

Public Service Motivation in an International Context: Evidence from the Lebanese Civil Service

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Abstract

Public service motivation has been developed partly as a reaction to the failures of new public management in reforming the civil service, and partly as a reaction to the negative effects that this model has on public service ethics. In 1990, the United States of America witnessed an attempt with the aim of reviving and developing the concept of public service ethics, also known as public service motivation (PSM) or public service ethos (PSE) in order to improve the performance of the American civil servants. PSM has been studied in different developed countries; however, it was almost ignored in developing countries. This study focuses on the conceptualization of PSM in Lebanon with a particular focus on civil service. This study shows that PSM is an international concept, which is present in the Lebanese context as well. However, other value-laden elements appeared to surface, where they yield additional information on the content of PSM.

Keywords: Public service motivation, new public management, public sector motivation, legality, objectivity, ethics, neutrality and merit

1. Introduction

Research on public service motivation has gained increasing attention partly as a reaction to the failures of the market model in reforming the public sector. The 1980s and 1990s, for instance, witnessed severe criticism of state centred bureaucracies, especially by the educated elite, the media, and political leaders in developed countries. This criticism paved the way for the rise of a new-market driven approach utilising management tools and techniques mainly from the private sector, namely new public management (NPM) (Kearney & Hays, 1998). NPM is a diverse and highly contested concept, which covers microeconomics, law and regulation, organization theory (Arellano-Gault, 2010), in addition to basic themes linked to public choice theory and the Chicago School of Economics (Lane, 2000). NPM concentrates on entrepreneurial management, which is at odds with traditional bureaucratic form of public administration and starts with the premise that there is little fundamental difference between private and public sectors. This blurring of boundaries between public, private and in some case non-profit organisations has led to a tendency in those countries to adopt NPM practices resulting in a reduction in ‘the distinctiveness of a civil service job’ (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004 p 77). The impetus for adoption or application of business management and pro-market techniques into the public sector also stems from the belief that market principles and techniques are superior (Labaky, 2015).

The widespread infusion of monetary incentives and other pro-market and business management principles into the public sector has posed real threats to the identity, credibility and existence of public service norms and values (Shamsul Haque, 1996). Moreover, building on and reinforcing “diminished trust and confidence in government” and, by association, its civil servants (Perry & Hondelghem, 2008, p.2), NPM has paved the way for the rational model to dominate the literature on motivation and performance for many years (Vandenabeele, 2007). Even so, although the proponents of reforming the public sector in line with market and business management approaches have been successful in explaining the poor performance of some civil servants, they have failed to explain the altruistic and prosocial behaviour of other public officials (Dilulio, 1994). Personal sacrifices, the desire to serve the public and altruistic behaviours are part of the unique and distinctive attitudes of public officials, which cannot be explained in terms of rational and market principles (Vandenabeele, 2007). As a result, in the last two decades, research on public service motivation (PSM) has gained increasing attention partly as a reaction to the failures of the market model in reforming the public sector, promulgated by proponents of New Public Management, and partly as a reaction to the negative effects that this model has on public service ethics (Myers, 2008). It is quite evident, then, that PSM is still seen today as an alternative to the rational model that has long dominated motivation literature (Perry and Vandenabeele, 2008).

Ever since public service motivation has been studied in many developed nations; however, it was almost ignored in developing nations, especially Arab states. This study focuses on a theorized underdeveloped area: the conceptualization of PSM in Lebanon with a particular focus on the civil service.

2. Public Service Motivation

Perry & Wise (1990, p.368), the acknowledged founders of PSM theory, define public service motivation as “...an individual’s predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations”. Professional identification, education and political ideology are the antecedents of PSM. Perry

(1997) further indicates that parental relations and religious beliefs are also the antecedents of PSM. Good and successful relationships between parents and children are believed to increase the levels of altruism among employees, whereas professions like medicine, law, and the clergy support ethical and institutional values and beliefs such as caring, serving the public, and supporting social justice (Perry, 1997). Here we can see a combination between individual characteristics and vocation and the types of environments that are perceived to meet these objectives. On the one hand we have the drivers (motivation) and on the other the socio-political and cultural settings (and causes) to which individuals may be attracted – the ethics or ethos of the institution or working environment. For many individuals, this could mean the difference between working in the public sector rather than the private sector. As discussed earlier, this means that the changes experienced in public sector management through a focus on new public management approaches to governance and privatisation, could impact on levels of PSM in public sector settings. While, PSM, according to Horton (2008) dates back to the ideas of Plato and Aristotle who extolled the virtues of common good and public service, the impact of NPM and continued change in public delivery has led to a renaissance of interest in PSM.

The presumed identification between individual motivation and a particular service ethos or ethic also suggests a commitment, expectation or duty to act both in the interest of the general will and as protectors of the common good (Horton, 2006, 2008). This altruistic behaviour - the aim of helping society, country and human kind (Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999), is seen as a basic element of public service norms that guides and directs behaviour (Moynihan, 2008). Similarly, Vandenaabeele (2007) declares that PSM represents a set of values and beliefs, where an individual subjugates his/her personal interest for the sake of the communal one. Equally, Brewer & Selden (1998) view PSM as a drive pushing individuals to execute beneficial services for the society or community. This is described, for instance, by Vandenaabeele, Scheepers & Hondeghem (2006) as a special type of motivation – a desire to serve others- that triggers individuals to behave according to an ideal of public service.

Recent scholars have attempted to strengthen public service motivation framework and to incorporate/embed it more in motivation literature. In this context, Perry & Wise (1990) provided a stronger and more modern theoretical framework for public service motivation than earlier works, which emphasize only altruistic motives and ignore the presence of rational motives. Perry & Wise (1990) suggest that this construct is associated with the following three motives: rational, affective, and normative. Here, employees are rationally motivated to join the public sector because they are interested in gaining more power and in maximizing other personal interests. Other individuals are affectively motivated because they want to execute meaningful programmes or deliver services that benefit the society. Individuals with normative motives feel that they are morally obliged to serve their society or community. Six years later, and based on the previous motives, Perry (1996) updated this model and identified four different measures for public service motivation: (1) attraction to policy making, (2) loyalty to public interest, (3) compassion, and (4) self-sacrifice (Wright, 2008). Since then, a large number of public management scholars have used Perry's (1996) four dimensions and 24 items to measure PSM (Wright, 2008).

3. International Diffusion of Public Service Motivation

Public service ethos in the UK has gained special attention since 1997. While introducing his administrative reform agenda in 2002, Tony Blair affirmed that the basic values and ethos of the public service were to be protected. Likewise, Gordon Brown stressed the importance of public service ethos while describing public service "... as a calling, not a career" (Brown, 2004, as cited in Needham, 2006, p.847). Public service ethos in the UK includes traditional values like objectivity, political neutrality, impartiality, accountability, trust, and equity as well as new elements such as treating citizens as customers, making sure that service delivery meets customer demands, and delivering services effectively and efficiently (Needham, 2006). Policymaking and policy implementation were the basic features of the British civil service during 1960s and 1970s. The introduction of new public management principles, especially during the 1980s and 1990s, changed this. The public ever since has been regarded as consumers of public services. Accordingly, new principles entered the framework of public service ethos, like the values of effectiveness, efficiency and quality (Vandenaabeele, Scheepers, & Hondeghem, 2006). Public sector ethos covers "... behavioral traits, loyalty to the organization and its goals, a commitment to public service, and accountability through and to political authorities and the law. Although these and other features are common to Western state bureaucracies, each regime system is unique, with its own values that are the result of contextual factors, including history, culture, and type of political system" (Horton, 2008, p.23).

Vandenaabeele, Scheepers & Hondeghem (2006) examined Perry's (1996) model of public service motivation in Germany. With regard to attraction to politics and policymaking as the first dimension of PSM, the aforementioned scholars found that in Germany there is a strong primacy of politics directed towards the departmental minister. The introduction of new public management principles failed to separate politics from the civil service. Similar to Perry (1996), the dimension of public interest in Germany refers to the level of local

communities. In Germany, little or no attention is given to the compassion of public officials since compassion is perceived to be at odds with the principles of objectivity and neutrality. Self-sacrifice implies that public servants behave in a way that protects the democratic values of the state, even if it contradicts one's own values. Hence, self-sacrifice has a political meaning different from sacrificing one's interest for a greater good. The values of PSM in Germany transcend the dimensions in Perry's model. For instance, equal treatment is an important principle of PSM in Germany. Equality implies equal treatment to all citizens and equal treatment between the civil servants. The principle of merit entered the ethical framework of PSM in order to counter patron-client relationships and politicization as well as to foster quality and professionalism. The German civil service has followed the Weberian bureaucratic model; hence it is no surprise that the rule of law is an important constituent of German public service motivation (Vandenabeele et.al; 2006).

Perry's model was also tested in France and the Netherlands. The four dimensions of PSM exist in both countries, but they have different meanings. This shows that PSM is an international concept. Results showed that there is primacy of politics in the two countries despite the introduction of market model principles in the civil service. Public interest in both countries has been directed towards the whole nation, not local communities. Unlike France, there is no place for individual compassion in the Netherlands. Self-sacrifice has proved to be more important in the French civil service than that in Holland. Religion plays an important role in both countries since it is one of the antecedents of public service motivation. For instance, Catholic values guide the behaviours of French civil servants, whereas protestant values guide the behaviour of public servants in the Netherlands. Equality is another important characteristic of the public service values in France. This value dates back to the period before the French revolution. Neutrality is an additional value that contributes to the development of an equal society. Democracy, neutrality and objectivity are also important values of the French civil service and the civil service in the Netherlands. Flexibility has entered into the new ethical framework of PSM in the Netherlands due to the infiltration of market model principles in the civil service.

The adoption of this principle was also a reaction against the rigidity of Max Weber's bureaucratic framework (Hondegheem & Vandenabeele, 2005). Within the same context, Steijn (2006) studied PSM in the public sector in Netherlands. He finds that public sector employees in the Netherlands have higher levels of PSM than their counterparts in the private sector. This implies that PSM is an important element that motivates employees to join the public sector. Besides, Steijn (2006) finds that public service motivated employees in the private sector are more motivated to work in the public sector than their colleagues with weaker PSM levels. He also asserts that education positively affects PSM. For instance, educated employees have higher levels of PSM than non-educated workers (Steijn, 2006). After examining public service motivation in the French context, Castaing (2006) indicates that this construct is an antecedent of organizational commitment in the French public sector. Hence, employing public service motivated individuals improves organizational commitment in this sector (Castaing, 2006).

Vandenabeele & Van de Walle (2008) show, that while overall PSM is an international concept, its constituent dimensions are not universal. Both scholars admit that the study of PSM in different countries is not an easy task to do. The values constituting this construct differ from one country to another. Even though PSM exists internationally, its constituents might have different meanings and strengths across countries. Institutional and societal differences are seen to:

“contribute to different patterns of public service motivation in different countries. Even where national public sectors share a common heritage, as is the case with the Judean and Roman-Greek heritage in most Western countries...There are differences in national administrative values upon which public service motivation is based” (Vandenabeele & Van de Walle, 2008, pp. 225-226).

Both scholars used data from the 2004 International Social Survey Program (ISSP) citizenship module in order to compare public service motivation internationally, across 38 different countries. Results show that a large number of European countries, except Southern European ones, have the lowest public service motivation scores. Conversely, Southern European, Northern American and Latin American countries have the highest scores on PSM. However, Asian countries and Australia were at the middle. Low scores on public service motivation among Western European countries were the direct results of reforming their civil services in line with pro-market business management principles. Low scores on PSM among East European countries were attributed to the weak understanding of democratic and capitalist principles after five decades of communism. However, high scores of PSM in Latin American countries were mainly attributed to the strength of Catholic Church in these countries (Vandenabeele & Van de Walle, 2008).

Bangcheng (2009) examines the applicability of PSM in the Chinese civil service. He finds that the two dimensions of Perry's framework exist in the Chinese context, namely commitment to the public interest and self-sacrifice, which “... can be traced to the Confucian principle of self-discipline” (Bangcheng, 2009, p.361). This exists in harmony with the Communist ideology, where party members place the revolutionary ideas before themselves. Likewise, one of the building blocks of the Chinese civil service is serving and devoting oneself to the public and to China. Public officials are servants of the people, where they subjugate their personal interests

for the public good. Commitments to the public interest and self-sacrifice in their turn lead to job satisfaction. For instance, employees that are committed to the public interest are highly satisfied in their work because their values are in harmony with the principles of the Chinese civil service (Bangcheng, 2009).

Similar constructs to public service motivation do exist in different countries, but under different terms. Non-American scholars, for instance, do not use the term public service motivation when studying public service motivated behaviour, but rather different terminologies like “public service ethos” in the United Kingdom, “l’*éthique du bien commun*” in Canada, “belief in mission” in China (Vandenabeele and Van de Walle, 2008, pp.224-225), and “Beamtenethos” in Germany (Vandenabeele et al., 2006, p.18). As such, every public service regime has its own public service ethos covering basic values and perceptions held by public servants about that regime. Each ethos resides in its own institutional and historical context and culture (Horton, 2008). Ethos, according to Needham (2006, p. 846), represents a “set of norms creating a logic of appropriateness for those working in public services. The internalization of these norms makes ethos an intrinsic motivation, distinct from extrinsic motivations such as material reward or fear of sanctions”. For example, the British public sector ethos was never formalized in law. This ethos combines public sector principles like political neutrality, impartiality, equity, probity, anonymity, accountability to ministers, trust between civil servants and the public, honesty, integrity, team spirit, and respect between public servants and politicians, as well as private notions like competition, customer care, and delivering high quality public services effectively and efficiently (Needham, 2006).

4. Methodology

4.1 The questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was developed in this study based on Kim et al’s (2013) PSM framework. The questionnaire was translated from English to Arabic, the official language of Lebanon, with the help of an official translator. The main reason for translating the questionnaire to the Arabic language was that some civil servants do not know English well since Lebanon is a Francophone country (Lebanon was a French colony from 1923 till 1943) and French is the second language after Arabic.

A scaled response mechanism provided a continuum of response alternatives for the respondent to consider. A Likert scale was adopted which entailed a five-point rating scale in which the attitude of respondents was measured on a continuum from strongly disagree to strongly agree with an equal number of positive and negative response possibilities and one neutral (middle) category. The Likert scale was used because it allows questions relating to attitude or perceptions to be asked and rated so that that the individual can rate according to their strength of feeling, or level of agreement/disagreement. It also allows for the development of a statistical analysis (descriptive stats) and comparison across data sets.

4.2. Questionnaire distribution

Nine hundred (900) questionnaires were distributed. The number of returned questionnaires was 470 with a return rate of 52.22 %.

Table 1: Questionnaire distribution

Name of ministry and public agency	Distributed questionnaires	Returned questionnaires	Response rate %
Ministry of Social Affairs	150	79	52.6
Ministry of Economy and Trade	150	81	54
Ministry of Education and Higher Education	150	73	48.6
The Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR)	150	82	54
Rafik Hariri University Hospital	150	85	56
Electrecite’ du Liban	150	70	46.6
Total	900	470	52.22

The targeted population included Lebanese public servants in four ministries and two public agencies from all grades (1,2,3,and 4), except grade five because it covers drivers, janitors and messengers who do not have a significant role to play in the organization; they do not stay all the time inside their ministries, and they are not in direct contact with the public. Employees in grades 4, 3, and 2 know best what the customers want because they have direct and daily contact with the customers. The ministries are the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Economy and Trade, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education, and the Office of the Minister of State for Administrative Reform (OMSAR). The public agencies are Rafik Hariri University Hospital (former Beirut Governmental University Hospital), and Eléctricité Du Liban (EDL). The main reason for choosing these ministries and public agencies is that their offices are centralized in the capital Beirut. Other

ministries and public agencies have offices outside Beirut in unsafe areas like North Lebanon and the Beqaa Valley, which are geographically close to Syria, and in South Lebanon, which is geographically close to Israel. Besides, each public agency or ministry has different and unique goals to attain. The researcher does not want to take the Lebanese civil service as one homogeneous employer; but rather as a sector formed of different agencies or ministries with different goals and objectives.

4.3 Reliability

The most common technique for examining the reliability of an instrument is the internal consistency method. The reliability of an instrument implies the consistency with which it measures a construct. In this research, internal consistency was measured using Cronbach's alpha α . The values of Cronbach's alpha range from zero to one. While Sekaran (2003) asserted that 0.60 and below is a poor score of alpha, Nunnally (1978) declared that a score of 0.7 and above is an acceptable one. If the indicator was not strong, then we can use the correlation test between each item and the average of the items for each factor. The tables below show the results of Cronbach's alpha in this study.

Table 1: Internal consistency of the survey instrument

Constructs	No. of items	Cronbach's Alpha
APS= Attraction to public service	4	0.710
CPV= Commitment to public values	4	0.724
COM= Compassion	4	0.729
SS= Self-sacrifice	4	0.858
Objectivity and Neutrality	1	0.780

4.4 Validity

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) is an important test that is used to examine the factorability of data; it is an index used to examine the appropriateness of factor analysis. It is very hard to extract a factor when the KMO is near 0. Weak values of KMO range between 0.5 and 0.7, values between 0.7 and 0.8 indicate that the factor analysis is good (appropriate), values between 0.8 and 0.9 are strong, and values above 0.9 are excellent (Haf, 2015).

Table 3: Results of KMO

Constructs	KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy
APS = Attraction to public service	0.715
CPV = Commitment to public values	0.755
COM = Compassion	0.748
SS = Self-sacrifice	0.792
LA = Legal aspects	0.588

4.5 Public Service Motivation

4.5.1 Attraction to Public Service (APS)

Table 4: Attraction to public service (APS)

Quest	Item	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		M	SD
		Fr eq	%	Fr eq	%	Fr eq	%	Fr eq	%	Fr eq	%		
7	I admire people who initiate or are involved in activities to aid my community	1	0.21 %	11	2.34 %	16	3.40 %	34	73.6 %	96	20.4 %	4.12	0.58
8	It is important to contribute to activities that tackle social problems	2	0.43 %	16	3.40 %	25	5.32 %	23	50.8 %	18	40.0 %	4.27	0.75
9	Meaningful public service is very important to me	1	0.21 %	16	3.40 %	40	8.51 %	23	48.9 %	18	38.9 %	4.23	0.76
10	It's important for me to contribute to the common good	7	1.49 %	5	1.06 %	73	15.53 %	22	46.8 %	16	35.1 %	4.13	0.82

As can be seen from Table 1, the majority of the respondents (94%) agreed or strongly agreed when asked if they admired people who initiate or are involved in activities to aid the community (mean=4.12; SD=0.58). There was a substantial shift to strongly agree on the three other sub-dimensions and, although the over percentages fell slightly, over 80% of participants responded positively. In particular, 40% of respondents

strongly agreed and half of the respondents agreed (51%) that it is important to contribute to activities that tackle social problems (mean=4.27; SD=0.75).

4.5.2 Commitment to Public Values (CPV)

Table 5: Commitment to Public Values (CPV)

Quest	Item	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		M	SD
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
11	I think equal opportunities for citizens are very important	1	0.21%	4	0.85%	55	11.70%	21	44.89%	19	42.34%	4.28	0.72
12	It is important that citizens can rely on the continuous provision of public services	0	0.00%	8	1.70%	68	14.47%	23	50.64%	15	33.19%	4.15	0.72
13	It is fundamental that the interests of future generations are taken into account when developing public policies	0	0.00%	6	1.28%	37	7.87%	21	45.99%	21	44.89%	4.34	0.68
14	To act ethically is essential	0	0.00%	17	3.62%	15	3.19%	20	43.19%	23	50.00%	4.40	0.72

As with attraction to public service, commitment to public values also shows high levels of agreement with the questions asked. Scores were over 80% for all dimensions, with questions 13 and 14, showing the most positive responses (agree/strongly agree) with 91% and 93% respectively. Around 87% of respondents indicated agreement with the contention that equal opportunities for citizens are very important (mean= 4.28; SD=0.72). Almost half of the respondents (50%) strongly agreed, and 43% agreed that it is essential to act ethically (mean=4.40; SD=0.72). Results from the survey show that 46% of the respondents agreed and 45% strongly agreed that it is important to take into account the needs of future generations when developing public policies (mean=4.34; SD= 0.68).

4.5.3 Compassion (COM)

Table 6: Compassion (COM)

Quest	Item	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		M	SD
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
15	I feel sympathetic to the plight of the underprivileged	3	0.64%	12	2.55%	8	1.70%	34	73.19%	10	21.91%	4.13	0.62
16	I empathize with other people who face difficulties	1	0.21%	8	1.70%	19	4.04%	27	59.15%	16	34.89%	4.27	0.64
17	I get very upset when I see other people being treated unfriendly	2	0.43%	7	1.49%	12	2.55%	28	61.06%	16	34.47%	4.28	0.63
18	Considering the welfare of others is very important	15	3.19%	3	0.64%	7	1.49%	18	40.00%	25	54.68%	4.42	0.83

As can be seen from the table above, the majority of the respondents (73%) agreed, and 22 % strongly agreed, that they feel sympathetic to the plight of the underprivileged (mean=4.13; SD=0.62). Besides, 59 % of respondents agreed and 35 % strongly agreed that they empathize with other people who face difficulties (mean=4.27; SD=0.64). More than half of the respondents (55%) strongly agreed and 40% agreed that it is very important to consider the welfare of others (mean= 4.42; SD= 0.83). Most of the interviewees agreed with that

4.5.4 Self Sacrifice (SS)

Table 7: Self-Sacrifice (SS)

Quest	Item	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		M	SD
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
19	I am prepared to make sacrifices for the good of society	133	28.30%	19	4.14%	52	11.06%	77	16.38%	13	2.77%	2.24	1.12
20	I believe in putting civic duty before self	122	25.96%	21	4.51%	43	9.15%	69	14.68%	24	5.11%	2.28	1.15
21	I am willing to risk personal loss to help society	154	32.77%	14	2.97%	78	16.60%	55	11.70%	43	9.15%	2.35	1.29
22	I would agree to a good plan to make a better life for the poor, even if it costs me	118	25.11%	16	3.44%	73	15.53%	95	20.21%	22	4.68%	2.45	1.20

Descriptive results showed that 42% of the participants disagreed with making sacrifices for the good of society, while only 16 % agreed (mean=2.24; SD=1.12). Likewise, almost half of the respondents (45%) disagreed to about putting civic duty before self (mean=2.28; SD=1.15). Almost 33% of the respondents strongly disagreed, and 30% disagreed with risking personal loss to help society (mean=2.35; SD=1.29). Finally, 35 % of the respondents disagreed, and 25.11 % strongly disagreed about making a good plan to make a better life for the poor.

4.5.5 Legal Aspect

Table 8: Legal Aspect

Quest	Item	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		M	SD
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
23	I strictly follow laws, rules and regulations	37	7.87%	107	22.77%	13	2.77%	133	28.30%	180	38.30%	3.66	1.39
24	Laws, rules and regulations are the building blocks of Lebanese civil service	77	16.38%	62	13.19%	15	3.19%	116	24.68%	200	42.55%	3.64	1.53
25	Laws, rules and regulations must never be breached no matter what the case is	6	1.28%	37	7.87%	4	0.85%	155	32.98%	268	57.02%	4.37	0.94

In line with the study of Vandenaabeele et al. (2006) as well as the study of Hondeghem and Vandenaabeele (2005), a new public service value relevant to PSM, namely the legal aspect, was included and found significant in the Lebanese context.

It is important to note that 28% of the respondents agreed and 38% of these respondents strongly agreed that they strictly follow laws, rules and regulations (mean=3.66; SD=1.39). There were respectively 25% and 43% of respondents who agreed and strongly agreed that laws, rules and regulations are the building blocks of Lebanese civil service. More than half of the respondents (57%) strongly agreed that laws, rules and regulations must never be breached no matter what the case is (mean=4.37; SD=0.94). This shows the strength of the legalistic approach in the Lebanese civil service.

4.5.6 Objectivity and Neutrality

Table 9: Objectivity & Neutrality

Quest	Item	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		M	SD
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
59	Objectivity and neutrality are important principles of the Lebanese public service ethics	0	0.00%	1	0.21%	1	0.21%	335	71.28%	133	28.30%	4.23	0.44

The majority of respondents (71 %) agreed and the rest (28.3%) strongly agreed that objectivity and neutrality are important principles of Lebanese public service ethics and of public service motivation (mean=4.23; SD=0.44).

4.5.7 Merit Principle

Table 10: Merit Principle

Quest	Item	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		M	SD
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
60	The merit principle is an important element of public service ethos	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	10	2.13%	353	75.11%	107	22.77%	4.21	0.45

There were respectively 75 % and 23% of respondents who agreed and strongly agreed that the majority of civil servants consider that the merit principle is an important element of public service ethos (mean=4.21; SD=0.45).

4.6 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics showed that Lebanese civil servants scored high on three out of four dimensions of PSM, namely attraction to public service, commitment to public values, and compassion. This finding contradicts Jabbara & Dwivedi's (1988) conclusions, who assert that Lebanese civil servants are lazy and they lack the drive to serve the citizens effectively and efficiently. Laxity and lack of responsibility, according to Jabbara & Dwivedi (1988), are major obstacles to the development of the Lebanese civil service. Usually, Lebanese public servants are depicted as demotivated and showing little interest in serving the public. They often come late to work and go home early. Laxity is a major characteristic of top civil servants who are supposed to be the ideal example for their subordinates. Their behaviour does not differ much from that of their subordinates except that they sign more transactions. Top civil servants have little devotion to their jobs and do not exert high energy in performing them. This laxity at the top and lower levels of the bureaucratic pyramid reaches high levels. Even when they are at work, the civil servants seem to do everything other than performing their duties in full (Jabbara & Dwivedi, 1988).

The quantitative phase also revealed that other values came to the surface, where they yielded additional information on the content of public service motivation. In other words, descriptive statistics demonstrated that PSM is formed of additional components other than the four dimensions developed by Kim et al. (2013). These dimensions are country and context specific but may be generalised to other developing economies, which could be tested through further research. They showed, for instance, that the Lebanese civil service is highly legalistic, where laws, rules and regulations are important elements of the public service ethics and of public servants' identity. This finding is consistent with the study of Bashir (1965), who asserted that

there is much concentration on legal provisions in the Lebanese civil service. Jabbra & Jabbra (2005), in turn, admitted that the laws are intended to regulate the behaviour of Lebanese civil servants, their rights, responsibilities and positions, in addition to ensuring accountability and integrity. This legal orientation, as Iskandar (1997) declared, dates back to the Ottoman rule and French mandate and demonstrates the historical and cultural development of the civil service in Lebanon. The quantitative phase showed that objectivity and neutrality are important elements of Lebanese public service ethics, and hence of public service motivation.

5. Conclusion

PSM, as developed by Kim et al. (2013), was examined in the Lebanese civil service. Descriptive statistics showed that the Lebanese civil servants scored high on three- out of four- dimensions of PSM. In other words, they scored high on attraction to public service, commitment to public values, and compassion, while they scored low on the fourth dimension, namely self-sacrifice. The majority of respondents disagreed, or even strongly disagreed, about making personal sacrifices for the sake of society.

The concept of PSM, developed by Kim et al. (2013), is formed of four dimensions. However, other value-laden elements appeared where they yield additional information on the content of PSM. One value is legality. The majority of the respondents in the quantitative phase admitted that legal factors are important elements of public service ethos, and hence of public service motivation. They declared that the Lebanese civil service is highly legalistic. While very few respondents declared that over-emphasis on rules, laws and regulations leads to positive red tape, the majority admitted that the legalistic orientation of the civil service leads to negative red tape. While one of the respondents, for instance, claimed that excessive formalism reduces or curbs illegal actions, the majority insisted that excessive reliance on rules, laws and regulations leads to inefficiency, rigidity, redundancy, and waste of time. Some rules are outdated and as time passes, they will be transformed into red tape with no specific aim. The majority of respondents admitted that Lebanese civil servants do not break rules and regulations no matter what the case is; they are afraid of taking any step for fear of breaking the law. Lebanese civil servants are also afraid of breaking the law because they are controlled by different administrative agencies, such as CSB, CIC, GDC, the BOA and others. This legalistic orientation covers almost all aspects of the Lebanese civil service, such as recruitment and administrative reform. The development of a bureaucratic model of civil service inherited from the French is demonstrated in a solid focus on legality, legal system and processes.

Other values include objectivity and neutrality. The majority of the respondents declared that objectivity and neutrality are important components of PSM; however, they are not applied. Lebanese civil servants do not follow these principles despite the fact that they form article 15 of public personnel law no.112/59. This article calls for prohibiting public servants from joining political parties, trade unions or syndicates in order to foster neutrality and objectivity. However, Lebanese civil servants openly violate this article by joining political parties, forming syndicates and participating in strikes openly without being afraid of any punishment.

Another value is merit. Like the principles of objectivity and neutrality, the merit principle is an important element of the Lebanese constitution; however, it has not been applied yet. For instance, article 12 of the Lebanese constitution states that no discrimination is made between candidates for a public post except on the basis of knowledge and merit. However, this article has been always violated. While competitive examinations aim at recruiting the most qualified candidate, article 95 of the constitution stipulates that equal representation must be ensured between all religious sects (sectarian quota) without taking into consideration the results of competitive exams. Hence, sectarian balance and political stability proved to be more important than the merit principle.

Generally, the concept and dimensions are understood and acknowledged by civil servants in Lebanon, however in some instances there is a gap between theory, knowledge, behaviour and actions. Some characteristics are more meaningful for respondents than others. For example, respect and compassion are considered learned values and stem from family and region first and then from the working environment. These influences of culture and societal values as well as the political environment in which individuals are working also impact on notions of self-sacrifice. Here self-sacrifice is not interpreted as for example sacrificing one's own time in order to progress within the job, or to put oneself out in order to serve the public good; it has a deeper more fundamental meaning which again reflects both cultural and historical dimensions of identity, behaviour and values as well as the real and present danger within the region. Even so there is a felt belief that public service is about doing good and working for the benefit of wider society.

6. Comments and Further Research

This study shows that PSM is an international concept. All Kim et al.'s (2013) dimensions were present in Lebanese public agencies and ministries. This study contributes to the international diffusion of PSM academic discourse by studying it for the first time in Lebanon. The international framework of public service motivation,

developed by Kim et.al (2013), consists of four dimensions, namely attraction to public service, commitment to public values, compassion and self-sacrifice. On the other hand, when searching for motivational values in public organizations in Lebanon, other value-laden motives appeared to the surface. Despite the fact that they cannot be compared to the Kim et al.'s (2013) model, they yield extra information on the content on public service motivation in the Lebanese context. These new dimensions are: (1) legal factors; (2) objectivity and neutrality; and (3) the merit principle. Although we know that PSM varies across nations, future research can best test this new framework in Arab states since these countries have almost similar social and administrative cultures to Lebanon. Besides, they are developing nations like Lebanon. Future research must also test the validity and reliability of these dimensions before applying them in any geographical context.

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