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ABSTRACT
This study assesses the relationship between prosocial motivation and commitment to change among youth care professionals. We draw on person–environment fit theory to propose that this relationship is conditional on employees' perceived meaningfulness of the change for society and clients. Our results confirm the expected positive relationship between prosocial motivation and commitment to change. Our analysis suggests that the moderating relationship between prosocial motivation, client meaningfulness and commitment to change should be understood as a substitutive relationship: both prosocial motivation and client meaningfulness are sufficient conditions, but the presence of both is not a necessary condition for commitment to change.

Introduction

The need to adopt innovations and new policies, implement administrative reforms and respond to economic downturns requires public organizations to be able to implement organizational change. Organizational change is thus a prominent issue in the public management literature (Fernandez and Rainey 2006; Isett et al. 2013; By and Macleod 2009). It is typically argued that the support of employees is a key factor in the implementation of change in public sector organizations (Herold et al. 2008; Wright, Christensen, and Isett 2013; Van der Voet 2014). Recent studies have highlighted how the particular context of public organizations may affect the implementation of organizational change (Kuipers et al. 2014; Kickert 2014; Van der Voet, Kuipers, and Groeneveld 2015; Fernandez and Rainey 2006). One of the things that arguably distinguishes the public from the private sector concerns the work attitudes, values and motivations of employees (Rainey 2014). Public sector employees are believed not only to respond to general extrinsic and intrinsic work motivations (Latham 2007) but also to 'other-regarding' motivational dispositions such as public service motivation (PSM) (Perry and Wise 1990; Perry and Hondeghem 2008) and prosocial motivation (Grant 2008a).

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Prosocial motivation can be seen as a motivational force that drives effort based on meaning and purpose. Grant (2008b, 49) defines prosocial motivation as 'the desire to expend effort to benefit other people'. This makes prosocial motivation distinct from intrinsic motivation, which is based on personal pleasure and enjoyment, as well as extrinsic motivation, which is based on (anticipated) rewards and incentives. The idea that such prosocial motivational dispositions are especially present in public sector workers is reflected not only in the literature on prosocial motivation but also within research into related concepts such as altruism, self-sacrifice and PSM. PSM can be seen as a particular form of prosocial motivation 'that is animated by specific dispositions and values arising from public institutions and missions' (Perry, Hondeghem, and Wise 2010, 682).

Several studies have concentrated on the role of the motivational bases of public sector employees during organizational change (Wright, Christensen, and Isett 2013; Naff and Crum 1999). These studies suggest that because of their desire to contribute to society and help others, prosocially motivated employees are generally expected to support organizational change initiatives. In order to assess employee support for organizational change, we use the concept of commitment to change: 'a desire to provide support for the change based on a belief in its inherent benefits' (Herscovitch and Meyer 2002, 475). The main contribution of our study is that we draw on person–environment fit theory to propose that the relationship between prosocial motivation and commitment to change is conditional on employees' perceived meaningfulness of the change. We distinguish between societal and client meaningfulness (Tummers 2013). Societal meaningfulness refers to the perceptions of professionals concerning the value of the policy to socially relevant goals and client meaningfulness refers to professionals' perceptions that the policy adds value for their clients (Tummers 2013, 11). Our expectations are tested with quantitative methods and techniques in a sample of youth care professionals involved in a nationwide reform in the Netherlands. Our central research question is: *To what extent is the relationship between prosocial motivation and commitment to change moderated by youth care professionals' perceived meaningfulness of change?*

Next to a direct positive relationship between prosocial motivation and commitment to change, we argue that change that is perceived to be meaningful for society and clients will be especially appealing for individuals with a high degree of prosocial motivation. Based on person–environment fit theory (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson 2005), we assess a person–change fit by assessing to what extent the organizational change is perceived to be meaningful. Based on this framework, we expect that meaningful change thus facilitates prosocial motivation as a driver of commitment to change. However, many contemporary changes in the public sector are about cost-cutting rather than improving service delivery, and such organizational changes will often conflict with the norms, values and motivations of public sector employees (Kiefer et al. 2014). While change management theory argues that employees will typically ask 'What's in it for me?' during organizational change, we argue that prosocially motivated employees will ask 'What's in it for others?'.

The structure of this article is as follows. The next section discusses prior research on prosocial motivation and organizational change in the public sector and introduces our hypotheses based on person–environment fit theory. Afterwards, we elaborate on the selected case of youth care reform in the Netherlands, our methods and procedures, the sample that responded to our survey and the measures that were used. Results are then presented, and the conclusions and limitations and implications of this study are discussed.

Theory

In organizational change research, employee commitment to change is generally assumed to be crucial for the success of planned organizational change (Herold et al. 2008; Wanberg and Banas 2000). Researchers often focus on affective commitment to change (Oreg and Berson 2011), as it is argued to be the most important antecedent of change-related behaviour (Rafferty and Restubog 2010). Research on change management has identified many factors that shape commitment to change of employees. Typical change management interventions are communication, participation and creating efficacy (Wanberg and Banas 2000; Holt et al. 2007; Van Dam, Oreg, and Schyns 2008; Bordia et al. 2004).

A large number of recent studies in the public management literature have been concerned with the implementation of organizational change in public sector organizations (see Kuipers et al. 2014 for a review). One of the things that distinguishes the public from the private sector concerns the presence of prosocial work motivations of employees. Although the differences between the public and private sector are becoming increasingly blurred (Rainey 2014), prosocial motivations are believed to be more prevalent in the public sector (Perry, Hondeghem, and Wise 2010) because of processes of selection and socialization (Wright and Grant 2010).

Several concepts have been used to describe these differences between public and private sector workers. In the public management literature, the concept of PSM is commonly used to highlight the distinct motivational bases of public sector workers, but there has also been attention for related concepts such as prosocial motivation and altruism (Perry, Hondeghem, and Wise 2010). While many definitions of PSM explicitly refer to the specific context, institutions or missions that are inherent to the public sector, prosocial motivation is generally positioned as a more general motivation to 'benefit others' (Grant 2008b, 149) or 'consider the needs of others' (Piliavin and Charng 1990, 30). Several authors use the PSM and prosocial motivation concepts interchangeably (Moynihan, Deleire, and Enami 2015; Wright and Grant 2010), or call for conceptual integration of both fields of research (Moynihan, Vandenabeele, and Blom-Hansen 2013). In addition, Wright, Christensen, and Pandey (2013) report that an often used measurement instrument for PSM is empirically indistinguishable from prosocial motivation. Nevertheless, a distinction can be made regarding the recipient of public service and prosocially motivated behaviours. According to Gould-Williams (2015), definitions of PSM emphasize a contribution to a group such as the nation, the state, society or the community. Prosocial motivation, in contrast, is conceptualized in a more open way, as it is a motivation to benefit others regardless of membership or collective needs of a group. This resonates with other reflections on the PSM concept that have criticized its conceptual foundations (Bozeman and Su 2014; Prebble 2016). To these criticisms, we add the paradoxical observation that PSM's emphasis on policy and politics – especially the dimension *attraction to policy making* – may decrease rather than increase its applicability and validity in a public sector context. Many public sector workers, most notably those professionals who execute policy, frequently report being *alienated* rather than motivated by policy (Tummers 2013). Some of the dimensions of the multidimensional PSM construct may therefore not be applicable to all types of public sector jobs. For this reason, we focus on prosocial motivation as an overarching concept of the motivation of professionals who execute public policy. Given the conceptual

similarities between the concepts of prosocial motivation and PSM (Moynihan, Deleire, and Enami 2015; Wright and Grant 2010), we will nevertheless draw on both lines of research in order to theorize the relationships between prosocial motivation and commitment to change.

There are no studies that have investigated the relationship between prosocial motivation and change in the public sector. However, several studies have assessed to what extent PSM affects public sector employees' reactions to change. For example, Naff and Crum (1999) are among the first authors to study the relationship between PSM and attitudes toward organizational change. They conducted a study of the relationship between civil servants' PSM and their perceptions of President Clinton's National Performance Review (NPR), a reform aimed at cutting red tape, empowering employees and increasing responsiveness to citizens. The authors conclude that PSM is positively related to the perception that the NPR had a positive impact on improving public service delivery. Likewise, Cerase and Farinella (2009) show that a positive perception of changes in the working situation of employees in the Italian Revenue Agency is positively related to PSM. Based on a study on the Swiss national administration, Ritz and Fernandez (2011) show that PSM is negatively related to resistance to change. Most recently, in a study of an austerity-related organizational change in a US local government organization, Wright, Christensen, and Isett (2013) find that civil servants with a high self-sacrifice – one of the dimensions of the PSM concept – are more committed to the change. Although these studies apply slightly different concepts, they provide theoretical support, as well as some empirical evidence, for the position that prosocial motivation is positively related to employee support for organizational change. This view is also present in the seminal article on PSM by Perry and Wise (1990, 371), who state that public service-motivated employees are likely to be committed to the organization, and in turn more likely 'to engage in spontaneous, innovative behaviors on behalf of the organization' and to 'facilitate an organization's adjustment to contingencies'. We therefore propose the following hypothesis:

H1: Prosocial motivation is positively related to commitment to change.

What is striking about prior research concerning the relationship between prosocial motivation and organizational change, is that prosocial motivation or PSM is conceptualized as a factor that invariably stimulates public sector employees to support organizational change. However, in our view, it is likely that the reported positive relationships between prosocial motivation and commitment to change are dependent on the content of organizational changes that have been studied. All studies that confirm a positive relationship with support for change are based on an organizational change or reform that is intended to improve public service delivery, cut red tape, make government more efficient or otherwise improve performance (e.g. Naff and Crum 1999; Cerase and Farinella 2009; Ritz and Fernandez 2011). However, many contemporary organizational changes in the public sector are more concerned with cutting costs than improving service delivery (e.g. Kiefer et al. 2014). There thus seems to be a bias in the types of organizational changes that have been studied. Indeed, the one study that fails to find a positive relationship between PSM and support for change is focused on austerity-related changes (Wright, Christensen, and Isett 2013). Wright et al. only found a statistically significant relationship between

self-sacrifice and commitment to change, leading the authors to conclude that self-sacrifice may cause employees to 'be less likely to resist changes that might disadvantage them personally' (Wright, Christensen, and Isett 2013, 738).

This suggests that there will be no linear, positive relationship between prosocial motivation and support for organizational change, but that this relationship is dependent on what the change is about. This idea is also consistent with other fields of study. For example, Tummers (2013) shows that public sector employees may oppose new policies due to the standards and values related to their profession. In research on organizational change, such mechanisms have been conceptualized as normative matching (Brunsson and Olsen 1993), sense-making (Weick 1995) or cognitive dissonance (Burnes 2014). Such approaches argue that support for change is not only dependent on *how* the change is implemented – the *process* of change – or the personal characteristics of change recipients but also to what extent the *content* of change 'fits' with the norms, values or motivations of change recipients.

This idea of 'fit' or 'congruence' has been present in the management literature for the past century and is commonly referred to as person–environment fit (Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson 2005, 281). A fit can be described as 'the compatibility between an individual and work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well matched'. Empirical research has shown that a high degree of fit can result in increased organizational commitment, job satisfaction and ultimately performance (Hoffman and Woehr 2006; Steijn 2008; Taylor 2008). Research has mostly concentrated on person–job fit, person–organization fit and person–supervisor fit. Organizational change can also be seen as an important aspect of an individual's work environment, resulting in the conceptualization of a 'person–change fit' (Chung, Du, and Choi 2014). In applying person–environment fit theory to prosocial motivation, an individual's prosocial motivation is thus conceptualized as a need that must be satisfied by the work environment (Steijn 2008), in this case, organizational change. When organizational changes are designed or intended to improve public service delivery, the organizational change provides individuals with a means to satisfy their 'need' for prosocial motivation. Inversely, when an organizational change aims to cut costs rather than improve public service delivery, the change reduces an individual's potential to satisfy their prosocial desires through their work.

Rather than seeing prosocial motivation as a concept that invariably stimulates public sector employees to support organizational change, we thus argue that this relationship is dependent on the degree of fit between an individual's prosocial motivation and the content of the organizational change initiative. We conceptualize this fit as the degree in which the organizational change is seen as meaningful by public sector workers. Tummers (2013) concludes that meaningfulness is a strong antecedent of professionals' support for change. '[F]or public professionals, it is more important to see the logic of a new policy than to have the feeling of being able to influence its shaping' (Tummers 2013, 46). Based on the central role of perceived meaningfulness in professionals' reaction to change, we use client and societal meaningfulness for the conceptualization of person–change fit. An organizational change is meaningful for society when employees perceive added value of the change to socially relevant goals. Client meaningfulness refers to the added value of the organizational change for their own clients. We propose the following two hypotheses:

H2: *The higher the degree of perceived societal meaningfulness, the more positively prosocial motivation will be related to commitment to change.*

H3: *The higher the degree of perceived client meaningfulness, the more positively prosocial motivation will be related to commitment to change.*

Methods

Case selection

A currently ongoing child welfare reform in the Netherlands is selected as a case for the purposes of this study. Youth care professionals are likely to be characterized by a relatively high degree of prosocial motivation. The child welfare literature argues that 'human caring' is seen as a very important predictor of employee behaviour in this sector (Ellett 2009). The reform includes three major reforms within the social domain presented as the three Ds (three decentralizations) (Dijkhoff 2014). One of this three Ds is commonly referred to as the 'decentralization' of youth care. In this reform, responsibility for youth care is decentralized from the national level to the municipal level (Decentralisatie van overheidstaken naar gemeenten, 2015). However, it also involves a substantial budget cut (Samenhang 3 decentralisaties, 2015). It is an appropriate case for the purposes of our study, because the reform's objectives are numerous. Some objectives could be perceived by youth care professionals as meaningful for society and clients. For example, the reform aims to decentralize youth care in order to more closely connect professionals with their clients, to make different aspects of youth care (general upbringing, safety, education, work and income, etc.) more integrated and to better connect the actors that are involved (such as teachers, healthcare specialists and physicians). The reform aims to accomplish this by setting up so-called multidisciplinary neighbourhood teams in which all actors are represented. The reform simultaneously has several aspects that could be perceived as meaningless by youth care professionals. For example, while the reform aims to bring professionals closer to their clients, it also changes their role in the process from delivering care and interacting with their clients, to a role that is more about overseeing the youth care process and monitoring the other actors that are involved. Moreover, the reform aims to make clients more personally responsible and dependent on their informal networks (family, friends, neighbours). This is framed by policy makers as a form of co-production, but is accompanied by budget cuts that have been estimated to amount in 2017–500 million Euros or 15 per cent of the budget (Netherlands Central Planning Bureau 2013). These different elements of the reform are likely to create variance on the degree of meaningfulness that professionals will attach to the reform.

Procedures and sample

The reform is one of the main objectives of the Dutch cabinet that came into power in November 2012 and was put into law at the end of 2013. Given the complexity, 2014 was defined as a transition year and the reform formally came into effect nationwide in January 2015. Organizations and professionals had thus time to prepare for the reform. However, the implementation process will likely take several

months if not years to be fully implemented. We contacted the major youth care organizations in the two largest city regions in the Netherlands: the Amsterdam region and the Rotterdam region. These regions include the city and neighbouring municipalities. Of the major organizations in these city regions, five were able to participate in the study. Together, these organizations employ a substantial amount of youth care workers in both regions.[1] Although funded by public means, these organizations are independent legal entities who are responsible for providing youth care. Most of them provide both prevention (e.g. helping families with difficulties) as cure (e.g. providing foster homes or institutionalized care). The reform has a huge impact on these organizations. In the pre-reform phase, they were the prime care provider themselves, but in the post-reform phase, the municipalities themselves are responsible. The youth care organizations are still independent, but they have to make a contract with the municipalities. The professionals providing preventive care are detached to the neighbourhood teams which are governed by the municipalities.

We sent an online survey to the youth care professionals of these organizations. This online survey was used to measure the work characteristics of youth care professionals and their perceptions of the change that is being implemented. This survey is the first part of a larger, longitudinal study concerning the effects of the reform on the work of youth care professionals. The online survey was developed in collaboration with the participating organizations and was tested among 5–7 employees in both regions to account for contextual differences in terminology.

Because all data were collected among a single group of respondents, the data may be prone to common method bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Our study relies on self-reported data because it is focused on the relationship between cognitive variables. Despite the existence of multiple statistical procedures, no fail-safe statistical technique of diagnosing and remedying common method bias exists (Conway and Lance 2010). Proactive steps were taken to mitigate the existence of common method bias in our data. In order to reduce evaluation apprehension and social desirability bias, the invitation e-mail and survey introduction ensured anonymity of respondents (Podsakoff et al. 2003). Moreover, the academic purpose of the questionnaire was not revealed in order to prevent hypothesis guessing by employees (Brannick et al. 2010).

The survey was sent to all youth care professionals of the five organizations in the second week of December 2014. The survey was open until the first week of January 2015. In all, 577 youth care workers responded to the survey, which corresponds with an average response rate of 47.7 per cent. The response rates for the five organizations were 51.5 per cent, 60.4 per cent, 40.8 per cent, 58.8 per cent and 45.0 per cent. The sample consists of different types of youth care professionals, such as youth and family coaches, behavioural specialists, foster care workers and social workers at schools. For two reasons, we only examine the youth and family coaches in the analysis of this study.[2] First, they are the first-line youth care professionals who directly interact with the clients and second, they are most affected by the change as they are allocated to the neighbourhood teams. In these teams, they will work together with professionals from other organizations (including civil servants and other youth care professionals) who have to deal with the problems of clients in their district. This new way of working is one of the most defining characteristics of the reform, and therefore has a large impact on professionals involved. These changes do not apply to the more specialist youth care professionals that also responded to our

survey. This limits our sample to 258 respondents of whom 221 provided a valid response to all items included in our analysis.

Measures

The full measurement scales that were used to measure the central concepts of this study are given in Appendix. All items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from '1: I fully disagree' to '7: I fully agree'.

Prosocial motivation
Prosocial motivation was measured by applying a four-item measure developed by Grant (2008b). A sample item of the scale is 'I care about benefiting others through my work'.

Commitment to change
The scale for affective commitment to change from the three-dimensional commitment to change measure by Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) was used. The original items were modified so that 'the change' referred to 'working in the neighbourhood teams'. Our measure uses four out of six of the original items. Two items of the original scale were excluded, 'This change is not necessary (R)' and 'I think that management is making a mistake by introducing this change (R)' because they describe the change as being a voluntary decision by the organization, while the change was part of an obligatory reform initiated by the government.

Societal and client meaningfulness
Two four-item measurement scales by Tummers (2013) were used to measure societal and client meaningfulness. The original items were reversed in order to reflect meaningfulness rather than meaninglessness, and the wording of the items was adapted to reflect the decentralization of youth care. Sample items are 'I think that the decentralization of youth care in the long term will lead to an improvement of youth care' and 'With the decentralization of youth care, I can better solve the problems of my clients'.

Control variables
We control for variables related to the individual as well as the organizational change process. Related to the individual, we control for gender, age, educational level and years of tenure. Educational level was divided into five categories (1 = primary education; 2 = high school; 3 = vocational education; 4 = higher vocational education; 5 = academic education). One of the central aims of the reform is to organize professionals in neighbourhood teams. We therefore control whether respondents already worked in a neighbourhood team at the time of the survey, as these employees may have more experiences with the reform and may therefore differ in terms of commitment to change. Another control variable was added that accounts for the region (Rotterdam or Amsterdam) in which the respondent's organization is located. This is relevant because regions differ in their implementation of neighbourhood teams.

Prior quantitative studies on organizational change management (Wanberg and Banas 2000; Wright, Christensen, and Isett 2013; Van der Voet 2015) show that factors related to the process of change account for a large degree of the variance in commitment to change. Van der Voet, Kuipers, and Groeneveld (2015) conclude that communication and participation in the change process are the main ways to stimulate support for change among employees. Given the impact of the implementation of the reform within the organizations on the employees, we therefore control for three factors that are related to the process of change and are expected to affect commitment to change to a large degree. These are the quality of information employees received about the changes, the degree of participation they experienced during the change and perceived self-efficacy to deal with the changes at hand. All measures for the change process characteristics are taken from Wanberg and Banas (2000). In addition, job satisfaction was added as a control variable based on the study by Claiborne et al. (2013), who report that job satisfaction is an important determinant of support for change among youth care workers.

Analysis and results

In this section, the analysis and results of the study are presented. First, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is conducted to confirm the data's factor structure. Second, descriptive statistics are reported. Third, the correlations between the study's variables are presented. Fourth, the study's hypotheses are tested using a regression analysis.

Confirmatory factor analysis

A CFA was executed to test the factor structure of the measurement scales that were used in this study. A measurement model was constructed using AMOS 22 software. The measurement model reflects the factor structure based on the validated measurement scales that were used. Seven latent factors were distinguished: prosocial motivation, commitment to change, societal meaningfulness, client meaningfulness, communication, participation and efficacy. The observed variable for job satisfaction was also included in the model. In all, the measurement model consists of the items that are listed in Appendix. The CFA indicates that the relationships between all observed variables and their respective latent dimensions are statistically significant. However, the model's fit indices indicate no acceptable degree of model fit. The model's chi-square statistic divided by degrees of freedom is 2.395, CFI is .870 and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) .074.

Analysis of the measurement model's modification indices identified cross-loadings between item 4 of societal meaningfulness and the commitment to change factor, as well as item 4 of client meaningfulness and the commitment to change factor. In order to resolve this issue, a modified measurement model was constructed, in which both items were excluded. The modified measurement model indicates that all observed variables are statistically significantly related to their latent constructs. All standardized factor loadings vary between .925 and .509. The standardized factor loadings for all items are given in Appendix. Cronbach's alphas for all latent constructs are reported in Table 1. The fit indices indicate an acceptable fit to the data: The model's chi-square statistic divided by degrees of freedom is 2.130, CFI is .915 and RMSEA .066.

Table 1. Correlation matrix and Cronbach's alpha.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1 Prosocial motivation	(.833)												
2 Commitment to change	.133*	(.913)											
3 Societal meaningfulness	-.012	.504***	(.715)										
4 Client meaningfulness	-.022	.445***	.572***	(.786)									
5 Information	.061	.203**	.258***	.163*	(.920)								
6 Participation	.051	.258***	.354***	.192**	.388***	(.874)							
7 Efficacy	.023	.396***	.432***	.314***	.207**	.246**	(.637)						
8 Female (dummy: yes)	-.006	.024	.066	.111	-.096*	-.032	-.148*	-					
9 Age	.048	.096	.097	.012	-.129*	.054	.174**	-.286***	-				
10 Education level	.095	-.059	-.118	-.072	.024	.048	-.035	-.093	-.035	-			
11 Tenure in years	-.001	.012	.077	.019	.107	.007	-.134	-.175**	.646***	-.097	-		
12 Neighbourhood team (dummy: yes)	.005	.113	.210**	.242***	.084	.106	.011	.119	.066	.162**	.005	-	
13 Amsterdam (dummy: yes)	.061	-.034	-.000	-.021	-0.069	.187**	.049	.077	.061	-.202**	.079	-.137*	-
14 Job satisfaction	.133*	.239***	.258***	.195***	.240***	.229***	.459***	-.112	.200**	-.065	.107	-.072	.174**

*: statistically significant with $p < .05$, **: statistically significant with $p < .01$, ***: statistically significant with $p < .001$. For all latent constructs, reliability scores (Cronbach's alpha) are given in parentheses

Table 2. Descriptive statistics.

Variable	Mean	Standard deviation	Minimum	Maximum	N
1 Prosocial motivation	6.46	.56	4	7	254
2 Commitment to change	5.38	1.02	1.25	7	241
3 Societal meaningfulness	3.66	1.05	1	6.67	249
4 Client meaningfulness	4.05	1.05	1	7	248
5 Information	4.49	1.30	1.25	7	244
6 Participation	3.55	1.58	1	7	238
7 Efficacy	4.91	1.20	1	7	240
8 Female (dummy: yes)	.84	.37	0	1	258
9 Age	41.7	9.47	23	63	256
10 Education level	4.1	.33	3	5	257
11 Tenure in years	14.35	7.66	2	41	246
12 Neighbourhood team (dummy: yes)	.71	.45	0	1	258
13 Amsterdam (dummy: yes)	.45	.50	0	1	258
14 Job satisfaction	5.45	1.07	2	7	254

Descriptive statistics

In Table 2, the means, standard deviations, range and number of observations (N) of all variables are reported. An important result is that the mean of prosocial motivation is quite high, with a mean score of 6.46 on a seven-point scale. Indeed, it makes sense that youth care professionals report a high degree of prosocial motivation (Ellett 2009). For the purposes of this study, however, it creates a challenge because the variance is skewed over the seven-point range of the measurement scale. The lowest reported score on the prosocial motivation construct is 4. In comparison with the other concepts that were measured on a seven-point scale, the standard deviation of prosocial motivation is also relatively small. We return to this issue in the discussion section of the paper.

The other statistics indicate that the mean score for commitment to change (5.38) is also relatively high. Another striking result is the relatively low score on participation (3.35), which corresponds with the top-down way in which the national reform is implemented. Moreover, the descriptive statistics indicate that both city regions are about equally represented in the sample, with 45 per cent of the respondents in the sample from the Amsterdam region. Finally, 84 per cent of the sample is female. According to the Dutch Employee Insurance Agency (UWV 2013), the overall percentage of women in the Dutch youth care sector is 75 per cent. The mean age of our sample (41.7) is identical to the average age in the overall sector (UWV 2013).

Correlations

In Table 1, the bivariate correlations between all variables are given. There is a statistically significant correlation between the dependent variable, commitment to change and each of the concepts that were identified in the CFA. The relationships with societal meaningfulness, client meaningfulness and commitment to change are particularly strong. Another relevant result is that the relationship between prosocial motivation and commitment to change is statistically significant, but that prosocial motivation is not related to societal meaningfulness and client meaningfulness. It is also apparent that working in a neighbourhood team is of particular relevance for employees' perception of the change and the implementation process. The dummy variable for

working in a neighbourhood team is positively related to commitment to change, meaningfulness and participation. Moreover, respondents from the Rotterdam region are less likely to work in neighbourhood teams than respondents from the Amsterdam region. There are no statistically significant differences between the Rotterdam and Amsterdam city regions in terms of the central variables of the study. The matrix also indicates that female workers are on average younger than their male colleagues.

Regression analysis

In order to test the study's hypotheses, a regression analysis was conducted with commitment to change as the dependent variable. Five separate models were estimated. Model 1 includes only the control variables related to personal characteristics of the respondents. In model 2, the factors related to the implementation process and job satisfaction are entered, as prior studies have shown that such factors account for a large portion of the variance in commitment to change of employees (Wright, Christensen, and Isett 2013; Van der Voet 2015; Claiborne et al. 2013). In model 3, prosocial motivation, societal meaningless and client meaningfulness are introduced in the analysis. In model 4 and 5, the interaction variables for prosocial motivation, societal meaningless and client meaningfulness are entered in the model. In order to test the interaction effect of prosocial motivation and societal and client meaningfulness, all variables were standardized by computing z scores. Using these z scores, interaction variables were constructed for prosocial motivation, societal meaningfulness and client meaningfulness. This resulted in two interaction variables: *Prosocial Motivation × Societal Meaningfulness* and *Prosocial Motivation × Client Meaningfulness*. The results of the regression analysis are displayed in Table 3.

The personal characteristics introduced in model 1 explain virtually none of the variance in commitment to change (adjusted $R2$ is .010). In model 2, the change process variables and job satisfaction are introduced, which results in a large increase in explained variance (adjusted $R2$ is .207). These results show that participation and efficacy are positively related to commitment to change. Information and job satisfaction are not statistically significant related to commitment to change. In model 3, the prosocial motivation and both meaningfulness variables are entered into the regression analysis (adjusted $R2$ rises to .327). The results indicate that all three variables are positively related to commitment to change.

Model 3 shows a statistically significant relation between prosocial motivation and commitment to change which provides support for hypothesis 1. The second and third hypotheses of the study concern the interaction effects of prosocial motivation and meaningfulness on commitment to change. These interaction effects are introduced in the regression analysis in model 4 (adjusted $R2$ is .332) and model 5 (adjusted $R2$ is .351). The interaction effect of prosocial motivation and societal meaningfulness is not statistically significant. However, model 5 does identify a significant interaction effect on commitment to change for prosocial motivation and client meaningfulness. This interaction effect is plotted in Figure 1.

Figure 1 indicates that a high meaningfulness for clients, due to its positive relationship with commitment to change, will result in a high degree of commitment to change. When the organizational change is perceived to be highly meaningful for clients (the dotted line in Figure 1), there is virtually no difference in commitment to

Table 3. Regression analysis for commitment to change (N = 221).

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Constant	5.199 (.100)	5.197 (.090)	5.167 (.083)	5.171 (.083)	5.145 (.082)
Female (dummy: yes)	.039 (.078)	.105 (.070)	.046 (.065)	.046 (.065)	.039 (.064)
Age	.130 (.092)	.069 (.084)	.067 (.077)	.071 (.077)	.079 (.076)
Education level	−.066 (.073)	−.042 (.067)	.001 (.062)	.001 (.062)	−.003 (.061)
Tenure in years	−.053 (.088)	−.066 (.079)	−.064 (.073)	−.061 (.072)	−.060 (.071)
Neighbourhood team (dummy: yes)	.141 (.074)	.119 (.067)	.012 (.064)	.001 (.064)	.010 (.063)
Amsterdam (dummy: yes)	−.036 (.073)	−.091 (.069)	−.076 (.063)	−.072 (.063)	−.066 (.062)
Information		.058 (.068)	.021 (.063)	.017 (.063)	.030 (.062)
Participation		.148* (.066)	.078 (.062)	.087 (.062)	.065 (.061)
Efficacy		.345*** (.066)	.215*** (.065)	.199** (.066)	.199** (.064)
Job satisfaction		.048 (.071)	−.020 (.067)	−.023 (.067)	−.042 (.066)
Prosocial motivation			.164* (.064)	.184** (.065)	.249*** (.069)
Societal meaningfulness			.278*** (.078)	.293*** (.078)	.298*** (.077)
Client meaningfulness			.207** (.078)	.216** (.077)	.246*** (.076)
Prosocial motivation × societal meaningfulness (interaction)				−.100 (.062)	
Prosocial motivation × client meaningfulness (interaction)					−.242** (.082)
Adjusted R2	.010	.207	.327	.332	.351

Unstandardized regression coefficients are reported. Standard errors are given in parentheses. *: statistically significant with $p < .05$, **: statistically significant with $p < .01$, ***: statistically significant with $p < .001$. Italicized values are the values of the constant.
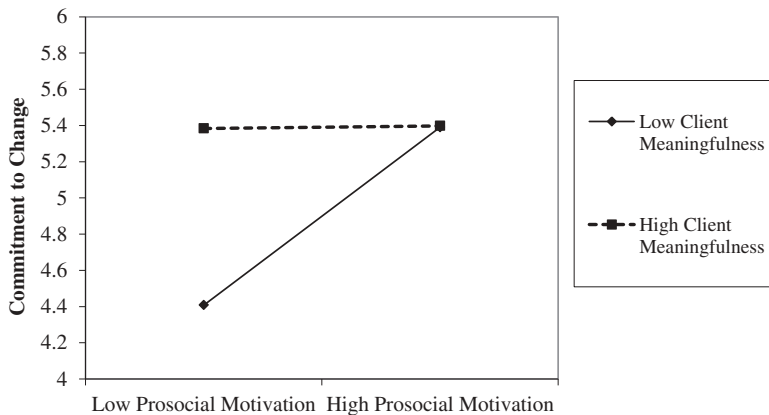
Figure 1. The interaction effect of client meaningfulness and prosocial motivation.

change between employees with a low versus a high prosocial motivation. However, Figure 1 indicates that prosocial motivation has a more important role in organizational change when there is a low perceived meaningfulness for clients (the solid line in Figure 1). In this situation, the analysis indicates that there is much more commitment to change among individuals with a high degree of prosocial motivation than among respondents with a low degree of prosocial motivation. These results

thus indicate that when an organizational change is perceived to be meaningful for clients, commitment to change is high, regardless the presence of a low or high prosocial motivation. However, when the organizational change is not perceived as being meaningful for clients, we only observe a high commitment to change when prosocial motivation is high. In fact, this refutes our hypothesis. We had expected that the relationship between prosocial motivation and organizational change would be strengthened by the perceived meaningfulness for clients. However, it appears that in fact a high prosocial motivation acts as a substitute for low perceived client meaningfulness.

Conclusion

This study adds to the increasing amount of literature that shows positive relationships between prosocial motivation or PSM and various outcome variables. So far, few studies have dealt with the relationship between prosocial motivation and perceptions of change. Our findings build on the existing studies in this field by studying commitment to change of Dutch youth care professionals in a major governmental reform. Based on the earlier studies, we expected a positive relationship between prosocial motivation and commitment to change. This expectation is confirmed by our analysis.

Our results also confirm earlier studies on commitment to change which have shown that change process variables are important for commitment to change (Van der Voet, Kuipers, and Groeneveld 2015). Our study especially shows that participation and efficacy are related to this commitment. As such this is no surprise, but it is interesting to note that these change process variables are also relevant in a nation-wide policy reform.

Incorporating person–environment fit theory, we also expected that the relationship between prosocial motivation and commitment to change is dependent on the content of the change. In this respect, we had expected that the perceived meaningfulness for society and clients would affect the relation between prosocial motivation and commitment to change. Our results on this are however mixed. First, our results do show that both meaningfulness variables are related to commitment to change. When professionals perceive the change as more meaningful for their clients and society, their commitment to the change is higher. Second, our results also show that the relation between prosocial motivation and commitment to change is moderated by client meaningfulness, but not by societal meaningfulness. However, this moderation is different than expected.

Our findings indicate that when respondents perceive the change as meaningful for their clients, their commitment to change is high – regardless their prosocial motivation. At the same time, when they do not perceive the change as meaningful, their commitment to the change is high only when high prosocial motivation is present. In other words, rather than strengthening the relationship between prosocial motivation and commitment to change, prosocial motivation and client meaningfulness seem to act as substitutes. Both prosocial motivation and client meaningfulness are sufficient conditions for commitment to change, the presence of both is not a necessary condition. It can thus be argued that when the intended goals of organizational change satisfy the 'need' to help others (Steijn 2008), prosocial motivation is no longer a relevant motivational driver of commitment to change. Thus, as has been argued by McGregor (1960, 36): 'A satisfied need is not a motivator of behavior!'

Our findings extend the study of Wright, Christensen, and Isett (2013), who argued that the disposition of public sector employees to sacrifice their personal interest for the common good may cause them to support or even overlook negative personal consequences of organizational change. In a similar way, the literature on organizational change argues that employee support for change is affected by the content of change, but has conceptualized the content of change as the impact of change on employees (Self, Armenakis, and Schraeder 2007) or the effects on an employee's job role (Rafferty, Jimmieson, and Armenakis 2013). Thus, the literature emphasizes the question: 'What's in it for the employee?' However, our findings suggest that commitment to change is not only dependent on professionals' evaluation of the personal consequences of the change, but that this consideration is also based on the perceived consequences of the change for their clients. In other words, our study suggests that prosocial motivation will induce public professionals to not only evaluate the personal consequences or change but also to ask: 'What's in it for others?' A perspective on public sector reform that only considers the employee consequences of change is thus too limited. Public managers and policymakers should be aware that both prosocial motivation of employees as well as their anticipated consequences of the change for society and clients are important antecedents of the capability of public organizations to implement change.

Finally, our study adds to recent debate on the PSM concept. Although the concepts of prosocial motivation and PSM are related, the former concept is more general as some of the PSM dimensions may not be applicable to all public professionals. Our finding that only client meaningfulness moderates the relation between prosocial motivation and commitment to change resonates a recent critique on the PSM concept of Gould-Williams (2015) as it suggests Dutch youth care professionals identify foremost with their clients and less with society.

A limitation of our study is that the variance on the prosocial motivation variable is skewed. Most respondents in our sample report a relatively high degree of prosocial motivation. It could well be that the results are different in a context where prosocial motivation can be expected to be more evenly distributed, for instance, in the civil service. Despite this, assumptions for the regression analysis regarding the distribution of residuals, homoscedascity and linearity were not violated. Furthermore, as our study relies on the analysis of cross-sectional self-reported data, the results may be subject to common method bias. Although research designs should ideally account for this issue, we believe the analysis of self-reported data from a single group of respondents is appropriate for the purposes of this study, because of our focus on the relationships between individual cognitive variables (Conway and Lance 2010). As there is no fail-safe statistical approach for identifying or remedying common method bias (Podsakoff et al. 2003), proactive steps were taken to mitigate this issue as described in the methods section of this paper.

In our view, future research should not only study prosocial motivation as an antecedent of organizational change but also assess how organizational change and administrative reform affect the prosocial motivations of public sector workers. As reforms may affect the working conditions, job characteristics and reward systems of public sector jobs, reforms may function as specific episodes of the socialization processes that shape the work motivations of public sector workers. In addition, we argue that more convergence of evidence is required on this topic. There have only been a handful studies on this topic, and these studies are based on different types of

public sector workers, different types of organizational change, different conceptualizations and measures for central concepts, and were conducted in different countries. Moreover, research on prosocial motivation and organizational change has been predominantly quantitative. Qualitative data could be used to cross-check results and can contribute to the interpretation of the mechanisms that underlie the relationships that have been reported in the literature.

Notes

1. Unfortunately, the exact number of youth care workers in both regions is unknown. However, we do know that in early 2015 the municipality of Rotterdam employed 292 youth care workers in their neighbourhood teams. Of these workers, 210 (or 72 per cent) are detached from the organizations included in our survey. According to officials in the city of Amsterdam, the two organizations in our survey employ 31 per cent of the youth care workers in their neighbourhood teams.
2. As several organizations were not able to give us precise information about the composition of their labour force, we are not able to give the exact response rates for the youth and family coaches. Two organizations only employ youth and family coaches. In one organization (overall response 60.4 per cent), we were able to discern response rates for specialists (68.8 per cent) and youth and family coaches (52.3 per cent). For the other two organizations, organizational records to calculate response rates per occupational group were not available.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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Appendix. Survey items

Prosocial motivation (Grant 2008b)
(1) It is important for me to do good for others through my work. (.631)
(2) I care about benefiting others through my work. (.742)
(3) I want to help others through my work. (.798)
(4) I want to have a positive impact on others through my work. (.817)

Affective commitment to change (Herscovitch and Meyer 2002)

(1) I believe in the value of working in neighborhood teams. (.885)
(2) Working in neighborhood teams is a good strategy for this organization (.915)
(3) Working in neighborhood teams does not serve an important purpose. (R) (797)
(4) Things would be better without working in neighborhood teams. (R) (.795)

Societal meaningfulness of the reform (Tummers 2013)

(1) I think that the decentralization of youth care in the long term will lead to an improvement of youth care. (.539)
(2) I think that the decentralization in the short term will lead to an improvement of youth care. (.777)

(3) I think that the decentralization has already led to an improvement of youth care. (.764)
(4) Overall, I think that the decentralization leads to an improvement of youth care.*

Client meaningfulness of the reform (Tummers 2013)

(1) With the decentralization of youth care, I can better solve the problems of my clients. (.824)
(2) The decentralization contributes to the welfare of my clients. (.734)
(3) Because of the decentralization, I can help clients more efficiently than before. (.666)
(4) I think that the decentralization is ultimately favorable for my clients.*

Information (Wanberg and Banas 2000)

(1) The information about the decentralization has been communicated in a timely manner. (.760)
(2) The information I have received has adequately answered my questions about the decentralization (.885)
(3) I have received adequate information about the decentralization. (.922)
(4) The information I have received about the decentralization has been useful. (.893)

Participation (Wanberg and Banas 2000)

(1) I have been able to participate in the implementation of the decentralization. (.803)
(2) I have/had some control over implementation of the decentralization. (.794)
(3) I have (or could have) had input into the decisions being made about the decentralization. (.925)

Efficacy (Wanberg and Banas 2000)

(1) I get nervous that I may not be able to do all that is demanded of me by the decentralization. (R) (.509)
(2) Wherever juvenile justice reform takes me, I'm sure I can handle it. (.586)
(3) I have reason to believe I may not perform well in my job situation as a result of the decentralization. (R) (.712)

Job Satisfaction

(1) Taking everything into account, I am satisfied with my job.

Standardized factor loadings are given in parentheses.
(R) = item was reversed for the analysis
* = item was removed based on the CFA