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Foreword

When I started writing this thesis, I never expected it would end up as an English article about Public Service Motivation, PSM-fit and its effects on the intention to leave, affective commitment and job satisfaction of employees of the Dutch public service. This might sound cliché, but it's definitely a statement based on truth. My first intention was to write a masterthesis about the merging of the Dutch provinces *Noord-Holland*, *Utrecht* and *Flevoland*. I wanted to research the change willingness of the employees of these provinces and mutually compare them. Very interesting, but the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, where I work as an intern at the time of writing this thesis, wasn't too happy about this idea: all my proposals were rejected because of political sensitivity.

I ended up drinking lots of coffee with employees of the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations in my search for a suitable subject. Eventually, one of them gave me the dataset 'POMO2012'. The basis for this thesis was thus laid. A lot of possible subjects, mini-crisises, cups of coffee, moments of feedback and motivational peaks and valleys passed. Eventually, it all contributed to the thesis that lies here in front of you. When I look back at the six-month process of writing this article and working as an intern at the ministry of the Interior, I can only ascertain that in four years of study, this was the most instructive and interesting period.

The last four years I studied at the department of Social Sciences of the Erasmus University Rotterdam. For me, a great period where I learned a lot, worked hard, got the opportunity to build a network and also a period which gave me many opportunities to develop myself. For that, I'm grateful. In the context of this thesis, I would like to thank two persons of the Erasmus in particular. First dr. Lars Tummers, who inspired me to graduate by writing an English article (which is not very common) and who helped me a lot during the last six months with his suggestions, feedback and accompaniment. Second, prof. dr. Bram Steijn. With his knowledge on the field of PSM and his feedback, he's helped me to make major improvements to this article. Thank you.

Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank my family. In particular, and this might sound somewhat cliché again, my parents: Karen and Ton. First of all Karen, my mother. We both know life didn't always go the way we wanted it to, but you still managed to cope with the numerous challenges you faced. By always putting yourself in second place, having faith and working incredibly hard you made it possible for Kylian, Lianne and me to grow up and find our place in society. By obtaining my master-degree, I hope to give you something in return. Your hard work has paid off, and I'm very grateful to you. Second of all, Ton, my father. It hurts us both that, due to the complex circumstances, we live far apart. Nevertheless, you've always been the role model where I've always looked up to since I was a little boy. Your support and wise advices throughout the years brought me to where I am now, and I am very aware of that. By obtaining my master-degree, I hope to give you something in return as well.

Public Service Motivation

The context-dependency of Public Service Motivation

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Abstract

This study examines and compares the effect of Public Service Motivation (PSM) and PSM-fit on the intention to leave, affective commitment and satisfaction between the employees of three major parts of the Dutch public sector. The insights from this study contribute to our understanding of PSM and PSM-fit and bridges a lacuna in theory: a research to sectoral differences and thereby the context-dependency of PSM within a public sector as a whole has not been conducted before. The results show multiple significant differences between sectors in the strength of the effects of PSM and (to a lesser extent) PSM-fit: especially the effects in the public administration sector tend to be stronger in comparison with the education sector and the safety sector. The degree of Public Service (dPS), which was not considered to be a main effect, also showed to be a strong predictor with significant differences in strength between the sectors. The results indicate that the context-dependency of PSM is important, but should not be overestimated. The overall findings of this study are an addition to previous research in this field (e.g. Leisink and Steijn, 2009) and add on to our understanding of PSM and its antecedents.

Keywords: *Context-dependency, Public Service Motivation, degree of Public Service, PSM-fit, intention to leave, affective commitment, job satisfaction, Dutch public service*

1. Introduction

The banking crisis, the financial crisis and the economic crisis. Three concepts that fill the headlines on a daily basis (e.g. Wall Street Journal, 2013; the Guardian, 2013). For national governments, this crises leads to insurmountable budget cuts. For example by raising taxes, the discontinuation of subsidies and by shrinking the size of the civil service. In the Netherlands a total of 15,000 jobs in the civil service will disappear until 2018 (Rijksoverheid, 2013).

High performing employees are needed in public organizations. Literature shows that, for example, employees who are more satisfied perform better (e.g. Judge et al, 2001; Taylor, 2007; Westover and Taylor, 2010) and employees who feel more affectively committed to their organization perform better as well (e.g. Meyer et al, 1989). It is clear that having excellent employees with a low intention to leave is beneficial in order to have a high performing civil service in times of crises. But how can a public manager influence the psyche of his employees and thereby their intention to leave, affective commitment and satisfaction? The concept of Public Service Motivation can be useful tool here: recent studies showed, for example, that PSM and affective commitment are positively linked (e.g. Castaing, 2009).

Multiple studies have been conducted on the effects of Public Service Motivation in public sectors. Examples are Castaing for the French public sector (2006), Vandenabeele et al (2006) for the public sectors of the United Kingdom and Germany, Naff & Crum (1999) for the American public sector, Liu et al (2008) for the Chinese public sector, Taylor (2007) for the Australian public sector, Giauque et al (2011) for the Swiss public sector, Cerase and Farinella (2009) for the Italian public sector and Leisink and Steijn for the Dutch public sector (2009). These studies have in common that they all researched public sectors as a whole, without recognizing the unique characteristics and differences between parts of the public sector, such as between the public administration and the education sector. For example, Leisink and Steijn (2009) found a relatively high degree of PSM in the Dutch public sector. They also found that PSM has a positive effect on commitment and job effort. In their proposals for future research, they suggest that *'(..) aggregating scores for public sector motivation at the sector level blurs real differences between the sectors (..). This is an aspect to consider in future research.'* (Ibid: 47).

This study responds to this proposal by focusing on the context-dependency of PSM: the effects of PSM between three major sectors in the Dutch public service system are researched and mutually compared. These sectors are the public administration, the education sector and the safety sector. Differences in PSM-effects are expected because of major differences between sectors in nature, goals and tasks. In this context, Public Service Motivation will also be linked to the perceived degree of Public Service of employees. This link creates a so called PSM-fit. The effect of these concepts is measured on three work-related attitudes of employees of the Dutch public sector: their intention to leave, their affective commitment and their job satisfaction. Therefore, the following question is central in this study:

"Which differences in effects of Public Service Motivation and PSM-fit on the intention to leave, affective commitment and satisfaction of employees exist on the sector level of the Dutch public service?"

Addition to literature

Previous research by Steijn (2008) already studied the concepts of PSM and PSM-fit for the whole Dutch public sector and concluded that workers with a PSM-fit are more satisfied and less inclined to leave their job and organization they work for. This study can be seen as a sequel to the study by Steijn (2008), because it focuses on the context-dependency of this concept by recognizing the unique characteristics and different contexts of the individual public sectors. The theoretical innovative and deepening part of this study is therefore the research to the context-dependency of PSM and its

antecedents by comparing three major parts of the Dutch public sector which operate in different contexts. By doing this, differences in the effects of PSM and PSM-fit on the sector level are made clear. No other study has done this before on this field, and therefore this theoretical lacuna is filled. This is interesting, because (as the theoretical framework will point out) many sectoral differences exist which can lead to differences in the existence and effects of PSM and PSM-fit. Making this clear gives us a better understanding of the context-dependency of PSM and its antecedents, and it might even contribute to the creation of even more targeted (sectoral) policies on this subject.

2. Theoretical framework

This section will first outline some background about Public Service Motivation (PSM), the perceived degree of Public Service (dPS) and the interaction between both: PSM-fit. Next, the intention to leave is explained, as well as the concepts of affective commitment, employee job satisfaction and sectoral differences. From this theoretical framework, six general hypotheses are derived to measure the effects of PSM and PSM-fit. These six hypotheses will be tested for each sector separately. The seventh hypothesis focuses on sectoral differences, and will be tested based on the first six hypotheses and its results.

2.1. Public Service Motivation (PSM)

The concept of Public Service Motivation (PSM) made its entrance in public administration research in the early 1960s. Examples are Guyot (1962), Warner, van Riper, Martin & Collins (1963) and Kilpatrick, Cummings and Jennings (1964). After a stagnation of two decades, PSM gained more research attention in the last 20 to 30 years by authors like Rainey (1982) and Perry & Wise (1990). They argue that PSM *'may be understood as an individual's predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and organizations'* (1990: 368). Crewson (1997: 501) notes that, more broadly, PSM can be characterized as a reliance on intrinsic motives over extrinsic motives. Houston (2000: 714) endorses this statement. A central theoretical assumption of PSM is that human beings develop these motives through interaction with significant institutions (Perry, 2000). Knoke & Wright-Isak (1982) distinguish three analytical categories: rational, norm-based and affective motives for PSM. Perry (1996: 6) describes these motives as follows: *'rational motives involve actions grounded in individual utility maximization. Norm-based motives refer to actions generated by efforts to conform to norms. Affective motives refer to those triggers of behavior that are grounded in emotional responses to various social contexts.'* Perry subsequently distinguishes four dimensions of PSM: attraction to public policymaking, commitment to the public interest, compassion and self-sacrifice.

Attraction to policymaking is an example of a rational motive that draws individuals to the public service (Kelman, 1987). It may have an exciting and dramatic effect and it can also reinforce one's image of self-importance. The commitment to the public interest is one of the most commonly identified normative foundations for public service. Downs (1967) argues that even when the public interest is conceived as an individual's opinion, the desire to serve the public interest is essentially altruistic. In their study, Frederickson and Hart (1985) argue that compassion (or, as they state: patriotism of benevolence) should be the central motive for civil servants. They define this as: *'an extensive love of all people within our political boundaries and the imperative that they must be protected in all of the basic rights granted to them by the enabling documents.'* The last dimension that is distinguished by Perry is self-sacrifice: the willingness to substitute service to others for tangible personal rewards (Perry, 1996: 7).

In recent years, researchers paid a lot of attention to the ways to measure PSM. Because research to PSM have mostly been conducted by using scales created in the US, the appropriateness of these measures in non-US environments is being questioned by, for example, Coursey and Pandey (2007), Wise (2000), Vandenabeele (2008) and Ritz and Waldner (2011). Others, as Kim et al (2013) point out, noted a general need to develop

a measure of PSM that is more appropriate and can be used consistently regardless the study environment (e.g. Wright, 2008; Liu, Tang & Zhu, 2008 and Wright & Pandey, 2008). Recent studies also provided insight in the sociological side of the PSM-concept. Multiple researchers found that gender, age and educational level have a positive correlation with PSM (Pandey & Stazyk, 2008; Bright, 2005). In addition to these findings, Steen (2006) and Moynihan (2008) found that this positive correlations apply to all four dimensions of PSM. When we focus primarily on the Netherlands, most PSM-research has been conducted by Vandenabeele (e.g. 2006; 2009). In addition, research on this concept has been conducted by Leisink and Steijn. For example, Steijn, van der Parre & Leisink (2006: 42) found that '*being able to do useful work for society*' is a more important factor for public servants than for employees in the private sector when one is looking for another job. Nevertheless, Leisink and Steijn (2009) argue that there is a growing recognition that more research needs to be conducted on differences in PSM.

2.2. Perceived degree of Public Service (dPS)

The perceived degree of public service (dPS) is in this study applicable in order to build and measure PSM-fit. Hence, it's not a main effect. Therefore, it will be discussed shortly in this paragraph and in the larger context of PSM-fit in the next. The perceived degree of Public Service refers to the meaning of employees about the extent to which they feel their job serves the public good. Taylor and Westover (2010: 813) also described this as the capacity of the work environment to fulfill the worker's need to serve the public interest. In fact, it focuses on the user-orientation of employees on their job and organization. In this context, dPS can fulfill the values and needs of employees who have a certain degree of PSM. By matching PSM and the perceived degree of Public Service, a certain person-jobfit arises: PSM-fit. This fit measures if the values and needs of employees are met by the job they fulfill.

2.3. PSM-fit

PSM-fit is a type of person-environment fit. Kristof-Brown et al (2005: 281) show that theories of person-environment interaction have been prevalent in the management literature for almost 100 years, making it one of the more venerable lines of psychological thinking. Some examples are Ekehammer (1974), Lewin (1935) and Murray (1938). Person-environment fit is broadly defined as '*the compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched.*' (Kristof-Brown et al, 2005: 281). When theory looks deeper into this concept, the next types of person-environment fits are distinguished: person-job, person-organization, person-group and person-supervisor (Ibid: 283).

Person-job fit refers to the relationship between a person's characteristics and those of the job or tasks that are performed at work. This fit can be outlined in two basic conceptualizations (Edwards, 1991). First, the demands-abilities fit: the employees' knowledge, skills and abilities match with what the job requires. Second, the needs-supplies fit: the employees' needs, desires or preferences are met by their job. The person-organization fit addresses the compatibility between people and the entire organization (Kristof-Brown et al, 2005: 285). Special focus lies on both characteristics. When this fit is high, Tom (1971) argues that individuals will be more successful. When we focus on the interpersonal compatibility between individuals and their work groups, the person-group fit is addressed, while the person-supervisor fit addresses the relationships between individuals and others in their work environment: for example their supervisors.

PSM-fit in particular is a type of person-job fit and is described by Taylor (2008) as '*the compatibility between the needs of individuals to serve the public interest and the environmental conditions in their organization which affect the fulfillment of these altruistic motives.*'. Multiple studies have researched the effects of PSM-fit (e.g. Steijn, 2006; Steijn, 2008; Taylor, 2008). They argue the importance of the work environment

to fulfill an employees' need to serve the public interest. When PSM and dPS are combined, four theoretical situations arise:

	Low dPS	High dPS
Low PSM	1: PSM-lowfit	3: PSM-misfit
High PSM	2: PSM-misfit	4: PSM-highfit

Figure 1: The PSM-fit model

In the first situation, a PSM-fit occurs: employees have a low degree of PSM and a low degree of dPS. The second situation creates a PSM-misfit: employees have a high PSM, but the job doesn't satisfy their PSM-needs because of the low dPS. In the third situation, a second type of PSM-misfit arises. Here, employees have a low PSM, while their job has a high dPS. The fourth situation creates a PSM-fit: employees have a high PSM and a high dPS. Previous research (e.g. Verquer et al, 2003; Hoffman & Woehr, 2005) found that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are positively affected by the fit between the values of employees and the values of their organization. Also, in terms of PSM-fit, Leisink and Steijn (2008) argued that the person-job and the person-organization fit are the most relevant because PSM-fit focuses on an individual's values and needs and combine this with what their job can offer to fulfill this values and needs. Therefore, it is likely that PSM-fit has an effect on the intention to leave, affective commitment and job satisfaction.

2.4. Intention to leave

The intention to leave is considered to be one of the strongest predictors of employee turnover and is a widely researched concept (e.g. Griffeth et al., 2000; Porter & Steers, 1973; Mobley et al, 1979). Attracting employees, as a public organization, who have a high PSM-fit can lead to less intention to leave, since workers find their needs and values in their job. The assumption is therefore that people who have a high motivation for their job (PSM) are less inclined to leave, as well as employees who find their values back in their job and have a PSM-fit. Previous research by Steijn (2008:25) confirms this by finding that PSM and PSM-fit are negatively linked to employees' intention to leave. In this study, this will be tested for and between three sectors, leading to the first two general hypotheses which are applicable:

- H1: PSM is negatively related to the intention to leave.*
- H2: PSM-fit is negatively related to the intention to leave.*

2.5. Affective commitment

Since the introduction of the concept *commitment* in the research amongst organizational behavior in the early 1950s, thousands of studies which focus on this concept have been conducted (Abrahamson, 2002: 29). Benkhoff (1997: 114) suggests that the outcomes of these studies are disappointing: assumed links are difficult to statistically confirm, and in addition we know very little about factors that explain the phenomenon. In contrast to this conception, Mowday (1998: 389) argues that science made a lot of progress in understanding the concept, its antecedents and consequences. A scan of the literature concerning the concept of commitment gives a lot of definitions. For example: '*commitment is a force that stabilizes individual behavior under circumstances where the individual would otherwise be tempted to change that behavior*' (Brickman, 1987: 2) and '*commitment beliefs that sustain the activities of his own involvement*' (Salancik, 1977: 62).

In their article '*A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment*' (1991), Allen & Meyer distinguish two scholarly thoughts on commitment: attitudinal and behavioral commitment. Mowday et al (1982: 26) describe the difference between these two as follows: '*Attitudinal commitment focuses on the process by which people come to think about their relationship with the organization. [...] Behavioral commitment, on the*

other hand, relates to the process by which individuals become locked into a certain organization and how they deal with this problem.' Allen and Meyer (1991: 1) go beyond this distinction between attitudinal and behavioral commitment. They argue that commitment, as a psychological state, has at least three separable components. These components are affective commitment, normative commitment, and continuance commitment. In addition, O'Reilly & Chatman (1986) and Vandenberg et al (1993) suggest that there is a fourth component: instrumental commitment. In this study, particular attention is drawn to affective commitment because of the focus on the psyche of Dutch public servants. The emotional attachment, identification and involvement with an entity which is felt by an employee is central to affective commitment. It aims at a feeling of 'belonging' and psychological attachment with which the employee commits to (Hartmann & Bambacas, 2000). This can either be an organization, a project, a manager, a colleague, et cetera. In this study, the entity an employee feels committed to is the public sector he works in. The affective commitment plays an important role within the psyche of an employee. Meyer and Herscovitsch (1991: 66) argue that the attachment with the organization is often an important argument to stay, even when the labor market provides more attractive jobs.

The assumption is that workers who have a high motivation become more affectively committed to their job and organization. Previous research, conducted by Castaing (2006: 96) in the French public sector, confirm this assumption and concluded that '*affective commitment appears to be an important effect of PSM*'. This study offers deepening to this conclusion by not only linking PSM to affective commitment. It adds the degree of Public Service in a job to create PSM-fit and measures its effect on affective commitment on the sectoral level. Therefore, the third and fourth hypotheses are:

- H3: PSM is positively related to affective commitment.*
H4: PSM-fit is positively related to affective commitment.

2.6. Job satisfaction

According to Sunaryo and Suyono (2013: 387), job satisfaction refers to the general attitude of an individual towards his or her work. Mathis and Jackson (2001) describe job satisfaction as a positive emotional condition resulting from the evaluation of one's work experience comparing to their individual expectations. Again, it is the assumption that workers with a high public service motivation and a PSM-fit will become more satisfied with their job. In his study, Vandenaabeele (2009: 27) confirms that PSM and job satisfaction are positively linked in the Flemish civil service. Thus, Taylor & Westover (2010: 813) argue that workers are likely to be more satisfied if they believe that their job helps them to fulfill their PSM-motives. Based on this, the following hypotheses are applicable:

- H5: PSM is positively related to job satisfaction.*
H6: PSM-fit is positively related to job satisfaction.

2.7. Sectoral differences

An entire public sector performs a multitude of tasks that are needed in the everyday life of society: e.g. on the field of education, health care, policymaking, safety and social welfare. To perform all these tasks, multiple sub-sectors arise within one public sector which individually perform a subtask of the entire set of tasks of a public sector. To do this, every sector needs qualified employees who have affinity with and are educated for the specific task of the sector. Therefore, major differences exist between employees across these sectors when it comes to their interests, values, needs, educational levels, capabilities, et cetera. This may lead to differences in the existence and effects of PSM and its antecedents.

Which sectors are researched?

In this study, three sectors are distinguished who meet the following requirements: (I) they fulfill a unique task which is not comparable to other sectors, (II) they belong to the

largest employers in the Dutch public sector and (III) their employees have the formal status of civil servants (in contrast to e.g. employees of the healthcare sector). The three sectors that fulfill these requirements are: the public administration sector, the education sector and the safety sector.

Why are differences expected?

Differences in effects of PSM and PSM-fit between sectors are expected because of the major (natural) differences that exist when it comes to, for example, their goal and the context they operate in. When the public administration sector is considered, it can be said that its goal is to create governmental policies, while it operates in a context of multi-level government structures, politics, interest groups et cetera. It's the main goal of the education sector to educate society and increasing knowledge. This sector mainly operates in a context of students and teachers, transferring information, doing research, gaining knowledge, et cetera. The safety sector focuses on keeping the society safe, monitoring the law and maintaining order. Their context is the monitoring of safety threats, take action when necessary, take preventive measures, et cetera. There are also major differences in size, the flow of personnel, age structure, retirement, et cetera (Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, 2013). It is conceivable that all these differences effect the (degree of) PSM and PSM-fit of employees.

As the previous sections showed, earlier studies already confirmed the linkage between PSM and PSM-fit and the intention to leave, affective commitment and job satisfaction (e.g. Leisink and Steijn, 2009; Hoffman & Woehr: 2005) in the public sector. It is expected that this study will confirm this links for the three individual sectors. Further, this study investigates if the strength of these linkages are context-dependent for the Dutch public service. In other words: are the found relationships significantly stronger (or weaker) in one sector, compared to the other? Therefore, it is assumed that the described sectoral differences between the public administration, the education sector and the safety sector lead to different strengths of effects of PSM and PSM-fit. In this study, it is expected that these effects will be significantly stronger in the public administration, compared to the education and safety sector. This, because the public administration is primarily focused on creating policies to serve the public good, while the education and safety sector are primarily focusing on executing these policies. Therefore, the effects of PSM and PSM-fit are considered to be more important in the public administration and therefore stronger. This leads to the seventh and final hypothesis:

H7: The strength of the effects of PSM and PSM-fit on the intention to leave, affective commitment and job satisfaction are significantly stronger in the public administration sector in comparison to the education and safety sector.

2.8. Conceptual model

Based on this theoretical framework and the derived hypotheses, the following conceptual model is applicable. It will be tested for every individual sector. The results will be compared between sectors in order to find strength-differences between sectors.

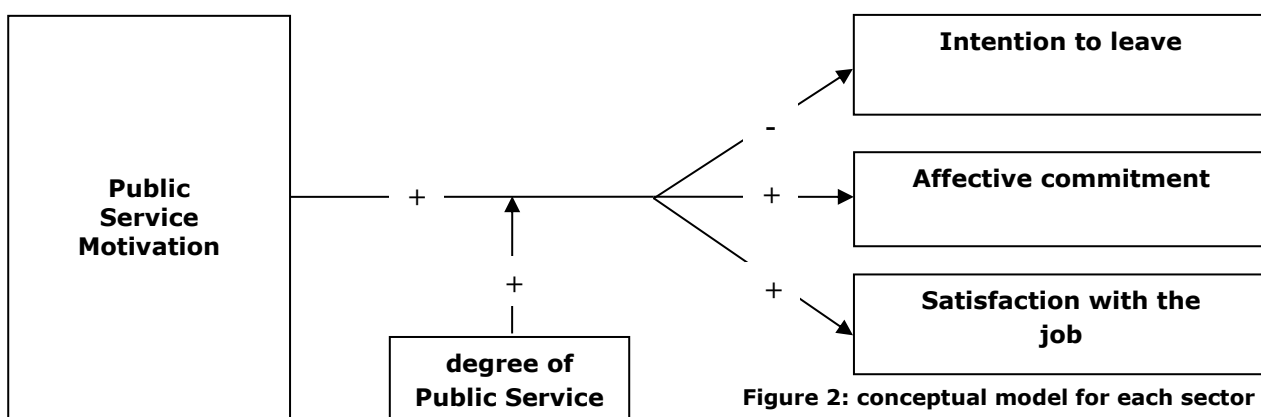


Figure 2: conceptual model for each sector

3. Methods

3.1. Sampling and response

For this study, analysis of secondary material is being used. The used dataset is the in 2012 conducted 'POMO' (in Dutch: *Personeels- en Mobiliteitsonderzoek*). POMO is a survey which is conducted every two years by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations of the Netherlands since 1999. The survey aims to provide insight in the labor market position of the government. Public servants from all governmental sectors are asked to answer questions about various aspects of their work. The questionnaire is constructed with the help of multiple Dutch scholars, and has in the past been used for scientific research (e.g. Leisink and Steijn, 2009). In 2012, a total of 22.446 Dutch public servants participated. A sample of 87.500 employees was drawn from a population of 864.931 employees. The response was 22.446, representing a response rate of 26%. The following sectors are divided, consisting of the presented sub-sectors.

Sector		Population	Sample	Response	% response
Public Administration	Sub-sector 1-5	293.866	31.172	8.989	29%
Sub-sector 1	National government	109.751	10.937	3.266	30%
Sub-sector 2	Provincial government	12.237	4.375	1.141	26%
Sub-sector 3	Local government	159.237	9.844	3.026	31%
Sub-sector 4	Judiciary	3.433	1.641	421	26%
Sub-sector 5	Water boards	9.312	4.375	1.135	26%
Education & science	Sub-sector 6-12	447.411	42.108	9.954	24%
Sub-sector 6	Primary education	164.351	9.843	2.531	26%
Sub-sector 7	Secondary education	92.235	8.749	2.497	29%
Sub-sector 8	High. Secon. Edu.	51.083	5.469	1.235	23%
Sub-sector 9	Higher education	35.961	5.469	1.188	22%
Sub-sector 10	Academic education	43.951	5.469	1.113	20%
Sub-sector 11	Research institutes	2.246	1.640	284	17%
Sub-sector 12	Medical research centers	57.584	5.469	1.106	20%
Safety sector	Sub-sector 13-14	123.654	14.220	3.503	25%
Sub-sector 13	Defense	64.076	7.656	1.903	25%
Sub-sector 14	Police	59.578	6.564	1.600	24%
Total		864.931	87.500	22.446	26%

Table 1: population, sampling and response

Table 1 shows that the public administration sector in the Netherlands consists of the national government, the provincial government, the local government, the judiciary and the water boards. The education sector consists of the primary education, secondary education, higher secondary education (*in Dutch: MBO*), higher education, academic education, research institutes and the medical research centers. The safety sector consists of the defense and the police.

3.2. Public Service Motivation

To measure the Public Service Motivation of public servants, a ten-item scale is used. These items are all measured on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5). The used items are based on a shortened version of the 24-item scale Perry (1996) created to measure PSM. The shortened version is created by Coursey and Pandey (2007), and has been slightly changed and used in previous research (e.g. Steijn & Leisink, 2009). The alpha of the scale used in this study is high: 0.739. One of the items is: *I think it's important to contribute to the public good.*. The measured items can be found in appendix 1. Literature shows that PSM can be divided in multiple categories. In line with the previous study by Steijn and Leisink and according to Coursey and Pandey (2007: 555), the ten measured items are divided in three sub dimensions. The first dimension is *attraction to policy and politics*. Items 1 and 2 belong to this category, with an alpha of 0.684. The second dimension is *commitment to public interest/civic duty*. Items 3 through 6 belong to this category, with an alpha of 0.727. The last dimension is *compassion*. Items 7 through 10 belong to this

category, with an alpha of 0.684. In this study, these sub-dimensions are not focused upon. Therefore, the entire PSM-scale will be used in the analysis.

3.3. Perceived degree of public service

This variable measures to what extent employees feel their work is useful for society. The perceived degree of public service (dPS) is being measured on a four-item scale, based on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5). *One of the items is: Through my work, I contribute to the public good.*' The scale has a high alpha: .770.

3.4. Interaction variable: PSM-fit

To measure PSM-fit, an interaction variable will be made build with PSM and dPS. The *direct assessment of subjective fit* is used: the perceived match between the person and environment which is reported by the person (French et al, 1994). For this study, the measurement of PSM and dPS meet this definition. As the theoretical framework points out, there are two types of PSM-fit: a fit with a low PSM and a low dPS and a fit with a high PSM and a high dPS. I chose to only research the effects of PSM-highfit, because this type of fit is theoretically seen the most logical to influence the dependent variables in an organization that serves the public good. Employees are considered to have a PSM-highfit when they score high (>4) on both PSM and dPS. This way of measuring PSM-highfit is in line with previous research by Steijn (2006).

3.5. Affective commitment, intention to leave and job satisfaction

As derived from the work of Allen & Meyer (1991), the concept of affective commitment is measured by using a five-item scale, based on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5). The Dutch translation of this scale is validated by de Gilder et al (1997). One of the items is: *'I feel like "a part of the family" in this organization'*. The reliability of the scale is high, with an alpha of .847. The intention to leave was measured by asking the question: *'Are you currently looking for another job?'*. There were two answers possible: yes (0) and no (1). To measure the job satisfaction of employees, one question was added to the questionnaire: *'How satisfied are you with your job?'*. This question was measured on a five-point Likert-scale, ranging from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied).

3.6. Control variables: gender, age, supervisory position and education level

To create a broadened view of the effects of PSM, a number of control variables are added to the analysis. These variables are gender, age, supervisory position and educational level. Gender is measured on a dummy scale (1=man). Age is measured on a linear scale, ranging from 17 to 70. The supervisory position is measured in terms of leadership. Here, also a dummy scale was added where no supervisory position was designated with a '0' and a supervisory position was designated with a '1'. The last control variable that is used in the analysis is the education level of respondents. This variable is measured with a list of ten types of education. For this study, these ten types have been clustered into four categories which are based on the level of education. The lowest category can be seen as basic education. 10,5% of the respondents belong to this category. The second category, secondary education, houses 23,4% of the respondents. The third category, higher education, consists of 38,5% of the respondents. The remaining 27,6% of the respondents belong the fourth category: academic education. In the analysis, this variable will be included by creating three dummy variables with the basic education category as the reference category.

4. Results

This section presents the results of this study. First, the descriptives will be outlined. Second, the regression results will be discussed, based on the first six hypotheses. This results will be mutually compared by testing the seventh hypothesis concerning sectoral differences. Finally, an explanation will be given for the found sectoral differences.

4.1. Descriptives

The descriptives and correlations of the used variables in this study are presented in table 2. The figures show that the average age of the respondents is 48,50 years. Of the respondents, 54,5% is a man and 45,5% a woman. Their affective commitment has a general mean of 3.25 and the statistics show a high mean of total PSM in the Dutch public sector: 3.68. The perceived degree of Public Service scores a lower mean, which is still high: 3.39. As the correlations show, this variable is positively linked to PSM. employees of the Dutch public sector have a general satisfaction with the job of 3.88 and their intention to leave is low with a mean of .22.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for the variables in the study

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Age	48,50	10,471	1											
2. Supervisory position	,105	,307	,014*	1										
3. Gender	,545	,498	,145**	,158**	1									
4. Secondary education	,234	,427	-,040**	-,030**	,052**	1								
5. Higher education	,345	,475	,007	-,072**	-,087**	-,407**	1							
6. Academic education	,284	,452	-,076**	,112**	,000	-,354**	-,458**	1						
7. Intention to leave	,223	,418	-,174**	,024**	,004	-,005	-,023**	,071**	1					
8. Affective commitment	3,25	,751	,031**	,075**	,025**	-,018**	,010	-,010	-,160**	1				
9. Satisfaction with the job	3,88	,975	,034**	,017*	-,039**	-,020**	-,010	,022**	-,256**	,266	1			
10. Public Service Motivation (PSM)	3,68	,454	,130**	,014*	-,014*	-,095**	,037**	,098**	,000	,228**	,073**	1		
11. Degree of PSM in organization (dPS)	3,39	,835	,004	,049**	,074**	-,101**	,061**	,097**	,000	,253**	,094**	,299**	1	
12. PSM-highfit	18,18	1,944	,046**	,075**	,059**	-,074**	,006	,093**	,008	,202**	,074**	,470**	,568**	1

**p<0.01

*p<0.05

4.2. Regression results

The results of the regression analysis are presented in table 3. A wide variety in effects of PSM and PSM-fit in the sectors is found. First, hypotheses one through six will be tested and discussed for each separate sector. The next section tests and discusses hypothesis seven, and makes clear whether the strength of the effects of PSM and PSM-fit are context-dependent. For the readability, only significant effects are discussed. In appendix 2, the interaction figures of the found significant effects of PSM-fit are presented and explained.

The effects on the intention to leave – discussing and testing hypotheses 1 and 2

The figures that are presented in table 3 answer multiple questions that can be derived from the theoretical framework and hypotheses. For example: do people have less intention to leave when they have a high PSM? Table 3 shows that the answer to this question can be answered with 'yes' for the public administration sector (beta: -.029) and with 'no' in the other sectors. Here, no significant effects are found. As a result, the first hypothesis is only partly accepted. The second question that can be asked is: do employees become significantly less intended to leave the organization when they have a PSM-highfit? The answer is 'no' for all sectors. Hypothesis two is therefore rejected as well. Although it's not included as hypotheses, it is found that the educational level of employees is a strong predictor of the intention to leave in all sectors. The figures show that when people become higher educated, they become more intended to leave. This can be explained by the assumption that higher educated people have more options on the labor market, and therefore more often have the opportunity to get another job. As a result, they become less committed to their current organization. Age also confirms to be

a strong predictor: when employees become older, they have less intention to leave in all sectors within a range of -.211 to -.165 (beta's).

Table 3: Regression. The effects on the intention to leave, affective commitment and job satisfaction

	Intention to leave			Affective commitment			Job satisfaction		
	Public Admin	Edu & Science	Safety	Public Admin	Edu & Science	Safety	Public Admin	Edu & Science	Safety
Constant	,287**	,215**	,336**	3,172**	3,315**	3,326**	3,915**	3,900**	3,820**
Supervisory position	,031**			,066**	,023*	,155**	,023*	,033**	
Gender	-,008**	,032**				,042**	-,044**	-,039**	-,044**
Age	-,171**	-,165**	-,211**					,102**	
Education									
- Secondary		,033**							-,039**
- Higher	,078**		,069**	-,068**	-,112**	-,086**	-,038**	-,066**	
- Academic	,109**	,096**		-,091**	-,142**			-,073**	
PSM	-,029**			,188**	,142**	,214**	,038**	,039**	,071**
dPS	-,041**			,200**	,213**	,232**	,110**	,052**	,136**
PSM-highfit				,027**			,024*		
R ²	,046	,034	,049	,105	,085	,162	,019	,008	,059
Durbin-Watson	1,920	1,918	1,935	2,023	1,930	1,931	1,953	1,942	1,962

**p<0.01

*p<0.05

Note: only significant results are presented

The effects on affective commitment – discussing and testing hypotheses 3 and 4

Another question that, based on hypothesis three, can be asked is: do people become more affectively committed when they have a high PSM? Table 3 shows that the answer is 'yes' for all sectors, with beta's ranging from .142 to .214. Hypothesis three will therefore be accepted for all sectors. It is also found that employees of the public administration sector (beta: .027) become more affectively committed when they have a PSM-highfit. This relation is not found in the other sectors. The fourth hypothesis will therefore only be accepted for the public administration sector, and rejected for the remaining two sectors. The figures also show that having a supervisory position leads to more affective commitment in every sector. This effect tends to be the strongest in the safety sector in comparison to the other sectors (beta: .155). An explanation for this might be that the hierarchical structure of this sector is far more important and developed than in the other sectors. Finally, employees who work in the public administration and the education sector become less affectively committed when they are higher educated. This can, again, be explained by acknowledging that higher educated people have more opportunities on the labor market and therefore become less committed to the job they do.

The effects on job satisfaction – discussing and testing hypotheses 5 and 6

Yet another question that can be asked is: do people become more satisfied with their job when they have a high PSM? The answer is 'yes' in all sectors; hypothesis five will hence be accepted. When the effects of PSM-highfit are considered, it can be said that employees of the public administration who have this type of fit become more satisfied with their job (beta: .024). Hypothesis six will therefore, again, be accepted for the public administration sector and rejected for the education sector and safety sector. It has also been found that women are more satisfied with their job in every sector. Or reversed: man tend to be less satisfied. Finally, employees who have a supervisory position have more job satisfaction in both the public administration and the education

sector, while the level of education also seems to be an important (negative) predictor of job satisfaction in all sectors. Table 5 gives an overview of the first six hypothesis:

	Public administration	Education sector	Safety sector
Hypothesis 1	A	R	R
Hypothesis 2	R	R	R
Hypothesis 3	A	A	A
Hypothesis 4	A	R	R
Hypothesis 5	A	A	A
Hypothesis 6	A	R	R

Table 4: testing hypotheses 1 through 6
A: accepted / R: rejected

4.3. Sectoral differences

Table 3 and 4 show variety in effects of PSM and PSM-fit. Still, the question remains whether the variety of the found significant effects (see table 3) are significantly dissimilar and, more important, if these effects are stronger in the public administration sector than in the education and safety sector. The seventh and final hypothesis will test this, based on the confidence intervals (95%-level). It may be concluded that sectors differ from each other when these intervals have no overlap. Table 5 presents the results.

Table 5: Confidence intervals (95%): statistical differences between sectors

	Intention to leave						Affective commitment						Job satisfaction					
	Public Admin		Edu & Science		Safety		Public Admin		Edu & Science		Safety		Public Admin		Edu & Science		Safety	
	L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U	L	U
PSM	,003	,022	-,003	,013	-,010	,038	,128	,158	,097	,118	,136	,185	,015	,056	,018	,059	,035	,103
dPS (int. var).	-,027	-,008	-,007	,008	-,050	,001	,109	,149	,146	,177	,149	,197	,084	,126	,030	,071	,097	,163
PSM-highfit	-,010	,007	-,013	,002	-,026	,013	,005	,032	-,004	,023	-,033	-,012	,003	,039	-,014	,022	-,017	,046

The seventh hypothesis will, based on table 5, partly be accepted: the effects of PSM and PSM-fit are in a few cases stronger in the public administration than in the education and safety sector. All the found differences will, for the sake of completeness, be discussed in the following paragraph.

To start with the effect of PSM on the intention to leave, no confidence intervals overlap between sectors. This implicates no significant differences between the sectors. The same counts for PSM-highfit. This makes it remarkable that the direct effect of dPS (which in this study acts as an interaction variable) is significantly stronger in the public administration sector (interval: -.027 /-.008) compared to the education sector (interval: -.007- / .008). A possible explanation for this might be that employees of the public administration sector generally have more possibilities in their sector (because of the size and the large variation in jobs) to find a job which contains a high dPS and therefore become less intended to leave, while employees of the education sector have less opportunities. On the field of affective commitment, more interesting results are found. First of all, the effect of PSM on affective commitment is stronger for employees of the public administration and the safety sector than for employees of the education sector. This might be caused by differences in the nature of the jobs: employees of the public administration and the safety sector have a job that is focused on 'serving' society, while the education sector has a stronger focus on educating society, which is a more executive/educating task. Second, employees of the public administration with a PSM-highfit experience a stronger positive effect on affective commitment in comparison to employees with a PSM-highfit in the safety sector. Finally, the figures in table 4 show

that there are no significant differences in the effect of PSM and PSM-highfit on the job satisfaction of employees. Again, there are significant differences in effects of dPS: the effect is stronger for employees of the public administration and the safety sector than for employees of the education sector. An explanation for this can also be found in the nature of the sectors: the more serving task of the public administration and the safety sector against the educating task of the education sector (as pointed out before).

5. Conclusions

Based on the results and the discussion in previous section, the final conclusions of this study are as follows. The first conclusion is that the effect of PSM on employees' affective commitment and job satisfaction is of significant positive importance in all three sectors, while the effects of PSM on the intention to leave can't generally be confirmed. The second conclusion is that PSM-highfit only seems to have significant importance in the public administration on the field of affective commitment and job satisfaction. The third conclusion refers to context-dependency. Generally considered, it appears that the effects of PSM (and to lesser extend PSM-fit) tend to be, in comparison, the most strong in the public administration sector, while the effects are the least strong in the education sector. The fourth and final conclusion is that the effect of PSM on affective commitment is the most context-dependent: this effect is significantly stronger in the public administration and safety sector, compared to the education sector. Also, the effect of PSM-highfit on affective commitment is stronger in the public administration sector compared to the safety sector.

This conclusions can conceivably be explained by the different contexts in which the sectors act, perform their task and reach their goals. Moreover, this can be explained by the fact that the public administration is primarily focused on creating policies to service the public good, while the education and safety sector are primarily focusing on executing these policies. The results of this study therefore confirm that the context-dependency of PSM is of significant importance, in particular on the field of affective commitment.

Answer to the central question

The central question of this study was:

"Which differences in effects of Public Service Motivation and PSM-fit on the intention to leave, affective commitment and satisfaction of employees exist on the sector level of the Dutch public service?"

The answer to this question is that differences exist between the three major parts of the Dutch public sector: the public administration, the education sector and the safety sector. First of all, the effects of PSM on the affective commitment of employees is weaker in the education sector, compared to both the public administration and the safety sector. Second, PSM-highfit has a stronger effect on affective commitment in the public administration than in the safety sector. dPS (which was not considered to be a main effect) has a stronger effect on the employees' intention to leave in the public administration, compared to the education sector while the effects on affective commitment is stronger in the safety sector than in the public administration. When it comes to the effect of dPS on job satisfaction, it can be said that its effect is weaker in the education sector, compared to both the public administration and the safety sector. Table 6 gives a final overview of the differences between sectors of PSM and PSM-fit.

Relationship	Direction of the strength difference
PSM on affective commitment	Public administration > Education sector
PSM on affective commitment	Safety sector > Education sector
PSM-highfit on affective commitment	Public administration > Safety sector

Table 6: Sectoral differences
> : stronger effect than ...

The importance of sectoral differences

This study has shown the existence of differences between public sectors in the strength of the effects of mainly PSM, (dPS) and to lesser extent PSM-fit on the intention to leave, affective commitment and job satisfaction of their employees. The question that rises is: why is this important to know and what do we do with this information? It is important to know because this information can be used to create a tailor made policy system for every sector in the field of reorganizing and hiring new employees: nowadays a very important issue where public managers have to cope with in the light of budget cuts and creating high-performing teams of employees. An example is that if the public administration seeks employees who feel more affectively committed, they should focus on attracting employees with a high PSM-fit. Doing this in other sectors will have less effect or even be useless since no significant effects were found here. More examples are thinkable. By creating such policies, each sector can implement a tailor made matching system in the field of reorganizing and hiring new people that will lead to, for example, less intention to leave or more job satisfaction. This could, eventually, lead to higher performance as the next section will point out.

Implications for practitioners

This study provides valuable information for public managers from different sectors. They cope with numerous challenges nowadays, for example as a result of current budget cuts. One of the results of these cuts is that the same amount of work has to be done with less employees. For example, 15.000 jobs will disappear in the Dutch public sector till 2018 (Rijksoverheid, 2013). This asks high performance and effectiveness from the employees who manage to keep their job. Public managers from different sectors (of course, only in the sectors where significant relationships were found) could create a tailor made policy system in the field of hiring new people or during reorganizations. The previous section showed a few practical examples of possible implications.

Previous research has shown that employees who are more satisfied, perform better (e.g. Judge et al, 2001). Other research (e.g. Meyer et al, 1989) show that employees who are more affectively committed to their organization, also perform better. And, when human resources become more important in times of budget cuts, it can be beneficial for an organization if they (after any reorganizations) can reduce their employees' intention to leave. Viewed from this perspective, the proposed system will help public managers to create a situation where employees might have less intention to leave, feel more affectively committed to their organization and/or find themselves more satisfied with both their job and organization. This can, ultimately, have a beneficial influence on the organizational performance in times where outstanding performance is needed.

Limitations

Like every study, this study has a few limitations. Here, four will be discussed. The first limitation is the use of cross-sectional data. The found causalities would be more reliable if longitudinal research was conducted. A proposal to solve this limitation will be presented in the next section. The second limitation is that there were no possibilities to include more items in the questionnaire to measure some of the variables. Even though the items were still scientifically verified and had high alphas, the conclusions would have been more supported when a larger questionnaire was added. The third limitation of this study is that in some cases, the R^2 is very low. For example for the intention to leave. Here, there are numerous other factors that have influence on this variable. PSM, dPS and PSM-fit are one of the many explanatory variables. The fourth limitation refers to the measurement of PSM-fit. In this study, an interaction-dummy was created but it's questionable if this is the best way to measure PSM-fit. Another option could be the use of a validated scale which can be added in a questionnaire, instead of the interaction effect that is used in this study.

Proposals for future research

In the future, more research can be conducted. My first suggestion would be a longitudinal research on this field and conceptual model. By doing this, the found causalities will be more reliable and developments on this field can be exposed as well. My second proposal is an international comparative research on the sector level. For example within Europe, or in comparison with the United States or even Asian countries, where a whole other system of public administration is applicable. The results of this study can contribute to the debate where PSM has the strongest effect on different variables which are important in every day (working) life. Another future research suggestion is an even deeper study within the Dutch public sector. An example is to research one particular sector, like the national government, to make even more clear which effects PSM, dPS and PSM-fit have. This will help public managers from different departments in the same sector, even more than this study does, to create a matching system (like proposed in this study) which will support them in finding capable and high performing human resources. The third, and last, future research suggestion is a broadened study to the effects of PSM, dPS and PSM-fit on other variables. This might also give a better picture of the importance of, for example, PSM-fit. Examples of other variables are employee promoter score, employee engagement, employee vitality, et cetera.

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Appendix 1: Used items

Public Service Motivation

No.	item
1	'Politics' is a dirty word in my eyes (reversed)
2	I have little interest in the doings of politicians (reversed)
3	I unselfishly contribute to my community
4	I think it's important to contribute to the public good
5	I think it's more important to contribute to society than to have personal success
6	To serve the general interest is an important incentive in my daily life
7	It touches me when I see people in big problems
8	I am not solicitous about the wellbeing of people I don't personally know (reversed)
9	The wellbeing of citizens is very important to me
10	If we don't show more solidarity, our society is doomed to fall apart

Chronbach's alpha:
.739

Perceived degree of Public Service

No.	Item
1	Through my job, I contribute to the development and implementation of public policy
2	Through my job, I contribute to the public good
3	Through my job, I contribute to solving other people's problems
4	Through my job, I contribute to the creation of greater solidarity in our society

Chronbach's alpha:
.770

Affective commitment

No.	Item
1	I experience problems of this organization as my own
2	I feel emotional attached to this organization
3	This organization means a lot to me
4	I feel at home in this organization
5	I feel like 'a part of the family' in this organization

Chronbach's alpha:
.847

Intention to leave – public and private

No.	Item
1	Are you currently looking for another job?

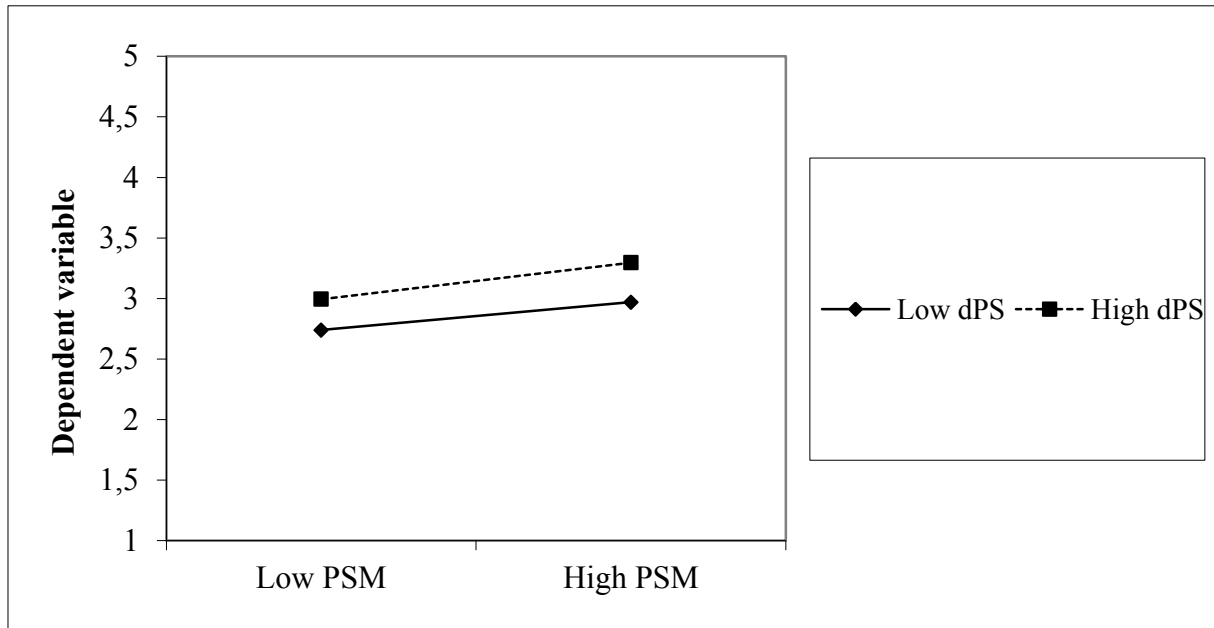
Chronbach's alpha:
n.a.

Satisfaction – job and organization

No.	Item
1	How satisfied are you with your job?

Chronbach's alpha:
n.a.

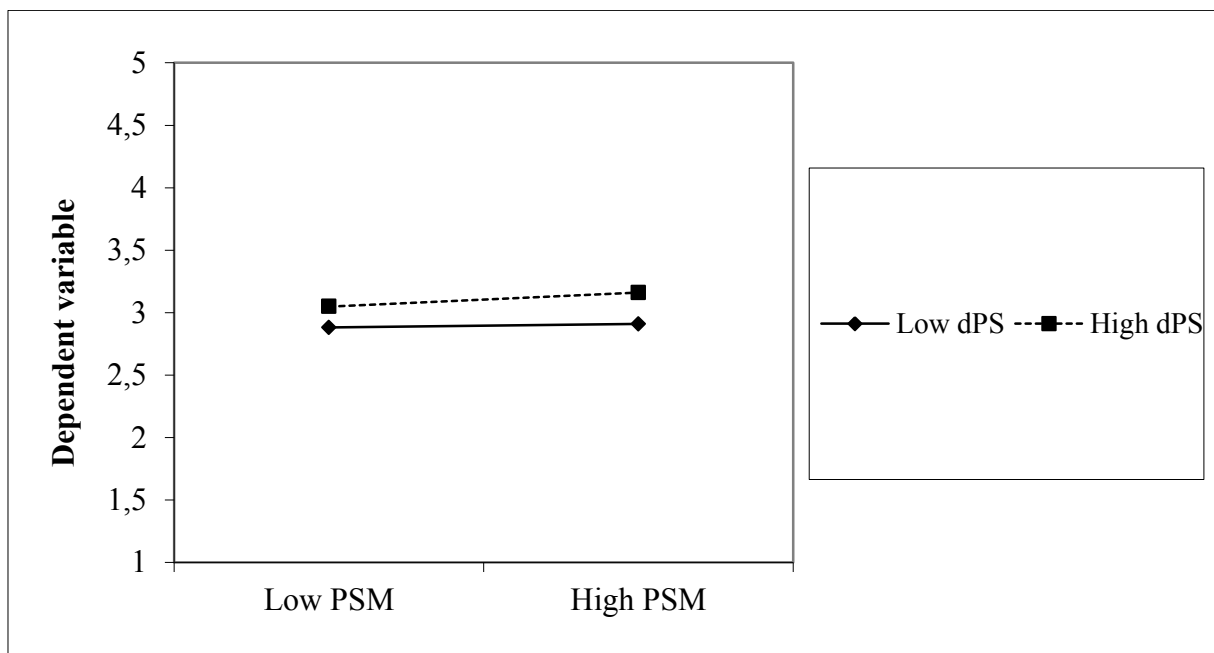
Appendix 2: Interaction figures



Dependent variable: Affective commitment

Sector: Public administration

Explanation: employees with a high PSM and a high dPS have more affective commitment, compared to when an employee would have a low PSM.



Dependent variable: Job satisfaction

Sector: Public administration

Explanation: employees with a PSM and a high dPS have more job satisfaction, compared to when an employee would have a low PSM.

Appendix 3: Data & analysis

This appendix provides some more background about the used data and conducted analysis. To start with the data, it can be said that the POMO2012-dataset is a large dataset which gives the opportunity to research many subjects. It includes, for examples, questions about integrity, salaries, ethnicity, satisfaction, working conditions, PSM, commitment, intention to leave, welfare, employability, push- and pullfactors, and so on. With an N of 22.446 and a good response rate, this dataset also makes it possible for researchers to say something about the population of which this dataset is drawn. For these exact numbers, see the Methods-section of this study. When it comes to the analysis, I originally didn't chose to use this dataset. In the first place, I wanted to research the change willingness of employees of the provinces Noord-Holland, Utrecht and Flevoland in the context of the unifying process that is currently taking place. Unfortunately, all my four proposals to research this were declined by the ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations because of political sensitivity and secrecy. After the fourth decline, I started looking for another subject, and the ministry eventually gave me this dataset. With this data in hands, it took a while before I chose to write about this final subject and final conceptual model, because so many options were available. Eventually, there were a few research options between which I had to chose. These were:

1. the effect of PSM on affective commitment and, subsequently, the effect of affective commitment on the intention to leave and job satisfaction;
2. the effect of PSM on affective commitment, job satisfaction and the intention to leave between fourteen governmental sectors;
3. the effect of budget cuts on employability and commitment and;
4. the effect of PSM and PSM-fit on integrity.

In first place, I chose for the second option: researching the effect of PSM and PSM-fit on the intention to leave, affective commitment and job satisfaction, compared between 14 governmental sectors. After executing over 40 regression-analysis for several times, this was the subject of my first concept-version as well. Mainly based on the feedback I received from dr. Lars Tummers and prof. dr. Bram Steijn on this concept-version, I chose to research the effects of PSM and PSM-fit on the intention to leave, affective commitment and job satisfaction in three large governmental sectors and mutually compare them, because this would theoretically seen make more sense. Eventually, this created this final version of my thesis.

It's safe to say that I learned a lot of writing this quantitative study: I had never done anything like this before and I never wrote an article in English before as well. For me, this was a double challenge. For example when it comes to analyze techniques, I recoded variables, tested my scales for reliability and factors, standardized variables, created an interaction variable, created dummy's, tested conditions for and executed lot's of regressions, interpreted the results, et cetera. These techniques were the basis for my description of the results, analysis and conclusions.