar en la prestación de los servicios		
Attraction to Public Participation , $\alpha = 0.822$ $\rho = 0.830$		
1. I admire people who initiate or are involved in activities to aid my community	0.758***	0.037
1. Admiro a la gente que promueve actividades para ayudar a su comunidad		
2. It is important to contribute to activities that tackle social problems	0.829***	0.036
2. Es importante contribuir con actividades que afrontan problemas sociales		
3. Meaningful public service is very important to me	0.576***	0.052
3. Los servicios públicos son muy importantes para mí		
4. It is important for me to contribute to the common good	0.789***	0.036
4. Considero importante contribuir al bien común		
Commitment with Public Values , $\alpha = 0.686$ $\rho = 0.711$		
1. I think equal opportunities for citizens are very important	0.684***	0.030
1. Creo que es muy importante que todos los ciudadanos tengan las mismas oportunidades		
2. It is important that citizens can rely on the continuous provision of public services	0.544***	0.046
2. Considero importante que los ciudadanos puedan confiar en la provisión continua de servicios públicos		
3. It is fundamental that the interests of future generations are taken into account when developing public policies	0.696***	0.033
3. Es fundamental tener en cuenta los intereses de las generaciones futuras cuando se toman decisiones sobre políticas públicas		
4. To act ethically is essential for public servants	0.538***	0.052
4. Actuar éticamente es esencial para los prestadores de servicios públicos		
Compassion , $\alpha = 0.834$ $\rho = 0.839$		
1. I feel sympathetic to the plight of the underprivileged	0.836***	0.025
1. Me preocupan las dificultades por las que pasan los más desfavorecidos		
2. I empathize with other people who face difficulties	0.765***	0.030
2. Siento empatía por las personas que pasan dificultades		
3. I get very upset when I see other people being treated unfairly	0.631***	0.037
3. Me enoja ver que hay personas que son tratadas de forma injusta		
4. Considering the welfare of others is very important	0.767***	0.024
4. Es muy importante tener en cuenta el bienestar de los demás		
Self-sacrifice , $\alpha = 0.840$ $\rho = 0.854$		

1. I am prepared to make sacrifices for the good of society	0.779***	0.026
1. Estoy dispuesto a hacer sacrificios por el bien de la sociedad		
2. I believe in putting civic duty before self	0.660***	0.046
2. Creo que es importante poner el deber cívico por delante de uno mismo		
3. I am willing to risk personal loss to help society		
3. Aceptaría alguna pérdida a nivel personal si es necesario para ayudar a la sociedad	0.883***	0.020
4. I would agree to a good plan to make a better life for the poor, even if it costs me money		
4. Estaría de acuerdo con un buen plan para mejorar la vida de aquellas personas más vulnerables, incluso si me tuviera que costar dinero	0.752***	0.032
Public Service Motivation, $\alpha = 0.734$ $\rho = 0.867$		
1. APP	0.841***	0.032
2. CPV	0.834***	0.038
3. CMP	0.881***	0.029
4. SS	0.569***	0.044
External Motivation, $\alpha = 0.664$ $\rho = 0.672$		
1. A high salary is important when I look for a job	0.652***	0.047
1. Un sueldo elevado es importante al buscar empleo		
2. Wage supplements motivate me to put more effort	0.723***	0.052
2. Los complementos salariales me motivan a esforzarme más		
3. A stable contract is important when I look for a job		
3. Un contrato estable es importante al buscar empleo	0.531***	0.056
Basic Needs Satisfaction, $\alpha = 0.736$ $\rho = 0.734$		
1. At the place I work, my opinions seem to count	0.761***	0.030
1. En mi puesto de trabajo, mis opiniones cuentan		
2. Employees participate in developing long-range plans in my work unit		
2. Los trabajadores participan en la definición de planes de trabajo a largo plazo	0.783***	0.029
3. If I have a problem in my job, I can count on help from my coworkers		
3. Si tengo un problema en mi trabajo, puedo contar con la ayuda de mis compañeros	0.549***	0.045

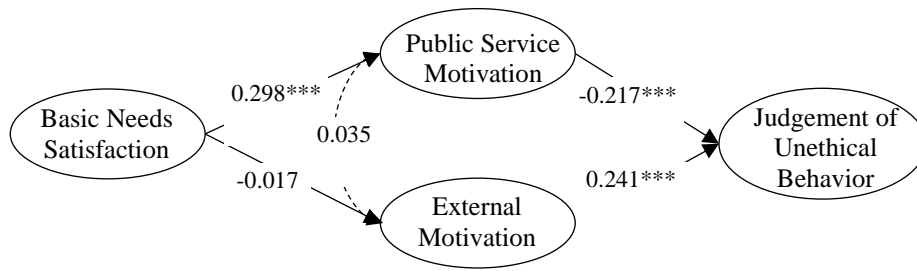
Correlations between latent variables

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Judgement of Unethical Behavior	—				
2. Innovative developmental culture	0.179***	—			
3. PSM	-0.218***	0.170***	—		
4. External Motivation	0.238***	0.034	0.029	—	
5. Basic Needs Satisfaction	0.078	0.822***	0.285***	-0.024	—

The standardized coefficients are reported. Note: *** $p \leq 0.001$.

Fit statistic	Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2	Population error RMSEA	S-B Baseline comparison		Size of residuals SRMR
			CFI	TLI	
Model results	(310) 638.993 $p \leq 0.001$	0.043	0.929	0.920	0.054

Full Model without Control Variables



Note: Standardized coefficients are reported. ***p≤0.001

Fit statistic	Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2	Population error RMSEA	S-B Baseline comparison		Size of residuals SRMR
			CFI	TLI	
Model results	(266) 582.004 p≤0.001	0.045	0.918	0.908	0.056

ARTICLE 3

In charge of safeguarding the public interest: the role of goal clarity in shaping public service motivation and the acceptance of unethical behaviours

This article is under review in *International Review of Administrative Sciences* as: Ripoll, Guillem. 2019. "In charge of safeguarding the public interest: the role of goal clarity in shaping public service motivation and the acceptance of unethical behaviours."

Abstract

Ethics are important for personal, organizational and societal development. Although the literature isolated some remedies and causes of unethical attitudes and behaviours, there is still a need for further research. When focusing on the public context, it has been suggested that the motivation to serve the public interest (PSM) has a negative relationship with different unethical outcomes. Thus, one interesting avenue of research is to explain how PSM can be enhanced by the outcome of certain managerial practices, which may also lead to ethical benefits indirectly. Using data collected from social workers in Catalonia (Spain), this article confirms that goal clarity directly increases the levels of PSM and indirectly reduces the acceptance of unethical behaviours by eliciting PSM. Research and practical implications of the findings are discussed.

Introduction

Given the importance of ethics in flourishing good governments and societies (Lawton 2013, Koven 2015), citizens are specially worried about the spread of unethical attitudes and behaviours across governments and public agencies. Although public administration scholars have provided valuable insights regarding what causes unethical behaviour, more work is still needed to isolate the ways it can be reduced (Bellé and Cantarelli 2017). Motivation is of special interest to satisfy this need because it prompts individuals to bring their values to decision situations involving ethical issues (Cramwinckel et al. 2013, Stazyk and Davis 2015). Moreover, since motivation can be influenced by many human resource practices (e.g. training or job design), there are a broad spectrum of management interventions that can be used to indirectly reduce unethical behaviours by cultivating motivation. This study investigates how public service motivation (PSM) is related to the acceptance of unethical behaviours, and which indirect role plays goal clarity on it by nurturing PSM.

The scholarship interest of ethical behaviour (Kolthoff et al. 2013) shocks with the difficulty to define it. The morality of an attitude or behaviour is usually assessed by comparing it to a set of values and norms working as moral standards (Lasthuizen et al. 2011). However, there is a difference between the content of an outcome and the governance process that leads to that outcome (Huberts 2018). For example, a government can decide to create a social policy or not (content) with or without making integrity violations such as cheating, bribing or favouritism (process). Although using the first approach to explain the nuances of the theory, this study defines unethical behaviour as acting against relevant norms and values: committing integrity or ethics violations (Lasthuizen et al. 2011, Six and Lawton 2013).

The first aim of this study is to confirm that PSM has a negative effect on accepting unethical behaviours. When delving into the motivations of individuals providing public services, public administration literature has developed the concept of PSM (c.f. Perry and Wise 1990, Ritz et al. 2016). PSM is defined as a motivation to promote the public interest even if personal interests need to be sacrificed (Vandenabeele et al. 2018, Schott et al. 2019). It captures an old ideal: to provide meaningful public service, personal interests need to be replaced by the interests of the community at large (Horton 2008). Because of the emphasis on looking after the public interest (and the public values it embraces), PSM has been linked to ethics since the concept emerged (c.f. Brewer 1998, Maesschalck et al. 2008) and it has been explained in detail by recent theoretical and empirical works (c.f. Wright et al. 2016, Ripoll 2019). In particular, it is suggested that PSM (being a moral identity) enables individuals to consistently regulate their ethical behaviours and attitudes in line with the ethical frameworks (norms, values and rules) internalized from the public institution (Ripoll 2019, Ripoll and Breugh 2019). However, there is a need to confirm these arguments by using different professional sectors and organizations (Ripoll and Ballart 2019).

Apart from the concise and robust explanation about how ethics violations can be reduced, PSM allows to indirectly link managerial practices to ethics by looking at the organizational antecedents of PSM (Stazyk and Davis 2015). Previous studies already settled the institutional and organizational origins of PSM (c.f. Moynihan and Pandey 2007, Perry and Vandenabeele 2008, Vandenabeele 2014), which have been operationalized using variables such as organizational culture and commitment, leadership, job attributes, goal clarity or red tape. Some of these concepts, such as economic stress, ethical leadership or basic needs satisfaction, have also been used to explain their indirect impact on reducing unethical judgement and intention by eliciting

PSM (e.g. Wright et al. 2016, Ripoll and Breugh 2019, Ripoll and Ballart 2019). However, more work is still needed to examine how other organizational antecedents relate to PSM's ethical consequences (Ripoll and Breugh 2019).

Given the positive impacts of goal clarity on PSM (c.f. Caillier 2016), it is one of the candidates that also merits attention. The role goal clarity plays in cultivating PSM is explained through the following argument: when organizational goals are clear they can be perceived as more important, and they are therefore more likely to be internalized into individuals' identities (Weiss and Piderit 1999). Thus, public institutions can nurture PSM by clearly stating their goals. Although this positive link has already been confirmed, there is still the need to generalize this finding by testing it using different samples and research strategies (Caillier 2016). Moreover, although goal clarity indirectly impacts individuals' positive attitudes and behaviours (e.g. organizational commitment) through PSM (Caillier 2016), this effect remains understudied when focusing on more negative attitudes. Accordingly, the second aim of this article is to calibrate the indirect effect (through PSM) of perceiving more goal clarity in the acceptance of unethical behaviours.

In sum, this article assesses the importance of goal clarity to directly develop PSM and indirectly decrease the acceptance of unethical behaviours. The contribution is twofold. First, this article assesses the stability of the positive effect of goal clarity on PSM, and the negative impact of PSM on the acceptance of unethical behaviours. In second place, this article goes one step further and calibrates the indirect effect of having more goal clarity at work in the acceptance of unethical behaviours through PSM. The empirical analysis is based on a questionnaire to a sample of 439 social workers employed by public or third-sector organizations in Catalonia (Spain). After applying a full structural equation

model, this study contributes to previous research by confirming previous expectations and identifying goal clarity as a valuable intervention to reduce ethics violations.

This article is structured as follows. It starts with a theoretical framework to sustain the hypotheses, after that data, methods and results are presented, finally findings are discussed and implications for practice stressed.

Theoretical framework

The institutional origins of PSM: the case of goal clarity

Although usually conceptualized as a motivation, PSM can also be understood as a public service identity, a self-concept representing a set of rules, norms and values, acquired by exposure to public institutions that motivate individuals to behave accordingly whenever appropriate (Vandenabeele 2007). In other words, PSM is a social identity imbued with public content, a micro representation of macro public institutional logics (Perry and Vandenabeele 2008, Meyer et al. 2014, Pedersen 2015). Hence, a key issue is to explain how these logics are transmitted into individuals' self-concepts. According to Perry and Vandenabeele (2008) this transmission is governed by different social processes such as socialization, social identification or social learning, and it can be explained by social-cognitive, self-determination, predisposition-opportunity or goal-setting theories.

All these theories and approaches have allowed scholars to develop the causal mechanisms linking certain organizational or job-related characteristics and PSM. For example, institutional origins of PSM have been explained using variables such as ethical and transformational leadership (Wright et al. 2016, Andersen et al. 2018), organizational culture (Moynihan and Pandey 2007) or basic psychological needs satisfaction

(Vandenabeele 2014). Goal clarity, usually tied to goal-setting theories (e.g. Locke and Latham 1990), is another organizational factor that can promote the cultivation of PSM through the internalization of public institutional logics.

The core idea of goal clarity is that goals matter, and that when goals are clear they can be perceived as important and therefore increase the motivation to achieve them. Inside institutional settings, organizational goals establish a vision of a desired future state providing a rationale for the organizations' existence and the standards by which individual outcomes can be assessed (Wright et al. 2012). Clearer organizational goals rise the importance of organization's values, which prompts their internalization into individuals' self-concepts and the commitment to further them (Mintzberg 1983, Dilulio 1994). In other words, goal clarity serves as a catalyst to develop individuals' social identities by internalizing institutional logics (Weiss and Piderit 1999).

Bringing this argument to our concept of interest, it results that if public goals are effectively communicated they will be perceived as more important. In consequence, organizational public values will be more likely to be internalized, and individuals more committed to achieve and respect them. Since PSM is a concept imbued with public values (Kim and Vandenabeele 2010, Ripoll 2019), goal clarity nurtures PSM when the organizational values are public¹ (i.e. not private). For example, imagine an organization aiming to attend the educational needs of those individuals in risk of social exclusion. This goal has strong synergies with public values such as equity, social justice or responsiveness, which can be found in some of the dimensions of PSM (e.g. attraction to public participation or compassion, scale by Kim et al. 2013). Therefore, if individuals in this organization perceive this goal clearly, they will be likely to internalize the related public values and, by doing so, develop PSM.

This theoretical argument underscores a mechanism for cultivating PSM: clearer public organizational goals emphasize the importance of certain public values (embraced by the public interest), and this fosters individuals' commitment to look after them. Thus, a public service identity is developed. This theoretical argument predicts a positive relationship between goal clarity and PSM, which goes in line with previous research (c.f. Caillier 2016). Therefore:

H1: Individuals who perceive a higher level of goal clarity are more likely to have a higher level of PSM.

PSM and the acceptance of unethical behaviours

As a concept imbued in public content, PSM enables individuals to bring public values to multiple decision situations (Stazyk and Davis 2015). This intrinsically leads to the fact that when required, public service motivated individuals take positions closer to promote public values, rather than to harm them. From an ethics perspective, this implies that PSM is likely to be a good antidote to reduce ethics violations because it explains behaviour accounting by individuals' public values (c.f. Brewer and Selden 1998, Wright et al. 2016, Ripoll and Breugh 2019). This argument can be further developed by inspecting it from a social identity perspective. According to Ripoll (2019), individuals with higher levels of PSM consistently regulate their ethical behaviour and attitudes in line with the set of public values, norms and rules (i.e. ethical frameworks) forming their public service moral identity. Although this argument can easily be linked to the idea that individuals with high levels of PSM are more likely to exhibit ethical attitudes and behaviours, the relationship is not that simple. In order to understand its nuances, it is convenient to bring back the distinction between process and content to assess the morality of a certain behaviour or attitude.

In line with recent studies delving into the dark side of PSM (c.f. Le Grand 2010, Schott and Ritz 2018, Ripoll 2019), public service motivated individuals are more likely to justify an integrity violation if it serves their interpretation of the public interest (embracing different public values). By contrast, when an integrity violation puts in danger this interpretation, public service motivated individuals are less likely to justify it. This implies that depending on the interpretation of the public interest (content), public service motivated individuals may differ in the justification of the same integrity violation (process). This article focuses on the second situation. In particular, it is suggested that when integrity violations put in danger the pursue of certain public values or/and the public interest, public service motivated individuals will be more likely to condemn them. Therefore:

H2. Individuals with a higher level of PSM are less likely to accept unethical behaviours.

Goal clarity, PSM and the acceptance of unethical behaviours

Past research explained the role of ethical leadership, financial stress, job insecurity and basic psychological needs satisfaction in directly shaping PSM and indirectly decreasing unethical judgement and intention (Wright et al. 2016, Ripoll and Breugh 2019, Ripoll and Ballart 2019). However, there is a need to underscore the effect of other job interventions like goal clarity. Caillier (2016) successfully predicted an indirect effect of goal clarity on extra-role behaviours through PSM. Thus, it can also be argued that public service organizations can indirectly encourage ethical outcomes by providing goal clarity. This is because when institutional public goals are clear, the moral content of the internalized public values and norms also become more central to the self (i.e. PSM is cultivated), which decreases individuals' acceptance of unethical behaviours that threaten

the institutional public values. In other words, goal clarity decreases the acceptance of unethical behaviour through the intermediary variable of PSM. Therefore:

H3. Perceived goal clarity indirectly reduces the likelihood of acceptance of unethical behaviours by increasing the level of PSM.

Data, methods and results

Data

The data used in this study was collected from a survey to social workers employed by all the counties ('Consells Comarcals') of Catalonia (Spain) and the City Council of Barcelona. In Catalonia, counties exercise the competences regarding social services. However, workers from both institutions have been included in the same study because the Barcelona County ('Consell Comarcal del Barcelonès'), from which the city of Barcelona is the biggest member, has been drained of competences, and it is this city council that exercises the competences regarding social services. As this service can be externalized, surveyed individuals are employed either by a public or third sector organization.

In line with Chen et al. (2014), since this article aims to advance theory in general, the context will not be examined in detail. However, two points need to be discussed. On the one hand, Spain is an appropriate setting to run this study for three reasons. First, Spain is a democracy with moderate levels of corruption (TI 2019). Second, Spanish citizens are worried by corruption but also by the functioning of politics (CIS 2019). Third, because of corruption is a salient issue in Spain, respondents are confronted with unethical behaviours they have heard about. The combination of these three points make Spain a

good country to develop studies tackling unethical issues (e.g. Muñoz et al. 2016, Ripoll and Ballart 2019).

On the other hand, social workers are appropriate for this research because they are public service professionals. In fact, social workers aim to improve the well-being of the individuals or groups they serve by providing a high-quality service, which may be aligned with organizational goals. Moreover, social workers can be tied to public values such as social justice or collective responsibility, but they can also do their job motivated by other, more extrinsic, reasons. Next to this, social workers have enough discretionary power to solve tensions between personnel cuts and increased workloads by committing small ethics violations. These three ideas relate to the three concepts of interest in this study: goal clarity, PSM and unethical judgement.

The researcher explained the project to the heads of social services in the city council of Barcelona and in each ‘Consell Comarcal,’ who facilitated the contact with 859 professionals. A 73-item standardized questionnaire was distributed during the first months of 2016 with a letter of presentation signed by the appropriate head in each case. The survey included questions on job and organization characteristics, work motivations, job attitudes and leadership styles. The response rate was around 61% or almost 530 responses. The number of questionnaires finally used was 439 (51.11%) after incomplete responses were discarded. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the final sample, which fairly corresponds with those of the target population. Almost all were women, had university studies, and worked for a public organization.

Table 1. Sample characteristics.

n = 574	%
Gender (female)	89.1
Age	
22-40	43.28
41-60	55.35
61-64	1.37
Level of studies (University)	90.21
Work sector	
Public	92.48
Third	7.52

Methods

The questionnaire used a 1-7 Likert scale (1=totally disagree, 7=totally agree) to measure all the items of the latent constructs, which are included in the appendix.

Endogenous, exogenous and control variables

Goal clarity was measured using a three-item scale adapted from Rainey (1983), and also used by Wright et al. (2012), higher levels in this variable indicate that the organizational goals are clearer. Although the measure of goal clarity is well-established in the literature, an important issue in terms of measurement of this variable is to know whether organizations missions and goals concern public values. This is of crucial importance as organizational values must be public to nurture PSM. In order to shed light into this issue, the goals and values of the organizations included in this sample have been examined by looking into their webpages. This research concludes that the main goal of these organizations is to serve those people facing difficulties (e.g. migrants, disabled, social exclusion or age-related problems) by offering a service based on the following values: responsiveness, social justice, equity, transparency and quality. These values match some of the public service values suggested by Brewer (2013), and they are also at the odds of typical private values such as profitability or innovativeness (c.f. Van der Wal et al. 2008).

PSM was measured using the scale proposed by Kim et al. (2013). It includes 16 items and four dimensions: attraction to public participation, commitment to public values, compassion and self-sacrifice. Although dimensions do matter, this article only uses the aggregate instrument of PSM, with higher levels indicating stronger PSM.

Because of the difficulties in observing unethical behaviour directly, this article measures an individual's willingness to accept misconduct (Klockars 1999), which is connected to Rest's (1986) second stage of ethical-decision making where individuals evaluate the standards involved in a situation with their own. In line with Lasthuizen et al. (2011) it has been measured the acceptability of three common integrity violations (i.e. transgression of relevant ethical values and norms): favouritism, conflict of public and private interest through gifts, and waste or abuse of organizational resources. Although being 'minor' unethical acts, they can have important consequences for both employees and organizations (Ripoll and Ballart 2019). To hire a friend to cover a sick leave may generate inequity dynamics among employees. Accepting tips or gifts from satisfied users, as well as using organizational resources for personal matters, threatens transparency. Since these unethical actions risk the public values guiding service delivery, they may ultimately lead to a decrease in the quality of the service, which is the main goal of the organizations included in this study. Higher levels in the emerged latent variable indicate that individuals are more likely to accept unethical behaviours.

To avoid inaccurate estimates, this article considers other factors that may also have an influence on PSM and the acceptance of unethical behaviours. In line with Ripoll and Ballart (2019), the analysis controls for the work sector of the company that contracts employees (0=third, 1=public) and sociodemographic or job-related characteristics: gender (0=male, 1=female), age (centered on the mean, 43), level of studies (0=no

university studies, 1=university studies), tenure (0=less than 3 years, 1=more than 3 years), direct contact with beneficiaries (0=no, 1=yes) and management tasks (0=no, 1=yes).

In order to validate the latent constructs, a measurement model was successfully conducted including each latent variable (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df = 202] = 342.513, $p < 0.01$; CFI = 0.945, TLI = 0.937, RMSEA = 0.040, and SRMR = 0.045), the correlation matrix of study variables is shown in the appendix. Significant chi-square tests are common in large sample sizes, and reported results are acceptable as they fall inside the cutoff criteria proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999). All factor loadings are significant. Moreover, internal reliability of PSM and goal clarity is acceptable as their Cronbach's alphas and Joreskog's rhos indicate (results in the appendix). Although acceptance of unethical behaviours falls below common thresholds, robustness checks confirm that the correlations between each of the items included in this measure and the other two latent variables are stable in terms of strength, direction and statistical significance.

Common Method Bias

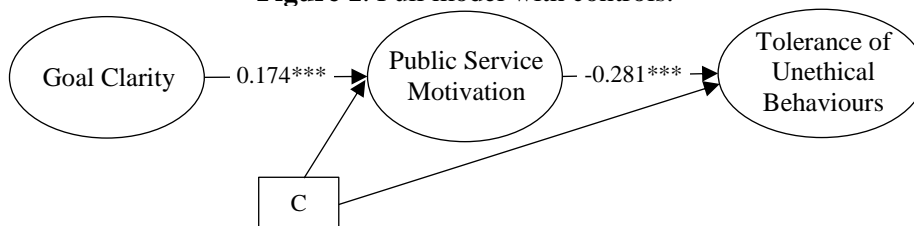
Since respondents provided self-reported information on all key variables, common method bias may be present (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Although, this study controlled the four broad sources of this type of bias (c.f. Podsakoff et al. 2003, 2012; Favero and Bullock 2014) using design procedures (e.g. psychological separation, protection of anonymity, or reducing evaluation apprehension), statistical remedies have also been taken. Following van Loon et al. (2015), all the items of the latent constructs have been loaded into one common factor and then compared the fit indices of this model with the measurement one. The common latent variable model showed a worse fit (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df = 209] = 1456.574, $p < 0.01$; CFI = 0.509, TLI = 0.457, RMSEA = 0.117,

and SRMR = 0.106) compared to the full-measurement model, suggesting that the reported results are not strongly affected by common method bias (Podsakoff and Organ 1986, Podsakoff et al. 2003).

Results

Analyses were executed in Mplus v.6. To test the hypotheses, a full structural equation model using robust maximum-likelihood estimation was applied. This method corrects for non-normality of the observed items, and simultaneously tests the effects of various dependent variables (Kline 2015). Figure 1 show the results, providing standardized coefficients. Table 2 shows the effects of the control variables. Although the regression paths are in line with the correlations table, a full model without control variables was ran to rule out the possibility of confounding effects (results in the appendix).

Figure 1. Full model with controls.



Note: The standardized coefficients are reported. C = Gender, Level of Studies, Job Tenure, Age, Job Sector, Direct Contact with Beneficiaries. *** $p \leq 0.01$

Table 2. Control effects of observed variables.

Variable(s)	Tolerance of Unethical Behaviours	PSM
Gender (female)	-0.039 (0.077)	-0.004 (0.046)
Level of Studies (university)	-0.120 (0.079)	0.060 (0.050)
Tenure (more than 3 years)	0.015 (0.067)	-0.008 (0.054)
Age (43)	0.030 (0.071)	0.086 (0.061)
Work Sector (public)	-0.050 (0.064)	0.023 (0.055)
Direct attention to beneficiaries (yes)	0.063 (0.066)	-0.017 (0.046)

Note: The standardized coefficients are reported. Standard errors in parentheses.

The overall fit of the structural equation model was tested using the common fit indices, which reveal good model fit except for the significant chi-square (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df = 343] = 627.258, $p < 0.01$; CFI = 0.925, TLI = 0.916, RMSEA = 0.038, and SRMR = 0.045). The model explains 4.2% of the variance of PSM, and 11% of acceptance of unethical behaviours. In what concerns the direct effects of control variables, none of them were significant. Regarding the hypothesized paths, all are significant and go in the predicted direction. First, goal clarity was found to have a significant direct positive impact on PSM: PSM changes in 0.174 standard deviation units for a standard deviation change in goal clarity. Second, PSM has a significant direct negative impact on the acceptance of unethical behaviours: when PSM increases in one standard deviation, the acceptance of unethical behaviours changes in -0.281 standard deviation units. Finally, goal clarity indirectly reduces the acceptance of unethical behaviours through PSM ($\beta = -0.049$, $p \leq 0.01$): the acceptance of unethical behaviours changes in -0.049 standard deviation units for a standard deviation change in goal clarity.

Discussion and conclusion

This paper analysed the relationship between goal clarity, PSM and individuals' acceptance of unethical behaviours. The findings successfully test the hypotheses and therefore complements previous research making three contributions. First, when organizations have clear goals, individuals' levels of PSM are likely to increase. This result is in step with previous research (c.f. Caillier 2016). However, the theoretical approach is novel because it puts identity as a central element to understand the relationship between goal clarity and PSM. In fact, the finding is explained because by understanding the importance of serving certain public values (embraced by the public interest), individuals become more committed to look after them. Thus, individuals

synchronize their values with the ones of the organizations, developing a public service (moral) identity. By explaining how institutional logics are transmitted and therefore PSM is cultivated, the theoretical approach shows how goal clarity is an organizational factor which can be fitted inside the institutional origins of PSM.

Secondly, this article also finds that individuals with high levels of PSM are less likely to accept unethical behaviours. Although this article does not measure the public values towards which public service motivated individuals are attached, it seems plausible to assume that, because of the internalization process, organizations and individuals' public values will be very alike. Thus, the negative finding is explained because the chosen unethical acts threaten public values and, ultimately, the quality of the service offered by the employees (i.e. an organizational goal). This highlights the importance of holding a public service moral identity, and of being able to consistently self-regulate individuals' behaviour and attitudes in line with the acquired institutional values, norms and rules. This goes in line with previous studies predicting and testing this link (c.f. Brewer and Selden 1998, Ripoll and Ballart 2019).

Finally, the results demonstrate that goal clarity indirectly impacts the acceptance of unethical behaviours through PSM. Concretely, when goal clarity is provided, individuals' PSM levels increase, which in turn leads to a decrease of the acceptance of unethical behaviour. This occurs because by promoting the internalization of certain public values and therefore developing a public service (moral) identity, institutional ethical content is also internalized. This novel finding suggests that institutional contexts do matter in indirectly shaping unethical outcomes, which extends prior research focusing on the indirect effect of other organizational variables on unethical judgement or intention (c.f. Wright et al. 2016, Ripoll and Breaugh 2019, Ripoll and Ballart 2019).

Apart from research implications, the knowledge provided by this article can be useful for managers working in public service-oriented organizations. First, individuals with a public service moral identity (i.e. possessing high levels of PSM) have a lower acceptance of unethical behaviours. In fact, public service-oriented organizational cultures promote the internalization of public values into individuals' self- concepts. Thus, if managers elicit this process, public organizations can take advantage of PSM's ethical potential. As our second implication suggests, the internalization process can be stimulated by clarifying the organizational goals. Therefore, if certain human-resources practices (e.g. appraisal or job design) are successfully applied and goal clarity is achieved, it will directly increase PSM and indirectly decrease the acceptance of unethical behaviours.

Despite of the fact of making theoretical and practical contributions, some limitations need to be acknowledged. First, all reported variables are perceptions of the employees, which may rise common method bias problems. Although both procedural and statistical remedies were taken, it is not possible to definitely rule out the possibility of having biased results. However, further research can replicate this study to corroborate the findings, or solve this problem at the initial stage taking panel, experimental or quasi-experimental approaches. These two recommendations go in line with recent calls in public administration research (Grimmelikhuijsen et al. 2016, Pedersen and Stritch 2018). Next to common method bias, another limitation associated with the use of only one survey is that it does not provide the necessary evidence for proving true causal inference (Wright 2008), which implies that more complicated relationships may exist between our variables. This is particularly the case in PSM because "high-PSM employees are not only a product of their environment, but that they may also perceive their environment differently because of their PSM" (Stritch and Christensen 2014: 833). Derived from this possible problem of reverse causality, it is convenient to develop more complex

conceptual models recognizing multiple causalities and testing them using longitudinal, experimental or qualitative studies.

A third limitation refers to small variance explained in PSM, as its low r-square indicates. This could be explained because this article does not consider other variables that could contribute to the explanation of PSM (e.g. basic needs satisfaction or leadership styles), which would require taking another perspective that is out of the scope of this article. However, this signals that current results may be affected by omitted variable bias, which imply that the shown coefficients can be over or sub-estimated. In order to provide evidence robust to this bias, future studies can use more controls in their analyses, or take a holistic approach to examine the antecedents of PSM and the acceptance of unethical behaviours. Fourth, it also needs to be acknowledged that acceptance of unethical behaviours has a Cronbach alpha and a Joreskög rho falling below the common standards. Robustness checks demonstrated that the correlation between its' items and the other two latent variables are stable. Although acceptance of unethical behaviour is difficult to measure, further research should delve into the development and use of a measure with better psychometric properties. Finally, it is convenient to recognize that the unique characteristics of this sample can impact the findings, which may limit the generalization of the results. Since the presented theoretical arguments are grounded in previous research and the conclusions are in line with previous studies, there are reasons to believe that the findings of this article can be generalized to other public service areas. However, it would be very interesting to develop similar studies and/or replicate this one using different countries and public service professions (e.g. police or teachers instead of social workers).

In conclusion, the purpose of this article was to identify a mechanism that fosters PSM and indirectly encourage a lower acceptance of unethical behaviours. It has been

confirmed a positive relationship between goal clarity and PSM, but also underscored an indirect impact on ethics through PSM. The theoretical argument sustaining these findings rests on understanding PSM as a public service moral identity, which is cultivated inside public institutions, that provides the needed motivational power to be self-consistent with the acquired institutional values, norms and rules (Perry and Vandenaabeele 2008, Ripoll 2019). By confirming this argument, managers are more aware about how PSM's ethical potential can be developed. In short, the public interest is more likely to be safeguarded when organizational goals are clear.

Notes

I. Although discussions about what are public values are broad, the following research offers a comprehensive overview: Moore (1995), Brewer (2013), Jorgensen and Bozeman (2007), and Van der Wal et al. (2008).

Acknowledgements and funding

This article was funded by the FPU programme of the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (FPU 14/06498) to support the author to pursue his PhD in Politics, Policies and International Relations at the UAB, and by a project of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness on Public Service Motivation, Objective Performance and Citizen Satisfaction (CSO2017-86653-P).

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Appendix

Measurement Model and Original Survey Items

Construct and Items	SFL	S-B SE
Acceptance of Unethical Behaviours , $\alpha = 0.507$ $\rho = 0.532$		
1. When there is a vacancy, it is normal to contract a friend or a relative <i>1. Cuando hay alguna vacante es normal contratar a un familiar o amigo</i>	0.449***	0.065
2. When a beneficiary is satisfied, it is normal to accept a tip or a gift <i>2. Cuando un usuario está satisfecho es normal aceptar una propina o regalo de su parte</i>	0.660***	0.073
3. It is normal to use for one-self resources from the job such as printing, transport tickets, surplus food... <i>3. Es normal usar en beneficio propio recursos del trabajo: la impresora, títulos de transporte, comida sobrante...</i>	0.455***	0.075
Attraction to Public Participation , $\alpha = 0.760$ $\rho = 0.765$		
1. I admire people who initiate or are involved in activities to aid my community <i>1. Admiro a la gente que promueve actividades para ayudar a su comunidad</i>	0.700***	0.052
2. It is important to contribute to activities that tackle social problems <i>2. Es importante contribuir con actividades que afrontan problemas sociales</i>	0.765***	0.045
3. Meaningful public service is very important to me <i>3. Los servicios públicos son muy importantes para mi</i>	0.504***	0.058
4. It is important for me to contribute to the common good <i>4. Considero importante contribuir al bien común</i>	0.697***	0.072
Commitment with Public Values , $\alpha = 0.692$ $\rho = 0.703$		
1. I think equal opportunities for citizens are very important <i>1. Creo que es muy importante que todos los ciudadanos tengan las mismas oportunidades</i>	0.639***	0.063
2. It is important that citizens can rely on the continuous provision of public services <i>2. Considero importante que los ciudadanos puedan confiar en la provisión continua de servicios públicos</i>	0.645***	0.057
3. It is fundamental that the interests of future generations are taken into account when developing public policies <i>3. Es fundamental tener en cuenta los intereses de las generaciones futuras cuando se toman decisiones sobre políticas públicas</i>	0.614***	0.080
4. To act ethically is essential for public servants <i>4. Actuar éticamente es esencial para los prestadores de servicios públicos</i>	0.539***	0.079
Compassion , $\alpha = 0.839$ $\rho = 0.850$		
1. I feel sympathetic to the plight of the underprivileged <i>1. Me preocupan las dificultades por las que pasan los más desfavorecidos</i>	0.814***	0.033
2. I empathize with other people who face difficulties <i>2. Siento empatía por las personas que pasan dificultades</i>	0.719***	0.040
3. I get very upset when I see other people being treated unfairly <i>3. Me enoja ver que hay personas que son tratadas de forma injusta</i>	0.691***	0.049
4. Considering the welfare of others is very important <i>4. Es muy importante tener en cuenta el bienestar de los demás</i>	0.833***	0.029
Self-sacrifice , $\alpha = 0.839$ $\rho = 0.846$		
1. I am prepared to make sacrifices for the good of society <i>1. Estoy dispuesto a hacer sacrificios por el bien de la sociedad</i>	0.763***	0.035
2. I believe in putting civic duty before self <i>2. Creo que es importante poner el deber cívico por delante de uno mismo</i>	0.673***	0.047
3. I am willing to risk personal loss to help society	0.843***	0.032

3. <i>Aceptaría alguna pérdida a nivel personal si es necesario para ayudar a la sociedad</i>			
4. I would agree to a good plan to make a better life for the poor, even if it costs me money	0.756***	0.037	
4. <i>Estaría de acuerdo con un buen plan para mejorar la vida de aquellas personas más vulnerables, incluso si me tuviera que costar dinero</i>			
Public Service Motivation, $\alpha = 0.704$ $\rho = 0.851$			
1. APP	0.857***	0.041	
2. CPV	0.809***	0.051	
3. CMP	0.819***	0.035	
4. SS	0.563***	0.060	
Goal Clarity, $\alpha = 0.664$ $\rho = 0.672$			
1. This organization's mission is clear to everyone who works here			
1. <i>La misión de esta organización es clara para la mayoría de las personas que trabajan aquí</i>	0.825***	0.026	
2. It is easy to explain the goals of this organization to outsiders			
2. <i>Es fácil explicar los objetivos de esta organización a personas externas</i>	0.832***	0.029	
3. This organization has clearly defined goals			
3. <i>Esta organización define claramente sus objetivos</i>	0.880***	0.027	
Correlations between latent variables			
	1	2	3
1. Acceptance of Unethical Behaviours	-		
2. PSM	-0.289***	-	
3. Goal Clarity	0.054	0.164***	-

Note: The standardized coefficients are reported. *** $p \leq 0.01$.

Fit statistic	Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2	Population error RMSEA	S-B Baseline comparison		Size of residuals SRMR
			CFI	TLI	
Model results	(202) 342.513 $p \leq 0.01$	0.040	0.945	0.937	0.045

Full Model without Control Variables



Note: The standardized coefficients are reported. *** $p \leq 0.01$

Fit statistic	Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2	Population error RMSEA	S-B Baseline comparison		Size of residuals SRMR
			CFI	TLI	
Model results	(203) 334.764 $p \leq 0.01$	0.040	0.944	0.936	0.045

ARTICLE 4

Leadership and Public Service Motivation. How Basic Need Satisfaction plays a Mediating Role for Transformational Leadership that does not happen for Transactional Leadership

This article is under review in Public Management Review as: Ballart, Xavier and Guillem Ripoll. 2019. "Leadership and Public Service Motivation. How Basic Need Satisfaction plays a Mediating Role for Transformational Leadership that does not happen for Transactional Leadership."

Abstract

This article studies the influence of transactional and transformational styles of leadership on Public Service Motivation (PSM) and the extent that the satisfaction of the basic psychological needs of employees mediates this relationship. Using data collected from social workers in Barcelona and the rest of Catalonia in Spain, this article shows that employees perceiving a higher level of transformational or transactional leadership on their direct supervisors are more likely to have higher levels of PSM. However, the two leadership styles have different underlying mechanisms. While basic needs satisfaction is not relevant for the relation between a transactional style of leadership and PSM, having a transformational style of leadership develops relatedness, pulling employees together and contributing to increase their prosocial motives. This finding is attributed to the social character of relatedness compared with the more individual character of autonomy and competence. Theoretical and practical implications of the findings are discussed.

Introduction

Increasing motivation is important to reach organizational goals and to keep employees satisfied with their tasks. Together with motivation, leadership is essential to direct behaviors toward fulfilling organizational goals (Jensen and Bro 2018). A key issue for management studies is to study the relationship between leadership styles and motivation. In the public administration literature, Public Service Motivation (PSM) is defined as a specific type of motivation that energizes employees to make efforts towards tasks with prosocial consequences (Perry and Hondeghem 2008). Various scholars have dedicated attention to the relation between transformational leadership and PSM. This type of leadership is presented as an antecedent of PSM and several studies have proved positive correlations between transformational leadership and PSM (Park and Rainey 2008, Wright et al. 2012, Bellé 2013, Vandenabeele 2014, Wright et al. 2016, Jensen and Bro 2018).

However, none of these studies has explored the relationship between transactional leadership and PSM. In this study, we focus on both transactional and transformational styles of leadership since transactional leadership also involves developing and sustaining an organizational vision. In this study, we also want to explore the mechanisms underlying the relationship between both types of leadership and PSM.

Public administration literature has studied this question through Self Determination Theory (SDT) and the satisfaction of basic needs as a mediating or moderating mechanism between transformational leadership and PSM (Vandenabeele 2014, Jensen and Bro 2018). Introducing SDT makes sense for two reasons: first, because SDT presents motivation as a continuum of different types of motivation and different leadership strategies activate different mechanism to reach similar outcomes. And, second, because

we want to understand the psychological mechanisms through which managers enhance PSM.

According to Gagné (2003) self-reported relatedness, autonomy and competence - the three basic needs identified by SDT - are associated to greater engagement in prosocial activities. However, in the studies of the interplay between transformational leadership, PSM and the satisfaction of basic needs, results are not conclusive: Vandenaabeele (2014) found that PSM grows when the basic needs for autonomy and competence are satisfied, while Jensen and Bro (2018) found that this increase depends on the satisfaction of the basic need of relatedness. We propose that relatedness is more predictive of an increase of prosocial outcomes and therefore it has a particularly important role in the interplay between transformational leadership and PSM. Our argument is based on the idea that relatedness is a social need while autonomy and competence are individual needs (Pavey et al. 2011) and relatedness directly concerns the extent that employees form strong social relationships and develop a stronger sense of community. This can be the mechanism eliciting relatedness' positive effects on prosocial tendencies and PSM. By contrast, since need fulfillment is not a concern for transactional leadership, we propose that it will not have an effect and that, if it has an effect, it will be a negative one, indirectly decreasing PSM.

Thus, this article tests the relationship between leadership strategies, the satisfaction of psychological basic needs and PSM. It pays a particular attention to the distinct influences of transactional and transformational leadership styles on PSM and to the role that the basic need of relatedness plays in this process. Both aspects can be considered a gap in public administration research. The study uses a database consisting of survey responses from 439 social workers in Spain. Using Structural Equation Modelling technique, the

article examines the direct and indirect paths between aggregated measures of transactional and transformational leadership, the satisfaction of the basic need for relatedness and employees' PSM.

We first conceptualize the two leadership strategies, SDT and PSM, then we argue how the satisfaction of the basic need of relatedness is a good candidate to mediate the link between transformational leadership and PSM and the opposite with regard to transactional leadership. We then present our data and methods, explain our results and conclude with a discussion of the main findings, their implications for research and practice, and the limitations of our study.

Theoretical framework

Leadership, SDT and PSM

Research on leadership has compared models and styles of leadership. One of the main distinctions is between transformational and transactional leadership (Bass and Avolio 1994). Transformational leadership is based on raising employees' awareness of the importance of organizational values and outcomes to make employees transcend their own self-interest for the sake of the organization. Transformational leaders are supposed to nurture followers' needs and give them a sense of mission. The impact on the followers is explained by the leader's ability to articulate a clear vision, serve as a model and provide individualized attention and consideration. Avolio et al. (1999) articulated these ideas through four main leader behaviors: idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration and inspirational motivation.

Transactional leadership, on the contrary, is based on rewards for compliance. In this case leaders involve followers in an exchange process with the aim to increase compliance with organizational goals and policies (Bass and Avolio 1994). The impact on the followers is explained by the leader's ability to maintain control, to check progress towards goals and to evaluate individual performance. As explained by Bass (1985) followers of transactional leaders are monitored on the basis of predetermined criteria.

While the study of leadership style is very extensive, research on the relationship between various leadership styles and employees' motivation is rather scarce. This study attempts to bridge the gap between these two leadership styles and PSM using SDT, which is described next.

SDT establishes a continuum of motivations, beginning with the distinction between amotivation (lack of motivation) and motivation (Deci and Ryan 1985, 2000). With regard to motivation, SDT differentiates between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. As it is well known, intrinsic motivation involves performing an activity because it is, itself, interesting, while extrinsic motivation involves performing an activity because it leads to some consequence. This is why activities that are uninteresting require extrinsic consequences for the person to be motivated (Eyal and Roth 2011).

According to SDT, performing an activity for external consequences can be considered as a controlled activity (Deci et al. 1999). On the opposite, an autonomous behavior requires that the individual attributes a value to that behavior and that it is internalized. Internalization plays a key role in SDT (Roth et al. 2006). When the value associated to an activity has been internalized, it can take three different types of motivation. Introjection, accepting a value and a regulation of behavior but not accepting it as one's

own. Identification, seeing the importance of the activity, identifying with the values but considering it unpleasant. And, integration, identifying completely with the values and the regulation of the behavior.

PSM can be presented as a public service identity grounded in public institutions (Vandenabeele 2007). Initially defined as “an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions” (Perry and Wise 1990: 368), PSM is supposed to emerge from the interactions between individuals and institutions. These may take place, according to Vandenabeele et al. (2014) at a macro level like citizenship and culture, at a meso level like church membership or belonging to a professional association or at a micro level like volunteering experiences or working relations with colleagues.

The individuals’ identity is composed by institutional logics, patterns of practices, values, beliefs and rules that provide meaning to the social reality experienced by the individual (Thornton and Ocasio 1999). It is the degree of internalization of these institutional logics what determines whether the behavior is controlled or autonomous and self-regulated. Attitudes and behavior will be self-regulated when the social identity of the individual is more consistent with institutional logics.

From the perspective of SDT, PSM has predominantly been considered an autonomous type of motivation (Pedersen 2015). What defines PSM is the interest to deliver public services with the purpose of doing good for others and society (Perry et al. 2010). The activities are performed even if they involve efforts that are not pleasant or interesting (Jensen and Bro 2018). Therefore, since the behavioral regulation and the values are internalized, and the external positive consequence is not for the person performing the

activity, it is considered extrinsically autonomous by Gagné and Deci (2005). The idea of PSM as an extrinsically autonomous form of motivation opens the door to consider that the source of this type of motivation is not unique and that PSM can fit other extrinsic forms of motivation (Vandenabeele and Breugh, forthcoming). That is, an individual can be public service motivated because he or she grasped the importance of the service to society or because he or she is pursuing some kind of reward or is trying to avoid a feeling of guilt.

Transformational leadership, PSM and the mediating role of basic needs satisfaction

Leadership is one possible way to manipulate the degree of internalization of institutional values and rules, thus having an effect on institutional identities (Perry and Vandenabeele 2008). In the public administration literature, it is quite established that transformational leadership or ethical styles of leadership lead to an increase of PSM because there is an integration of institutional public logics into the individual self-identity (Park and Rainey 2008, Wright et al. 2012, Bellé 2013, Vandenabeele 2014, Wright et al. 2016, Jensen and Bro 2018).

The effects of transformational leadership on PSM can be explained with the help of SDT and the idea of needs satisfaction, a key feature for students of transformational leadership (Podsakoff et al. 1996, Kovjanic et al. 2013). SDT proposes that people have three basic psychological needs (relatedness, competence and autonomy) that are as essential to our psychological health as food, water or shelter to our physical health (Pavey et al. 2011, Ryan and Deci, 2000). Relatedness is the extent to which a person feels connected to the people around him or her. Competence refers to the extent to which a person feels capable

of achieving his or her goals. Autonomy is the extent to which decisions and actions emanate from a person rather than being the product of external influence or coercion.

The basic argument with regard to transformational leadership is that, establishing the broader purpose of the organization, setting desirable goals, articulating and communicating the vision the organization, transformational leaders enhance employees' satisfaction of the needs of autonomy and competence (Jensen and Bro 2018). They feel that they have the authority to decide the tasks that need to be performed to achieve the desired outcomes and, seeing they succeed in these tasks, makes them feel effective. With regard to relatedness, setting the organization's purpose and the desired outcomes, transformational leaders are creating a group spirit and pulling together employees, increasing their feeling of connection to other colleagues (Pavey et al. 2011).

In the field of public administration, one previous study (Vandenabeele 2014) found that the relationship between transformational leadership and PSM depends on the satisfaction of the basic needs of autonomy and competence but not relatedness. On the other hand, a more recent study (Jensen and Bro 2018) finds that the relationship between transformational leadership and PSM is mediated by the satisfaction of the need of relatedness but not by the satisfaction of the needs of autonomy and competence.

According to the social psychology literature, people's motives for prosocial behavior and helping others are related to personality traits and other demographic characteristics (Penner et al. 2005). But one particular way that prosocial behavior benefits the actor, as well as the recipient, is through the feeling of connectedness to others (Pavey et al. 2011). When transformational leaders create opportunities for employees to feel that they belong to the organization and that they have common goals and outcomes, it is likely they feel

their need of relatedness more satisfied, and, at the same time, leaders motivate them to engage in prosocial action. It is possible that employees' PSM is positively affected by a sense of autonomy and competence with regard to their tasks, but it may well be that relatedness is more important for PSM than the other two basic needs.

Thus,

H1 Transformational leadership is positively correlated with PSM

H2 Transformational leadership is positively correlated with the satisfaction of the basic need for relatedness

H3 Satisfaction of the need for relatedness mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and PSM

Transactional leadership, PSM and the mediating role of basic needs satisfaction

In the public administration literature, there is little insight into the question of whether transactional leadership can influence PSM or the satisfaction of basic needs to stimulate PSM.

Transactional leaders create a set of regulations that monitor employees' efforts and control employees' attitudes and behavior through rational and economic means (Brown et al. 2005). They may use performance evaluation to reward employees achieving objectives or to correct employees making mistakes or considered to be underperforming. Leadership behavior focusses on the idea of exchange of resources (Yukl 1998) and leaders expect to have an effect on the capacity of employees to make the right decisions for the organization or to take responsibility for the achievement of organizational goals.

As explained by scholars like Zhu et al. (2011), transactional leaders “accept the goals, structure and culture of the existing organization” (153). The specific means by which they affect employees’ PSM is different from those put in place by transformational leadership. There is not a process of identity internalization (Hetland et al. 2011), values and behaviors are not integrated as leaders use a form of controlled regulation. In fact, employees are offered rewards in exchange for pursuing organizational goals. In many instances, these goals represent a form of public interest, particularly in public and third sector organizations. Employees may not internalize the meaning of what their commitment implies and they may not integrate institutional logics but leaders may provide them with a more controlled, less autonomous, form of motivation. From this perspective, transactional leadership can inspire and empower employees. They can influence their moral development (Zhu et al., 2011) and have a positive effect on their moral identity contributing to develop their PSM.

However, for those organizations where leaders opt for a transactional style, the underlying mechanism regarding basic needs satisfaction should be different. Actually, according to Bass and Avolio (2004) need satisfaction is not required. Transactional leadership is based on an exchange, it is more task than relation oriented, and it is not constructive (Hetland et al., 2011). If we consider autonomy, it is unlikely that setting specific goals, close monitoring of employees actions and controlling everyday tasks will enhance the satisfaction of this basic need (Jacobsen et al. 2014). In the case of relatedness, since transactional leadership is based on controlling deviation from standards, the external pressure to regulate employees’ effort can create a feeling of insecurity and develop a work climate that is not conducive to collaboration (Parker et al. 2003). Unless collective performance is prioritized, transactional leadership should thwart the feeling of being a group and being connected to one another in the work.

Regarding competence, it is less clear that transactional leader does not satisfy this need. Goal clarity and clear criteria for individual performance can contribute to develop confidence that targets can be achieved through individual's work. Being successful and seeing effort rewarded may nurture the feeling of being effective. A different question is the indirect effect of the satisfaction of this need on PSM.

Thus,

H4 Transactional leadership is positively correlated with PSM

H5 Transactional leadership is negatively correlated with the satisfaction of the basic need for relatedness

H6 Satisfaction of the basic needs for relatedness does not mediate the relationship between transactional leadership and PSM

Data, methods and analysis

Data used in this study was collected from social workers employed by all the counties of Catalonia and the City Council of Barcelona. Workers from both institutions have been included in the same study because in the Barcelona County, it is the City which employs social workers providing social services. Since this service can be externalized, respondents are employed either by public, private or third sector organizations.

In line with similar studies (Chen et al. 2014) since this article aims to advance theory in general, the local context is not discussed in detail. It is convenient, however, to mention that social workers from these institutions are appropriate for this kind of research because they provide public services. They interact with their direct supervisors on a daily basis,

which makes it possible to collect unbiased and concise opinions about their leaders. And, as argued by Vandenaabeele (2014), direct supervisors can make a substantial impact on their work-related identity and PSM.

The researchers explained the project to the head of social services of the City Council of Barcelona and to the heads of social services in each of the counties. They facilitated the contact with 859 professionals. A 73-item standardized questionnaire was distributed during 2016 and 2017 with a letter of presentation signed by the appropriate head in each case. The survey included questions on the organization characteristics, work motivations, job content, job attitudes and leadership styles. The response rate was 61%, 530 responses. The number of questionnaires finally used was 439 (51.11%) after incomplete responses were discarded. Table 1 shows the characteristics of the final sample, which fairly corresponds with those of the target population. A majority were women, had university studies, and worked for a public organization.

Table 1. Sample characteristics.

n = 439	%
Gender (female)	89.1
Age	
22-40	43.28
41-60	55.35
61-64	1.37
Level of studies (University)	90.21
Work sector	
Public	92.48
Third	7.52

The questionnaire used a 1-7 Likert scale (1=totally disagree, 7=totally agree) to measure all the items of the latent constructs, which are included in the appendix.

Endogenous, exogenous and control variables

In order to measure PSM, we used the scale proposed by Kim et al. (2013). This scale includes sixteen items and four dimensions: attraction to public participation, commitment to public values, compassion and self-sacrifice. Although PSM dimensions are important, this article only uses the aggregate instrument of PSM.

Relatedness was measured with one item asking respondents if they feel they can count on the help of co-workers (1-7 Likert scale). The item is: “If I have a problem in my job, I can count on help from my co-workers.” The selection of this item was based on the basic psychological needs at work scale (Van den Broeck et al. 2010) and it measures the degree of connection to others that according to several SDT scholars (Vallerand 1997, Deci and Ryan 2000) defines relatedness.

Transformational and transactional leadership were measured with a number of items asking respondents about how their most direct supervisor influences them on a daily basis. Transactional items focus on contingent rewards and management by exception, while transformational items reflect individualized consideration, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and idealized influence. The specific items for each style are inspired on previous studies (Bass and Avolio 1997, Park and Rainey 2008 Wright et al. 2012, Caillier 2015, Kroll and Vogel 2014). The analysis also controls for the work sector of the company that contracts employees, sociodemographic job-related characteristics, gender, age, level of studies, tenure, direct contact with beneficiaries, and management tasks.

Latent variables were validated through a measurement model (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df = 202] = 332.454, $p \leq 0.01$, CFI = 0.959, TLI = 0.953, RMSEA = 0.038, and SRMR

= 0.044). We report acceptable results as falling inside the cutoff points proposed by Hu and Bentler (1999). All factor loadings are significant, and the standardized coefficients are above 0.5. Moreover, internal reliability of latent variables is correct as their Cronbach's alphas and Joreskog's rhos indicate. Results and correlations between main variables are shown in the appendix. Although transactional leadership falls below common thresholds, robustness checks confirm that the correlations between each of the items included in this measure and the other main variables are stable in terms of strength, direction and statistical significance.

Common Method Bias

Since it was not possible to separate leaders and employees in the survey collection process, respondents provided self-reported information on all key variables and common method bias may be present (Podsakoff et al. 2003). This study controlled the four broad sources of this type of bias (c.f. Podsakoff et al. 2003, 2012, Favero and Bullock 2015) using design procedures (e.g. psychological separation, protection of anonymity, reducing evaluation apprehension). In addition, following van Loon (2017) and van Loon et al. (2015), we loaded all the items of the latent constructs into one common factor and compared the fit indices of this model with the measurement one. The common latent variable model showed a worse fit (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df = 209] = 2143.896, $p \leq 0.01$, CFI = 0.389, TLI = 0.325, RMSEA = 0.145, and SRMR = 0.138) compared to the full-measurement model, suggesting that the reported results are not strongly affected by common method bias (Podsakoff and Organ 1986, Podsakoff et al. 2003).

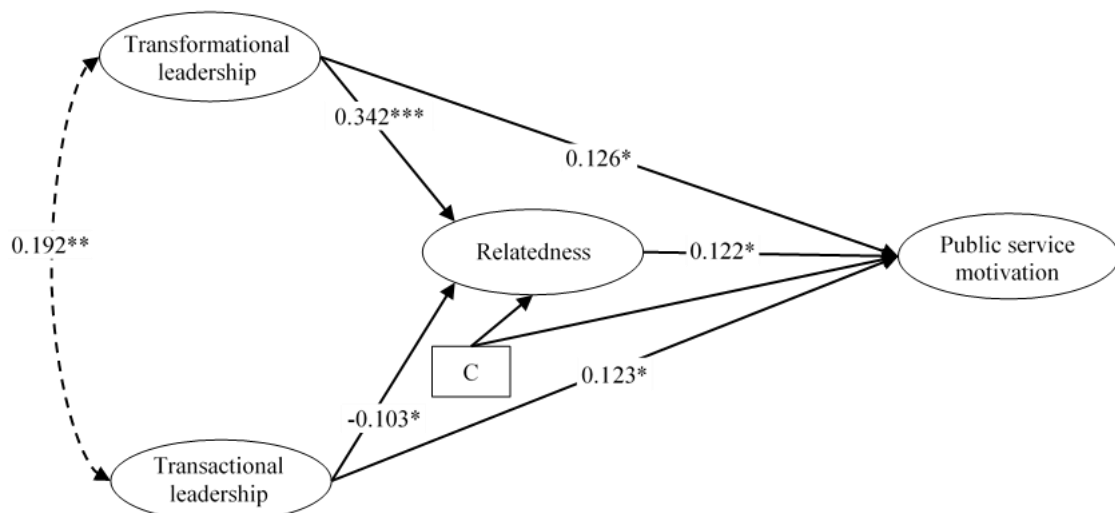
Analysis

We performed the analysis with Mplus v.6. In order to test the hypotheses, the study applies a full structural equation model using robust maximum-likelihood estimation.

This method corrects for non-normality of the observed items and simultaneously tests the effects of various dependent variables (Kline 2016). Figure 1 and table 2 show the results providing standardized coefficients. Although the regression paths are in line with the correlations table, a full model without control variables was ran to rule out the possibility of confounding effects (results in the appendix).

Common fit indices suggest that the overall fit of the structural model is correct except for the significant chi-square (Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2 [df = 368] = 627.258, $p \leq 0.01$, CFI = 0.932, TLI = 0.924, RMSEA = 0.040, and SRMR = 0.048). The model explains 7.5% of the variance of PSM, and 14% of relatedness. In what concerns the direct effects of control variables, only age was significant, showing that older employees have higher levels of PSM and a lower satisfaction of relatedness. Regarding the hypothesized paths, we can observe how relatedness and the two leadership styles have a significant and positive impact on PSM, findings in line with the predicted hypotheses. Additionally, the results reveal that transactional leadership decreases relatedness and transformational leadership increases it. At the same time, the indirect effects of leadership styles on PSM through relatedness differ. While transformational leadership has a positive and

Figure 1. Full model with controls.



Note: C = Gender, Level of Studies, Tasks, Job Tenure, Age, Job Sector,

significant indirect effect ($\beta = 0.042$, $p \leq 0.05$), the one of transactional leadership is negative but non-significant ($\beta = -0.013$, $p = 0.175$).

Table 2. Control effects of observed variables.

Variable(s)	Relatedness	PSM
Gender (female)	0.056 (0.042)	-0.017 (0.047)
Level of Studies (university)	0.071 (0.053)	0.055 (0.051)
Tenure (more than 3 years)	-0.011 (0.045)	0.014 (0.055)
Age (43)	-0.089* (0.050)	0.100* (0.062)
Work Sector (public)	0.029 (0.046)	0.029 (0.052)
Direct attention to beneficiaries (yes)	-0.004 (0.043)	-0.022 (0.046)
Management tasks (yes)	0.041 (0.047)	-0.034 (0.056)

Note: The standardized coefficients are reported.
Standard errors in parentheses. * $p \leq 0.1$

Discussion of results and conclusions

The aim of this study is to understand why transactional and transformational leadership support PSM and the role that the satisfaction of psychological basic needs may play in this process. We wanted to respond to previous calls asking to merge leadership styles and the development of different types of motivation (Eyal and Roth, 2010) and we believe this study does exactly this with regard to PSM, one specific type of motivation. We have identified two gaps in the literature and we understand we have some relevant findings regarding the relationship between transactional leadership and PSM and the different mechanisms underlying the relationship between both styles of leadership, transformational and transactional, and PSM.

As expected, transformational leadership contributes to the development of PSM (Park and Rainey 2008, Wright et al. 2012, Bellé 2013, Vandenberghe 2014, Wright et al. 2016, Jensen and Bro 2018) but a transactional style of leadership can also induce more PSM.

Offering rewards, monitoring performance, acting as transactional leaders, managers can motivate employees to pursue organizational goals and have an effect on their public service identity. The source of motivation is in this case less self-regulated and more controlled but it has an effect on PSM, although smaller than the one of transformational leadership.

With regard to the underlying mechanism, transformational leadership contributes to increasing the basic need for relatedness (Podsakoff et al. 1996, Kovjanic et al. 2013)-and nurtures PSM through its satisfaction. This result is interesting because it confirms the social psychology literature understanding that relatedness is likely to produce a sense of community and connection with others. PSM, being a pro-social motivation based on the will to do good for others and society (Perry, Hondeghem and Wise 2010), can be increased with a transformational style of leadership that pulls together employees.

As it was also expected, transactional leadership does not have the same direct effect on the basic need for relatedness as transformational leadership. In this study, it shows a negative effect on relatedness. Therefore, transactional leadership does not contribute to nurture PSM through the satisfaction of this basic need. Transactional leadership affects the public service identity of employees but there is no identification or integration with the mission, organizational values and goals of the institution pursuing the public interest. An interesting corollary is that PSM, as a public service identity, can vary in its degree of self-regulation, there is not a unique way of promoting PSM and the leadership style plays a role in this process.

Apart from the theoretical implications, this article can be useful for managers working in public service-oriented organizations since it provides evidence about specific human

resources practices that can foster PSM. First, since individuals perceiving transactional or transformational leadership are more likely to improve their PSM, public service institutions should favour the application of a mixture of both styles of leadership. However, since the leadership style has implications in the degree of self-regulation of PSM, if public managers care about PSM and their aim is that their employees accept organizational values and behaviors as their own, they should adopt a transformational leadership style and work specifically on developing a feeling of connectedness among all the employees.

Despite this research can show significant results, we are also aware of some of its limitations. First, it was not been possible to differentiate between leaders and employees when the survey was distributed. All reported variables are therefore perceptions of employees, which may rise common method bias problems. Although procedural and statistical remedies were put in place, it is not possible to definitely rule out the possibility of having biased results. The solutions to this problem are distributing different surveys to leaders and employees or adopting experimental, quasi-experimental or panel approaches. A second limitation refers to the small variance explained in PSM, as its low r-square indicates. This could be because this article does not consider other variables that contribute to the explanation of PSM. However, increasing the number of variables would require taking another perspective that was out of the scope of this article. A third limitation refers to the accuracy of measures used, particularly for relatedness, competence, and autonomy, although we followed previous research (Van den Broeck et al. 2010) when we designed the survey. The same argument could be applied to the measurement of leadership styles and PSM. In the specific case of PSM, it was not possible to directly catch its degree of self-regulation, which would have given a more precise confirmation of the hypothesized causal mechanisms.

Finally, it is convenient to recognize that the unique characteristics of the sample can impact the findings and, therefore, the generalization of the results. Using a single survey, the study lacks the evidence to prove true causal inference (Wright 2008). This is particularly important considering that high-PSM employees may perceive their work environment differently because of their PSM (Stritch and Christensen 2014). Thus, research using different respondents and settings is needed to confirm the results. An interesting avenue we would like to pursue in the future is, as advocated by Grimmelikhuijsen et al. (2016), the combination of insights from public administration and psychology through experimental methods.

Acknowledgements and funding

This article was funded by the FPU programme of the Spanish Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports (FPU 14/06498) to support the author to pursue his PhD in Politics, Policies and International Relations at the UAB, and by a project of the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness on Public Service Motivation, Objective Performance and Citizen Satisfaction (CSO2017-86653-P).

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Appendix

Measurement Model and Original Survey Items

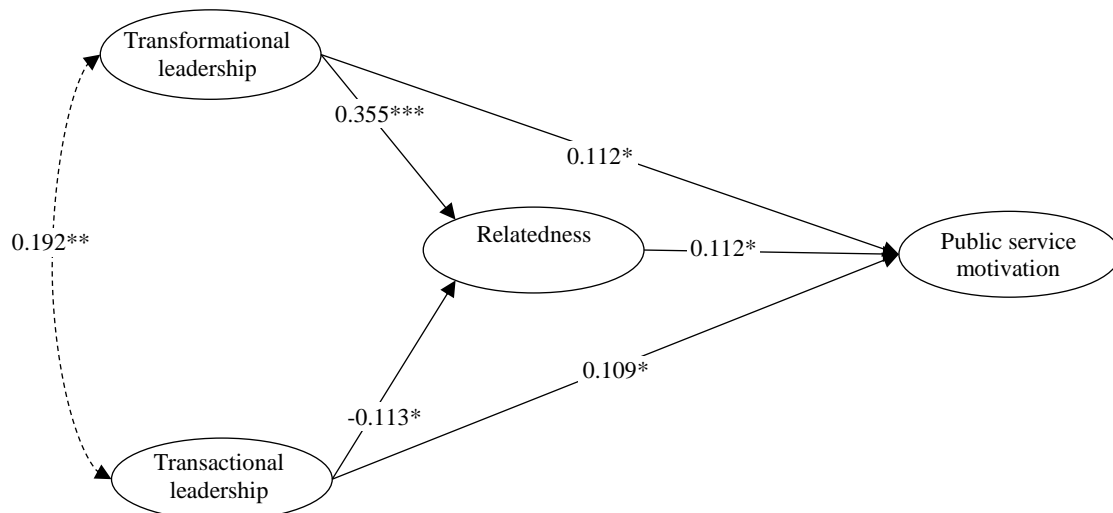
Construct and Items	SFL	S-B SE
Attraction to Public Participation , $\alpha = 0.760$ $\rho = 0.765$		
1. I admire people who initiate or are involved in activities to aid my community	0.704***	0.050
1. Admiro a la gente que promueve actividades para ayudar a su comunidad		
2. It is important to contribute to activities that tackle social problems	0.768***	0.044
2. Es importante contribuir con actividades que afrontan problemas sociales		
3. Meaningful public service is very important to me	0.501***	0.057
3. Los servicios públicos son muy importantes para mi		
4. It is important for me to contribute to the common good	0.692***	0.072
4. Considero importante contribuir al bien común		
Commitment with Public Values , $\alpha = 0.692$ $\rho = 0.703$		
1. I think equal opportunities for citizens are very important	0.640***	0.063
1. Creo que es muy importante que todos los ciudadanos tengan las mismas oportunidades		
2. It is important that citizens can rely on the continuous provision of public services	0.645***	0.057
2. Considero importante que los ciudadanos puedan confiar en la provisión continua de servicios públicos		
3. It is fundamental that the interests of future generations are taken into account when developing public policies	0.615***	0.080
3. Es fundamental tener en cuenta los intereses de las generaciones futuras cuando se toman decisiones sobre políticas públicas		
4. To act ethically is essential for public servants	0.538***	0.079
4. Actuar éticamente es esencial para los prestadores de servicios públicos		
Compassion , $\alpha = 0.839$ $\rho = 0.850$		
1. I feel sympathetic to the plight of the underprivileged	0.813***	0.034
1. Me preocupan las dificultades por las que pasan los más desfavorecidos		
2. I empathize with other people who face difficulties	0.720***	0.040
2. Siento empatía por las personas que pasan dificultades		
3. I get very upset when I see other people being treated unfairly	0.691***	0.050
3. Me enoja ver que hay personas que son tratadas de forma injusta		
4. Considering the welfare of others is very important	0.833***	0.029
4. Es muy importante tener en cuenta el bienestar de los demás		
Self-sacrifice , $\alpha = 0.839$ $\rho = 0.846$		
1. I am prepared to make sacrifices for the good of society	0.763***	0.035
1. Estoy dispuesto a hacer sacrificios por el bien de la sociedad		
2. I believe in putting civic duty before self	0.672***	0.047
2. Creo que es importante poner el deber cívico por delante de uno mismo		
3. I am willing to risk personal loss to help society	0.844***	0.032
3. Aceptaría alguna pérdida a nivel personal si es necesario para ayudar a la sociedad		
4. I would agree to a good plan to make a better life for the poor, even if it costs me money	0.757***	0.037
4. Estaría de acuerdo con un buen plan para mejorar la vida de aquellas personas más vulnerables, incluso si me tuviera que costar dinero		
Public Service Motivation , $\alpha = 0.704$ $\rho = 0.851$		
1. APP	0.862***	0.041
2. CPV	0.807***	0.052
3. CMP	0.814***	0.036
4. SS	0.562***	0.060
Transformational Leadership , $\alpha = 0.942$ $\rho = 0.944$		

1. My supervisor offers a good example	0.885***	0.018
1. Mi supervisor da un buen ejemplo		
2. My supervisor achieves that employees are proud to be part of the organization	0.890***	0.014
2. Mi supervisor hace que los trabajadores nos sintamos orgullosos de ser parte de la organización		
3. My supervisor worries for the development of the employees	0.927***	0.011
3. Mi supervisor se preocupa por el desarrollo de los trabajadores		
4. My supervisor appreciates the work that employees did	0.895***	0.015
4. Mi supervisor pone de relieve el valor del trabajo que realizamos		
Transactional Leadership , $\alpha = 0.496$ $\rho = 0.500$		
1. My supervisor reward and punish according to the performance of the employees	0.570***	0.143
1. Mi supervisor premia y castiga en función del rendimiento de los trabajadores		
2. My supervisor renovates contracts according to the performance of the employees	0.584***	0.141
2. Mi supervisor renueva los contratos a los trabajadores en base a su rendimiento		

Note: The standardized coefficients are reported. *** $p \leq 0.01$.

Fit statistic	Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2	Population error RMSEA	S-B Baseline comparison		Size of residuals SRMR
			CFI	TLI	
Model results	(202) 332.454 $p \leq 0.01$	0.038	0.959	0.953	0.044

Full Model without Control Variables



Note: Standardized coefficients are reported. *** $p \leq 0.01$, ** $p \leq 0.05$, * $p \leq 0.1$

Fit statistic	Satorra-Bentler scaled χ^2	Population error RMSEA	S-B Baseline comparison		Size of residuals SRMR
			CFI	TLI	
Model results	(221) 362.064 $p \leq 0.01$	0.038	0.957	0.950	0.045

Correlations Table between Main Variables

	1	2	3	4
1. PSM	–			
2. Relatedness	0.148*	–		
3. Transformational Leadership	0.189*	0.322*	–	
4. Transactional Leadership	0.142*	-0.037	0.192*	–

Note: The correlations of the latent variables have been calculated using their factor scores obtained in the full model with controls. * $p \leq 0.1$

CONCLUSION

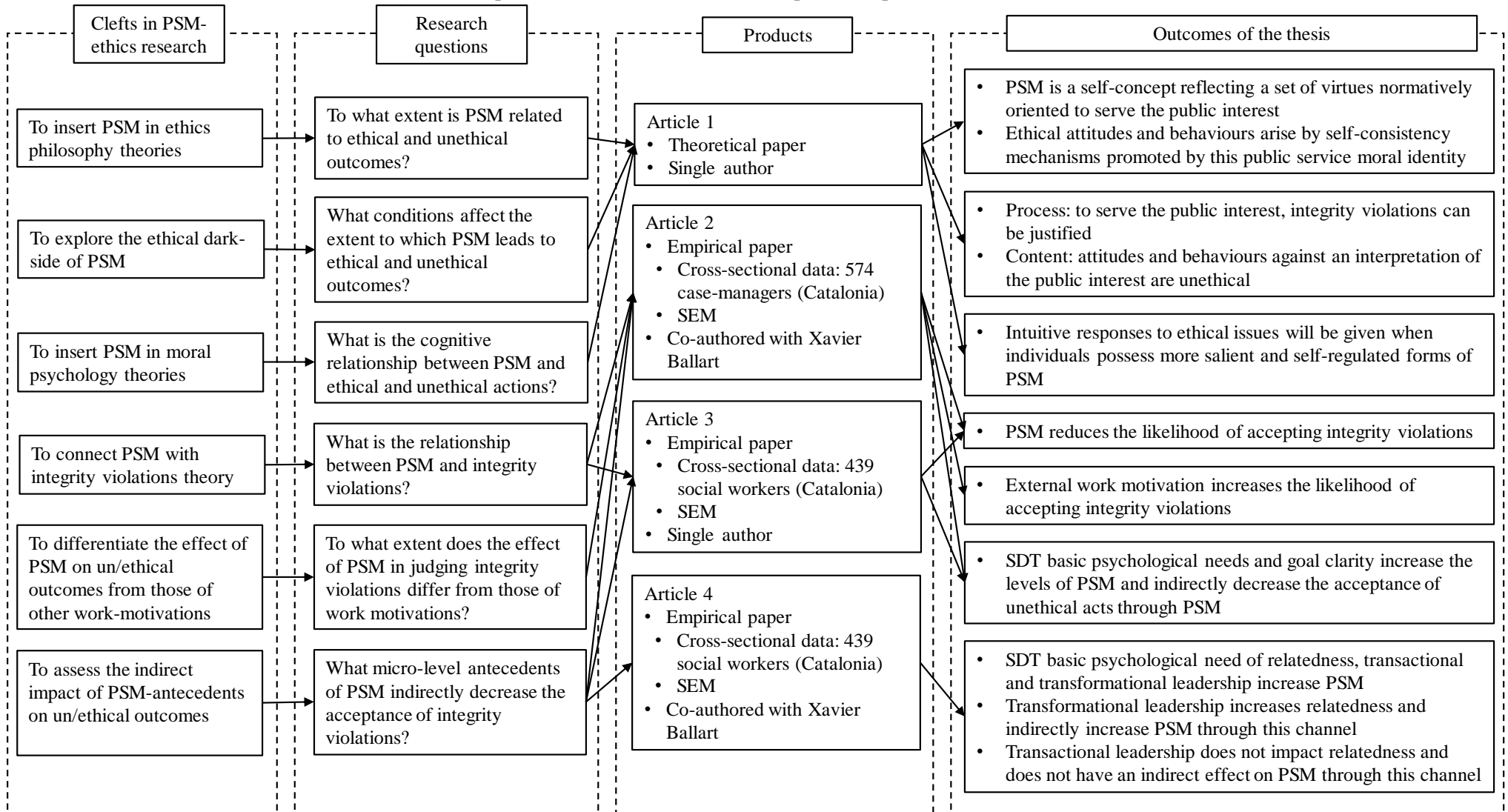
This concluding section of the thesis brings all findings together and offer some final remarks. First, it explains how the main theoretical and empirical findings answer the six research questions. Next to this, it summarizes the main theoretical, methodological and practical implications of the thesis. Third, the limitations of the thesis are stressed. Fourth, potential future research avenues are presented. After that, both done and on-going works beyond the thesis are exposed. In last term, a short concluding reflection is offered.

Object, products and outcomes of the thesis

The main aim of this thesis was to understand the link between PSM and ethics. After reviewing previous works studying this relationship, this overarching concern was divided into six different research questions. To answer them, four articles were developed, which formulate a theory and empirically test parts of it. Although each article has specific objectives and purposes, all of them are inter-linked to serve as a basis to fulfil the original aim of the thesis. What follows is a review of the main conclusions of each article and their connection with the research questions of this thesis (see also figure 1).

The first article offers a theoretical framework to answer research questions one, two and three, and to guide the subsequent empirical articles. First, inspired in previous studies linking PSM to social identity, the theory proposes that, when applied to ethics, PSM can be better understood as a public service moral identity that varies depending on its degree of salience and self-regulation. The content of the moral values attached to this identity are defined by the public interest. Hence, intersecting quandary and virtue

Figure 1. Implementation of the thesis: clefts, questions, products and outcomes



ethics, PSM is fitted inside Arendt's deductive approach to morality: PSM is a self-concept reflecting a set of virtues normatively oriented to serve the public interest (i.e. a higher moral rule). Therefore, public service motivated individuals are more likely to show ethical attitudes and behaviours because of being self-consistent with their public service moral identity. By fitting PSM in the main philosophical ethics debates, the first contribution of this article was to reveal the pure link between PSM and ethical and unethical outcomes.

The theory also explains that public service motivated individuals only produce ethical outcomes if their salient public service moral identity fits with the environment surrounding them. This argument unveils a new approach towards the dark side of PSM. This can be examined by bringing back the distinction between *process* and *content* when assessing the morality of an attitude or behaviour. Previous research examining the dark side of PSM (Le Grand 2010, Schott and Ritz 2018) mainly focused on whether public service motivated individuals are likely to commit an integrity violation (i.e. *process*) to serve the public interest. In this theoretical article, this vision is offered when asserting that public service motivated individuals are "prisoners and servants of the public interest at the same time" (Ripoll 2019: 27). On top of that, this article adds another perspective by emphasizing the importance of the *content*. The given approach stresses that if some individuals are attached to a specific interpretation of the public interest, they will label as unethical an attitude or behaviour going against it and in favour of other interpretations. Therefore, the first article not only explains the effect of PSM on ethical outcomes, but also under what conditions it may lead to unethical ones.

In addition, this article theoretically examines the cognitive relationship between PSM and ethics. Previous works in this issue proposed that individuals with high levels of PSM

are more likely to balance different principles prior to offer a judgement (Choi 2004, Stazyk and Davis 2015). However, they obtained limited evidence to sustain this argument. After revolving ethical and general decision-making theories, the two-systems approach (Kahneman 2003) was combined with the developed arguments connecting PSM and ethics, and with the idea that PSM's motives can reflect both reason and passion (Perry 2011). This led to the following proposition: individuals with more salient and self-regulated forms of PSM are more likely to make automatic or intuitive judgements (system 1).

The second article answers the research questions four, five and six. These questions are explored combining PSM, self-determination theory (SDT) and integrity violations literatures. Using data from 570 case managers working on a program that integrates health and social services in Catalonia (Spain), three hypotheses are tested. In contrast with previous works mainly investigating the effect of PSM on whistle-blowing attitudes (Brewer and Selden 1998, Wright et al. 2016), this article demonstrates a negative effect of PSM on judging the appropriateness of three integrity violations. Hence, if PSM increases, the acceptance of unethical acts decreases. Moreover, this article calibrates the distinct effects of PSM and external work motivation on the judgement of unethical acts. The results show that the effect for external work motivation is positive. This means that individuals with higher preferences for working in exchange for money or status (i.e. extrinsic motivators), are more likely to accept unethical acts. All in all, these findings indicate the importance of the adherence to public service logics and the possession of a public service moral identity. In other words, the differences in values and identities of individuals are critical to reduce ethics violations.

On top of that, the results indicate that higher levels of autonomy, competence and relatedness, i.e. three basic psychological needs according to SDT, increase the levels of PSM but not those of external motivation. And, it has also been identified a negative indirect effect of basic psychological need satisfaction on the acceptance of unethical acts through PSM. Apart from underpinning previous research finding a positive association between basic psychological needs satisfaction and PSM (Vandenabeele 2014, Jensen and Bro 2018), these results are relevant because they highlight the importance of developing PSM through this micro-level mechanism to reduce ethics violations.

The third article of this dissertation connects PSM, goal-setting theory and integrity violation literatures in order to provide a response to the fourth and sixth research questions. To articulate this answer, three hypotheses are elaborated, and further tested using a sample of 439 social workers in Catalonia (Spain). The results show that PSM decreases the acceptance of integrity violations, which again stresses the importance of possessing PSM, and consistently regulate individuals' attitudes and behaviours in line with the public values forming this identity. This finding confirms the results of the second research article, and it therefore strengthens the idea that how individuals 'are' matter when judging ethic violations.

Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates that when public workers clearly perceive the goals of they organization, the overall level of PSM increases. This effect is explained because individuals first understand the importance of looking after the public interest, and then become committed to serve it. In other words, individuals develop a public service moral identity by adjusting their values with the ones of the organizations. Although this finding goes in line with previous research (Caillier 2016), the theoretical argument slightly varies by introducing the identity conceptualization of PSM. Apart

from this direct effect, this article also finds an indirect effect of goal clarity on the acceptance of integrity violations through PSM. This happens because when transmitting the public values from institutions to individuals, the moral content of these values is also transferred to individuals' identity. This novel finding increases the spectrum of micro-level techniques that can be used to increase PSM and, by doing so, decrease the acceptance of unethical behaviour.

The fourth, and last, article answers a small part of the sixth research question. In fact, it explores new micro-level techniques to cultivate PSM delving into the interconnectedness between SDT, leadership and PSM literatures. By doing so, this article mildly tests an idea developed in the first article. The theoretical article proposes that PSM varies depending on whether it is autonomous or controlled regulated. To provide initial evidence calibrating the empirical validity of this idea, this article uses the same data as the third article to examine how two micro-level factors promote PSM. The results show that basic psychological need of relatedness, transformational and transactional leadership increase the level of PSM. However, while transformational leadership increases relatedness and indirectly promotes PSM, transactional leadership does not affect relatedness and, consequently, it also does not indirectly cultivate PSM through this channel.

The findings of this article are important for three reasons. First, the effect of transformational leadership and relatedness in promoting PSM confirms previous research using a different setting (Jensen and Bro 2018). Second, the article demonstrates that transactional leadership can also nurture PSM, a completely novel finding in the literature. In last term, the distinct indirect effects of the two leadership styles on PSM through relatedness shows that although PSM is cultivated, the identification or

integration of the institutional public values does not always occur. This last point suggests that PSM, as a public service identity, may vary in its degree of self-regulation.

Relevance of the thesis

All in all, this thesis has explored the relationship between PSM and ethics. This has been done both theoretically and empirically by answering the six research questions formulated in the introduction. This sub-section presents an overall explanation of how this thesis advances theoretical, methodological and practical knowledge.

Theoretical work in the field of PSM has been for a long time limited to the development and critique of the concept in terms of definition, conceptualization and measurement (Perry 1996, 2000, Vandenabeele 2007, Perry and Vandenabeele 2008, Kim et al. 2013, Bozeman and Su 2015, Schott et al. 2019). By contrast, there are few studies theoretically delving into the link between PSM and certain outcomes. This dissertation provides a new interdisciplinary theoretical framework for exploring the relationship between PSM and ethics using insights from philosophy, moral identity and broader motivational and institutional theories. Although useful at an abstract level, this thesis demonstrates that the theoretical arguments can also inspire empirical studies. Apart from expanding PSM-ethics research, some of the unveiled theoretical ideas can indeed be useful to contribute to the understanding and development of PSM. An example is the distinction between salience and self-regulation when conceptualizing PSM.

Methodological advancements were a means to better understand the link between PSM and ethics. First, this thesis suggests that integrity violations can be used in PSM research because they reflect different instances of unethical behaviour (i.e. *process*). To do this, it clarifies the role integrity violations play in the PSM-ethics research, and then proposes

a technique to assess them in cross-sectional surveys. In addition, this thesis opens the door to measure not only the level of PSM, but also the extent to which this identity is self-regulated and salient. This calls to add psychological and identity insights into the measure of PSM. Moreover, although this dissertation primarily relies on self-reported data, it also makes evident the need of using more advanced methodological techniques (e.g. experimental and quasi-experimental strategies) to underpin the findings or to follow-up the suggested research lines.

Practitioners need to be cognizant of the ethical power and risks associated to promoting PSM. This dissertation proves that PSM decreases the acceptance of integrity violations. Therefore, to reduce unethical acts, public institutions should promote PSM. At the micro level, this thesis shows that this can be done satisfying the basic psychological needs, providing goal clarity and using transformational and transactional leadership. However, it is also important to note that depending on the meaning or interpretation of the public interest, PSM may promote ethical and unethical outcomes, which implies that the context do matter when assessing the ethical consequences of PSM.

Limitations of the thesis

Despite of taking great care in designing this thesis, there are several limitations which need to be acknowledged. First, to develop the theoretical article, some decisions were deliberately taken to fix a solid departure position. For example, Arendt's approach towards morality is one of the many approaches that researchers could use to inspect the relationship between a social concept and ethics. Another example is that the definition of PSM and its conceptualization as a social identity were selected because of its fit with moral identity. Therefore, this theoretical framework can be challenged by adding insights from different perspectives or by changing the chosen departure positions.

Second, it is convenient to recognize that all empirical articles included in this thesis only rely on the use of cross-sectional data to test the hypotheses. As it is well known, the unique characteristics of the samples can impact the findings, and therefore the generalization of the results is limited. This is particularly important considering that high-PSM employees may perceive their work environment differently because of their PSM (Stritch and Christensen 2014). Thus, to prove true causal inference, these results need to be confirmed by subsequent research using different respondents and settings (Wright 2008).

Third, another concern comes from measuring the main variables of interest as individuals' perceptions, which rises common method bias problems. In each article, procedural and statistical remedies were taken. However, one can not definitely rule out the possibility of having biased results. Next to this concern, there is the validity of the items used to measure each concept. Although results in key indicators were usually above common standards, new studies are encouraged to use different measures, or apply the same measures in different samples.

Further research

Apart from contributing to the current needs in PSM-ethics research, this thesis suggests different avenues for further research. First, the theoretical framework offered in the first article can be criticized and advanced. For example, new research can further explore the intersection between salience and self-regulation. Although conceptualized, it is convenient to develop proper methods to catch this difference, and to test its usefulness. Another example could be to inspect the connections between PSM and ideology, as the latter also reflects a system of ideals and values. Second, because of this thesis only tests some of the theoretical propositions emerged in the theoretical article, it is convenient to

develop quantitative and qualitative studies oriented to test all of them. For example, to adopt experimental (Grimmelikhuijsen et al. 2016) or process tracing techniques (Beach and Pedersen 2019) could be useful to test and revise the propositions. Or, in order to be able to generalize the results, future research could develop new studies using different measures, samples or applying a longitudinal perspective.

Third, unethical acts are difficult to define and observe (Rabl and Kühlmann 2008). Thus, it is unsurprisingly hard to measure unethical behaviour directly. Although this thesis has captured different instances of unethical behaviour (i.e. integrity violations) quite successfully, further research should be directed to catch actual ethical and unethical behaviour, and to select other widespread integrity violations (e.g. manipulation of information or improper use of authority). In the fourth place, because of the importance of micro-level factors in indirectly reducing the likelihood to accept integrity violations, new studies are encouraged to bypass cross-sectional surveys, and provide new causal evidence on how specific techniques can help public managers to develop PSM in the workplace, and, by doing so, decrease the acceptance of unethical behaviours.

In last term, this thesis also suggests avenues of further research for PSM that are not constrained to the ethics sub-field. The theoretical article proposes a new conceptualization of PSM, i.e. an identity open to diverse interpretations of the public interest and with different levels of possession, salience and self-regulation. This is not a mere suggestion to inspect the relationship between PSM and ethics. In fact, it goes directly at the heart of what is PSM, how it should be measured, and how it should be conceptualized to provide detailed explanations. Therefore, this thesis encourages subsequent work to further inspect the conceptualization of PSM. To do this it is

convenient to first assess its theoretical validity and, after that, propose accurate methods to catch it.

Beyond the thesis: work done

During these almost 4 years as a full-time PhD student, my main research tasks were focused on advancing the thesis. However, it is also necessary to stress two additional works developed and published during this time. Although these works are linked with the overall object of this thesis, they have not been included here for different reasons. On the one hand, together with Xavier Ballart and Guillem Rico (Autonomous University of Barcelona), I co-authored a book entitled “La motivación en los servicios públicos. Análisis empírico de sus antecedentes y de sus efectos,” which was published at INAP (Ballart et al. 2016). This book brings the concept of PSM to the Spanish and Catalan context. To do this, it first reviews the origin of the concept, and its connections with similar concepts. After that, it explains how it can be measured and the main causes and consequences established in the literature. The emerging hypotheses are further tested using two samples from Catalonia (Spain). The conclusions provide evidence sustaining the general structure of the measure of PSM, and also confirm almost all hypotheses.

On the other hand, together with Jessica Breugh (Hertie School of Governance), I co-authored the article “At their wits’ end? Economic stress, motivation and unethical judgement of public servants,” which was published at Public Management Review (Ripoll and Breugh 2019). This article extends the effect of PSM on the judgement of integrity violations beyond the work context using a large data set integrating 27 countries and more than 7000 public servants. Specifically, it separates the effects of PSM from those of autonomous and controlled work motivations on unethical judgements in the public square. Moreover, this article examines how environmental pressures at the

institutional level may affect the extent to which motivations are cultivated and therefore levelling their relationship with the acceptance of integrity violations outside the job. The results show that PSM and autonomous work motivation decrease the acceptance of ethics violations, while controlled work motivation increases it. And, that perceived economic stressors indirectly shape the dependent variable through their impact in work motivations, but not in PSM. These findings suggest relevant practical and research implications, which were discussed.

Beyond the thesis: on-going work

Apart from the finished studies carried on during the PhD, it is also necessary to list some other projects which will be finished after defending it. The works mentioned below are linked with the two topics of the dissertation, other research projects are not included. First, built on the propositions emerged in the theoretical framework examining the cognitive relationship between PSM to ethics, a new research aims to reveal, through a novel experimental approach, to what extent individuals with a more self-regulated and salient PSM are able to offer intuitive ethical judgements. This study will be co-authored with Wouter Vandeanabeele (Utrecht University). Second, together with Carina Schott (Utrecht University), we are developing a research article oriented to examine a dark-side of PSM: acceptance of integrity violations when individuals' interpretations of the public interest are furthered. Third, I am involved in one research project (led by Arjen van Witteloostuijn, Lode De Waele and Kristina S. Weißmüller), which aims to provide a more nuanced explanation about the link between PSM and corruption through an experimental approach replicated in different countries. In last term, I developed a study to assess if public service motivated individuals are immune to common causes of unethical behaviour. To clarify this issue, this research isolates what factors, if any, could

provoke that public service motivated individuals commit integrity violations and, in consequence, undermine the public interest.

Conclusion

This dissertation has focused on understanding the relationship between PSM and ethics. The main argument was that the two concepts are intrinsically connected because they are related to the idea of identity, and that PSM promotes ethical outcomes through self-consistency mechanisms. The empirical analyses have partly demonstrated this by showing that individuals with higher levels of PSM are less likely to accept integrity violations. However, the theoretical study suggests that this association is context dependant. This not only implies that PSM potential will be realized depending on different circumstances, but also that the actions driven by PSM will differ from one context to another.

To conclude, it is convenient to connect the theoretical and empirical findings with the opening discussion in the introduction. The nexus to understand the difference between Plato's and Juvenal's guardians was education, i.e. how individuals 'are.' According to this thesis, if the guardians possess PSM, or a set of virtues oriented to defend the public interest, they can be trusted to behave in line with their interpretation of the public interest (i.e. ethically, *content*) and to not commit integrity violations (i.e. ethically, *process*). However, many interpretations of the public interest exist. Therefore, guardians are subjected to context, in such a way that a guardian will only protect his or her realm (i.e. interpretation of the public interest), not the one of others. And, in their will to do so, both ethical and unethical means could be justified.

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