

ASSESSING PUBLIC SECTOR VALUES THROUGH THE TRI-AXIAL MODEL: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM SPAIN

ABSTRACT

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to examine values among public sector employees. Furthermore, this study will identify differences according to several demographical variables with relevant policy making implications.

Design/methodology/approach – Once the literature review on public sector values and the description of the Tri-axial model is presented, analysis based on a survey of 3018 public sector will be undertaken. The sample consists of employees working in the Government of Andalusia, Spain.

Findings – Results reveal the domination of pragmatic values, as well as values connected to the ethical axis. The study also shows how these values vary according to several demographic characteristics of the respondents, especially when considering their level of education and their respective tenure.

Research limitations/implications – When managing employees from public organizations, emphasis should be given to the development of an organizational culture that represents a configuration of both pragmatic and ethical axes.

Originality/value – This study was tested with relatively a large sample size (more than three thousand observations) thus adding significant and original value to the empirical test of the Tri-axial model.

Keywords – Tri-axial Model, Public-sector Values, Culture

Paper type – Research paper

INTRODUCTION

The study of public sector values has a long tradition (van der Wal and Huberts, 2008). Hill (1975), for example, concluded more than three decades ago that there is a type of personality among public sector employees that makes them different from the employees of the private or non-profit organizations. The importance of the study of values among the employees of an organization has been vindicated with their role on determining the organization's culture and identity (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Pettigrew, 1979); in addition values have also been related with the organizational structure (Walsh et al. 1981, Kabanoff et al. 1995); and more recently, with the strategic actions undertaken by the organization (Bansal, 2003).

However, as discussed below, research is scarce providing general frameworks that can assess the whole value system of public-sector employees. Which are the predominant values among public-sector employees? How can these values change according to demographical characteristics? And moreover, how should public sector organizations manage the values of their employees? In order to answer these research questions, the present article relies on the Tri-axial model (Dolan 2011; Dolan & Altman, 2012) to disclose which are the values driving organizational behaviors within public administrations. Thus, the aim of the paper is to assess values among public sector employees and identify commonalities and differences according to several demographical variables with relevant managerial implications.

The reminder of this article is organized as follows. In the next segment, we explain the work that has been done in the public administration field concerning values among public-sector employees. Subsequently, we present the Tri-axial model and explain its major characteristics. The data and methods used in the study are then described. Afterward, we present the results of this article, reflect on the managerial implications, disclose some limitations and finally offer an agenda for further research.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

While many psychological theories ascribe vital roles to values in determining attitudes and behavior, the espoused definitions of values typically remain abstract in nature. This is because the concept of value is so powerful that it can be meaningfully employed at all levels of social analysis – cultural, societal, institutional, organizational, group and individual (Kabanoff, Waldersee and Cohen, 1995). In the domain of social sciences the level of analysis for the study of values has varied from an individual level, via groups and organizations to a societal level. Among those authors that considered values as individual attributes (see, for example, Feather, 1975; Rohan, 2000; Rokeach, 1973; Schwartz, 1992; Schwartz, 2005) there is a lack of consensus of a definition of *value* and the answer to the question, “*what is a value?*” (Meglino and Ravlin 1998; Knoppen et al, 2006). However a common understanding views them as transituational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or a group (Schwartz and Rubel, 2005). Rokeach (1973) proposed that values are people’s enduring beliefs that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence (Dolan, Garcia, and Richley 2006). If we define values as “a person’s internalized belief about how he or she should or ought to behave” (Ravlin, 1995 in Ravlin & Meligno, 1998, p. 354), as Meligno (1996) highlighted concerning to behavior at work, we should add the qualifier “at work” to the former definition.

Because values drive individual behaviors within organizations (Dolan, Richley and Lingham, 2008) it is extremely important to consider their utility for management and organizational behavior. Actually, they have also been characterized as “the most distinctive property or defining characteristic of a social institution” (Rokeach, 1979, p. 51). In fact, at the organizational level, values are viewed as a major component of organizational culture (O’Reilly and Chatman, 1996; Schein, 1985). As Meligno and Ravlin (1998) mentioned, values have even been described as principles responsible for the successful management of a number of companies (e.g., Mitchell and

Oneal, 1994). Many scholars have investigated the role of organizational values in the management practices of organizations (Argandoña, 2003; Dolan, 2010, Kabanoff and Daly, 2002; Schein, 1992; Schuh and Miller, 2006). In the following section, we review the works that have addressed the values of public sector employees.

Determining Public Values

The study of the predominant values among public sector employees has generated considerable attention among public administration scholars. Most of this literature has focused on the distinction between the values of public and private sector employees. This is the case of Metcalfe (1989), for instance, who assessed the values of 2302 employees from public and private British organizations and reported that public sector employees place more importance to the opportunity to contribute to society, and to the job security offered by their organizations. In contrast, when compared to private employees, their public counterparts place less importance on fringe benefits and economic earnings. In the same vein, Khojasteh (1993) also found that public-sector employees are much more motivated by the social recognition of their work than by the economic incentives that their organizations might provide. However, the examination of the values of public sector employees has encountered divergent results within the literature. Maidani (1991), for example, argues that public-sector employees place more importance on the economic conditions of their contracts than private employees.

Fostering the distinction of the values of public sector employees from their private counterparts, it has been stated that public sector employees attribute more value to interesting work and less value to wages when compared to private employees (Karl and Sutton, 1998). Thus, it could be argued that public-sector employees seem to have a set of personal values that emphasize the importance of the development of their societies, and not as much on the economic incentives that their professional activities might generate for them individually. Accordingly, private sector

employees are described as being more motivated by high incomes whereas their public counterparts are more motivated by being useful to the society (de Graaf and Huberts, 2008).

The assessment of the public-sector employees values was developed further by Posner and Schmidt (1996) by asking public and private sector managers which were their main personal values. Regarding their results, these authors state that private sector managers place more importance on morale, productivity, efficiency, and growth; and on personal traits such as cooperativeness, flexibility and ambition. Contrarily to the private sector, public managers place more importance on quality, effectiveness, public service and value for the community. Public managers also place greater importance also on stakeholders, and believe that their organizational values are clearer and more shared among their coworkers.

Although in some cases, it has been stated that no differences appear between the values of public and private sector employees (see, for example, Lyons et al., 2006). It is worth noting that the research that has relied on large datasets did find important differences according the values of public and private employees (Buelens et al., 2007, Bourantas and Papalexandris, 1999, Frank and Lewis, 2004). More recently, van der Wal and Huberts (2008) surveyed 382 public and private managers to determine their core values. In their conclusions, these authors argue that the core values of private managers seem to be innovativeness, profitability and self-fulfillment, while public managers attach more importance to incorruptibility, serviceability and social justice.

Significant differences are also found in the managerial focus of the two sectors. Private sector managers are more committed to owners and shareholders, whereas public sector managers are more committed to the public at large (Poole et al., 2006). This gives support to the previous statement that public and private sectors have core differences regarding their social mission: whereas public sector managers aim to maximize collective value, the aims of their private sector counterparts are driven by the rational choice theory (Mort et al., 2003).

These findings are in line with the notion of the “Public Sector Ethos” described by Aldridge and Stoker (2002): “Public Service Ethos is a sense that involves: 1) A performance culture: a strong commitment to service for individuals and the community; 2) A commitment to accountability: an emphasis on open access to information; 3) A capacity to support universal access: recognition of a special responsibility to support the rights of all service users in an environment; 4) Responsible employment practices; and 5) Contribution to community well-being.”

Despite the large number of studies addressing public sector values, there is still a research gap regarding a general model that could explain behaviors among public-sector employees. This is because most of the existent research on public sector values have identified several isolated values, but does not rely on an empirical model to provide a clear snapshot of the value set among public-sector employees. The following section describes an existing model to assess the value systems of individuals: the Tri-axial Model.

The Tri-axial Model

Although there is a general agreement about main traits of values, as mentioned earlier, the fact that there is an absence of a unique definition has led to the development of several value models at the different levels of analysis (Schwartz 1992; Rockeach, 1973; Dolan and Garcia, 1997; Hofstede, 1980) and sometimes the mixed uses of these models. For the purpose of this paper, we will use Dolan’s Tri-axial Model (1997), which offers a broad framework to understand values at the organizational level. Specifically, Dolan et al. (2006) identify a Tri-axial model that supports a three-pronged taxonomy of organizational values: economic-pragmatic (e.g., related to planning, quality control, financial management), ethical-social (e.g., related to honesty, congruency, integrity), and developmental (e.g., related to creativity, adaptability, growth). Each category is described as being an integral component of assessing the nature of organization’s values (Dolan et al., 2006).

The Tri-axial model of values developed and validated by Dolan and his colleagues (Dolan et al. 2004, 2006, Dolan 2011) is used as a parsimonious model to measure values within organizations. The model has been tested previously in Spain (Knoppen et al. 2006). The model assumes that values can be detected in all universes (personal, family, organizations), regardless of their nature or mission. All these values can be classified according to three core axes: economic-pragmatic, ethical-social and emotional-developmental. And any personal and organizational values can be used as a proxy situated along one of these dimensions, referred to as axes. The model draws attention to the relative importance of each axis. The specific values that lie therein depend on national cultural characteristics, organizational characteristics, and some individual differences. The hypothesis of zero sum notion of the model is also especially relevant, which means that the 3 axes combined together represent the whole of a so-called universe of culture. So, each culture represents a specific configuration amongst these three axes.

Based on the Delphi technique, which will be explained in the methodology, the research team that developed the Tri-axial model reduced the number of values in organizations sixty. Respondents of questionnaires have to select the five most relevant values (i.e. five items) used for each axis. Some examples of Economic-pragmatic values are competitiveness, money, achievement, order, and task focus; Ethical-social values include cooperation, family, professional ethic, justice, and integrity; and Emotional-developmental values include love, passion, satisfaction, empathy, and happiness. The Tri-axial model identifies these three types of organizational values (economic-pragmatic, ethical-social, and emotional-developmental), and postulates the importance of enacting all three towards achieving the potential positive impact within the organization. Importantly, Dolan et al. (2006) suggested that to achieve positive transformation in an organization, employees need to understand the values of the organization and to have their core values aligned with specific organizational values.

METHOD

List of values

Dolan et al.'s (2006, 2012) Tri-axial Model was developed using an original list of 260 values, generated from an extensive review of the literature on values and culture across the world. With this list, an expert panel of 6 managers and organizational behavior scholars were surveyed in a three-round Delphi study to reduce the original number of values to the sixty most relevant and recurrent values. The Delphi technique allows reaching a consensus of opinion of a group of experts (Linstone and Turoff, 1975) in a specific topic along the steps required to answer a research question. The Delphi technique brings the added value of one of its main advantages which is that it combines experiential knowledge of the participants who make up the expert panel. We are aware of criticism that the technique has received, most of them due to the abundance of its methodological interpretations (Powell, 2003). However, we highlight that the findings of a Delphi study represent expert opinion of the "universe" of human values, rather than an indisputable fact.

The 60 selected values fall into one of the three "axes" namely the Economic-Pragmatic axis, the Ethical-social axis, and the Emotional-developmental axis. The *Economic-Pragmatic* axis represents those values that are related to the fulfillment of efficiency, production, and attainment of goals. It can include values such as competitiveness, achievement, order, and task focus. The *Ethical-Social axis* is to coordinate social relationships, generate social structure, and define social moral. It can include values such as cooperation, family, professional ethic, justice, and integrity. The *Emotional-Developmental axis* relates to personal affection and developmental concern. It could include values such as love, passion, satisfaction, empathy, and happiness. It is proposed that the 60 values and the 3 axes represent the universe of values and culture, and how people relate to those axes by giving meaning to the values and arranging values according to different axes which are representative of their culture.

Sampling and Procedure

The target population was the total number of civil servants in Andalusia, a region of southern Spain. This population included both public managers and also public-sector employees, all of which framed in the Government of Andalusia. The total number of people who make up the designated population is 51542. The survey was responded by a total of 3018 public servants, which represents a 5.85% of the population (51.13% female, 48.87% male). Respondents were invited to participate in the project through an electronic message. They were informed that the purpose of the survey was exclusively academic and participation was voluntary and their anonymity was assured as no personal information would be revealed. The Government of Andalusia developed an on-line questionnaire located in its Intranet in order to be able to have access to all the staff members of the administration and facilitate not only the collection but also the analysis of data.

The structure of the questionnaire was the following. The first part included 9 questions about personal traits and professional activity, demographic variables. The second part provided the list of 60 values and where participants were asked to classify each of the 60 values in one of the three axes of the model (Economic-Pragmatic Axis, Ethical-Social Axis, and Emotional-Developmental Axis). Some information was provided to respondent to facilitate their understanding about the three axes:

- *Ethical-social values: these are values that guide people's behavior in groups. They arise from beliefs of how people should behave in public, at work and in relationships*
- *Pragmatic-economic values: these are values shared organizations that guide aspects of the work, as for example, quality, order, results, etc.*
- *Emotional-developmental values; these are that lead or generate personal satisfaction.*

And finally, the third part of the survey asked participants to identify from the sixty values which were the 5 most important values in their organization.

RESULTS

In order to differentiate between the main values among public-sector employees, a first step was to classify each of the 60 values within the tri-axial model (Dolan and Garcia, 2002, Dolan et al., 2004, Dolan et al., 2006); which implies placing each of the values on one of the three axes (Economic-Pragmatic; Ethical-Social; or Emotional-Developmental). Subsequent with the criteria of the VAC partners, a specific value was only attached to one of the three axes if at least 50% of the respondents identified this value within the same axis. Furthermore, we also apply proportion analysis to test the differences between the distributions of each value under the different axes. A Two step z-test was conducted to grade the dominant axes for each value (at a significance level of 0.05). Those cases in which the values did not achieve significance on any of the three axes were left out of the analysis. Through this technique, we can be highly confident that the final values associated with each of the tree axes represent the classification chosen by the majority of the respondents of our sample. Out of the 60 values analyzed, then, 22 did not fulfill our standards to consider them within one of the axes, and therefore they were left out of the analysis.

Table 1 presents each of the values listed within the three axes, as well as the percentage of respondents that considered the value as related to the axis. As can be observed, overall there are 7 values representing the Ethical-Social axis, 20 values falling on the Economical-Practical axis, and finally 13 values that belong to the Emotional-Developmental axis.

Insert Table 1 about Here

The second step of the data analysis was to identify the top values of public sector employees. In this case we focused on the five more important values, and assessed the axis in which they were placed. In order of importance, the top five values on our sample were: Acceptance (emotional), Adaptability (pragmatic), Belonging (ethical), Commitment (ethical), and finally Effectiveness (pragmatic). Therefore, out of the five top values, two represent the pragmatic axis, another two the ethical axis, and finally the last value is from the emotional axis. Dolan et al. (2006; 2011) argue that each one of these five values could be considered to have a stake of a 20% when determining the culture of a person. Following this criteria, and as Figure 1 shows, the values of public-sector employees from Spain will be determined by two main dimensions, ethical and pragmatic, standing with 40% each; and another dimension, emotional, that would count for the other 20%.

Insert Figure 1 about Here

Furthermore, we have also assessed how a subset of individual characteristics might shape the value systems of public-sector employees. In this sense, four variables have been differentiated: the gender of the respondents, their job level within public administrations, their formation level and finally their tenure.

The first analysis corresponds to the assessment of the value differences among female (n=1543, representing the 51.13 of the sample) and male (n=1475, representing the 48.87 of the sample) public-sector employees. Traditionally, female employees have been identified with ethical values to a higher degree than their male counterparts (Gilligan, 1982, Chodorow, 1990). To test this effect, we identified and classified the top 5 values among female and male respondents. Regarding males, their top values where: Adaptability (pragmatic), Acceptance (emotional), Commitment

(ethical), Efficiency (pragmatic), and Contribution (pragmatic). While, in the case of females, their top five values were: Acceptance (emotional), Adaptability (pragmatic), Belonging (ethical), Commitment (ethical), and Effectiveness (pragmatic). Figure 2 places each of the subgroup preferences within the tri-axial model.

Insert Figure 2 about Here

As results indicate, there are no major differences according to male and female top values. The only difference is that females place higher importance on ethical values than their male counterparts, since they choose belonging (ethical) instead of contribution (pragmatic), which was the males' choice. It is worth noting that both in the case of males and also in the case of females the emotional dimension is very small.

Furthermore, we were interested in the effects that the job level of the respondents might have on their value systems. Because of that, we repeated the analysis according to the job level of the respondents. In the Government of Andalusia, public servants are classified by law within a scale that ranges from 7 to 30. This scale reflects the responsibilities of the employee and is linked to the salary that the employee would receive in such a position. The place that a particular employee would have within this scale would be determined by the academic degree of the employee, and by their career within the organization. Overall, the higher the position within the scale (closer to 30) the more responsibilities the employee would have, and in addition, the economic benefits would increase substantially.

The first group (levels 12 to 21 and groups III, IV and V) has an n= 1180 representing 39.1% of the sample. They placed as top values: Adaptability (pragmatic), Acceptance (emotional), Acknowledgement (emotional), Commitment (ethical), and Structure (pragmatic). The second group

was formed by those employees from levels 22 to 25, and groups I and II. This group had an n= 1394 representing the 46.19% of the sample; and the values they choose were: Acceptance (emotional), Adaptability (pragmatic), Commitment (Ethical), Effectiveness (pragmatic), and Contribution (pragmatic). This shows two important differences with those employees of the first group: efficacy and belonging. The incorporation of these values gives to the pragmatism dimensions a leading role within their value systems. Finally, the third group (levels 26 to 30), with an n= 444 (14.71%) choose: Acceptance (emotional), Acknowledgement (emotional), Adaptability (pragmatic), Belonging (pragmatic), and Effectiveness (pragmatic). Note that within this group the ethical dimension did not achieve any importance at all. Figure 3 shows the representation of these values for each subgroup within the Tri-axial Model.

Insert Figure 3 about Here

Overall, we can see little variation between the top values of the employees and their job levels. A relevant conclusion, thought, is that the ethical values seem to lose importance when the employees have higher levels within the hierarchy of the public administration.

In addition to gender and job level, another important characteristic that has been historically identified to exert an influence on the value systems is the formation level of the employees (Kelsey, 1964). To contrast this argument, we have analyzed the top values of the sample according to the highest formation level that they had achieved; and we have differentiated five subgroups¹: those individuals that achieved the school graduate, employees with professional

¹ Note that in Spain those students who want to enroll in university studies must undertake a two year course that is known as High School (from 16 years to 18 years old). Thus we refer to 'School' as the period immediately after Elementary School. In addition, students can undertake a two year course that is aimed at training them for specific jobs, such as plumber or sports instructor, among others. We refer to this as Professional Education.

formation (non-university degree), with diplomas, with bachelors or masters degrees, and finally with PhDs.

The first subgroup according to the educational degree achieved represents those individuals that ended their education upon finishing school. The sample has 83 persons with this characteristic, representing the 2.8% of the overall respondents. Their top five values were: Usefulness (pragmatic), Completion (pragmatic), Adaptability (pragmatic), Commitment (ethical), Acknowledgement (emotional).

The second group was employees with professional formation, which represents 14 percent of this sample (423 cases). The values that this group identified to be the prominent ones were: Teamwork (pragmatic), Achievement (emotional), Effectiveness (pragmatic), Adaptability (pragmatic), Acceptance (emotional). The employees holding a diploma represent 26.8 percent of our sample (808 respondents). The values that they identify to be the most important were: Teamwork (pragmatic), Adaptability (pragmatic), Acceptance (emotional), Acknowledgement (emotional), and Belonging² (ethical).

The next subgroup analyzed is those individuals holding a bachelors degree or a master's degree (1609 employees, representing the 53.3 percent of the total sample of this study). It is interesting to see how this group placed high importance on pragmatic values, leaving the ethical dimension in a very modest position, while not considering the emotionality dimension at all. Their top five values were: Contribution (pragmatic), Usefulness (pragmatic), Effectiveness (pragmatic), Adaptability (pragmatic), and Belonging (ethical).

The last subgroup represents those individuals that hold a PhD, which is the smallest proportion of the sample (84 employees, representing the 2.8% of the sample). In this case, the most important value is not identified with one concept, but with four of them. In the case of the second most important value we also identify two concepts. To present these results, 20 percent of

² It should be noted that the value Belonging did not achieve significance when trying to incorporate it to one of the three dimensions of the Tri-axial Model, the decision to place it within the ethical dimension is due to the fact that it is the dimension where this value was identified with higher frequency.

the first value has been equally divided within the four values chosen by the members of this subgroup. In the case of the second most important value, the two values holding this position have been considered as having 10 percent in their dimensions. The final value set was the following: within the first position, the four values identified were Structure (pragmatic), Honesty (ethical), Teamwork (pragmatic) and Independence (ethical); the second most important value was shared between Adaptability (pragmatic) and Care (ethical); finally, the last three more important values were Acceptance (emotional), Achievement (emotional) and Professionalism (pragmatic). Figure 4 shows the representation of each subgroup within the Tri-axial model.

Insert Figure 4 about Here

As can be observed in Figure 4, important differences exist according to the education level of the employees. In many cases, the importance of the dimensions is similar, but the values that define each dimension change. For example, those individuals with an education that was more specific and focused in a particular skill, such as those with professional education degrees or diplomats, selected Teamwork as the most important. This can be due to the nature of their jobs within the organization. It is relevant also to note the little importance of the emotionality dimension for those individuals with bachelor or master's degrees, and the enormous importance that they place to pragmatic values.

Finally, the last variable considered on the post-hoc analysis is tenure, or the number of years that an employee has been working within the current organization. The literature argues that values are usually shaped and formed by socialization (Chatman and Jehn, 1994, Meglino and Ravlin, 1998). Because of that, the exposure that an individual has had to the socialization of an organization might influence his or her value systems. To assess how tenure can affect the value

system of the employees, we have distinguished six groups: those with 5 years or less (n=467, representing 15.44 percent of the sample), between 6 and 10 years (n=527, representing 17.46 percent of the sample), between 11 and 20 years (n=577, representing 19.12 percent of the sample), between 21 and 30 years (n=1003, representing 33.23 percent of the sample), between 31 and 40 years (n=336, representing 11.13 percent of the sample), and finally those working within the same organization for more than 40 years (n=108, representing 3.58 percent of the sample).

Individuals with short tenures, 5 years or less, responded that their top values were: Acceptance (emotional), Acknowledgement (emotional), Commitment (ethical), Adaptability (pragmatic), Discipline (pragmatic). Those working within the same organization between 6 and 10 years chose: Achievement (emotional), Acceptation (emotional), Adaptability (pragmatic), Effectiveness (pragmatic), and Belonging (ethical). The third group, individuals with tenures between 21 and 30 years, selected: Acceptance (emotional), Adaptability (pragmatic), Achievement (emotional), Belonging (ethical), and Commitment (ethical). Giving less importance to the ethical dimensions, those with tenures of more than 31 years and less than 40 decided that their top values were: Adaptability (pragmatic), Acknowledgement (emotional), Acceptance (emotional), Commitment (ethical), and Contribution (pragmatic). And the last group, with more than 40 years of experience, selected: Accuracy (pragmatic), Discipline (pragmatic), Acceptance (emotional), Adaptability (pragmatic), and Acknowledgement (emotional). Figure 5 shows these results within the Tri-axial Model framework.

Insert Figure 5 about Here

As the figure 5 shows, no major differences are observed among employees with different tenures. The subgroup with more differences is the one with higher tenures. They place less value

on the ethical dimension in favor of the pragmatic one. It could be argued, that when someone has been working for more than 40 years within an organization, the priority becomes to be realistic and to place more importance to pragmatic values such as accuracy or discipline.

Another possible explanation for the effects of tenure within organizational values is the age of the respondents. This is supported by the existing empirical evidence on the effect of age within the value systems of public-sector employees (Jurkiewicz and Brown, 1998). It is obvious that those individuals with higher tenures would be more likely to be older than those with shorter tenures, especially within public organizations, where the employee turnover is very low. Because of that, one could argue that the tenure effects are not really due to the number of years that an employee has been working within the same organization, but that in reality what makes a difference is the employee's age.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the values among public-sector employees in Spain reflects the importance of pragmatic values, and also of those values identified within the ethical dimension. This is in line with previous studies within public organizations that reported the importance that public-sector employees place on ethical values (Aldridge and Stoker, 2002, van der Wal et al., 2008, Jelovac et al., 2011). Therefore, when managing employees from public organizations, emphasis should be placed on the development of an organizational culture that is both pragmatic and ethical. Moreover, we have also seen how these values change according to several demographic characteristics of the respondents, especially when considering their education and their tenure. Thus, fostering the idea that values are developed through the socialization of individuals with their environments, whether this is done at the university (Kelsey, 1964) or in the organizations where they work (Chatman and Jehn, 1994, Meglino and Ravlin, 1998).

Since values have an important effect on the management of organizations (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998), the results of this study might have several management implications that should be considered in public administration. For example, an effort should be made to differentiate the values of public-sector employees from those of public managers. This is due to the fact that, as our results have shown, the values among those individuals with more executive responsibilities tend to place more emphasis on the ethical dimension, while those employees from lower positions within the organizational hierarchy place more importance to the emotional dimension. Managers should thus be aware of this difference and emphasize the emotional dimension of their employees. Furthermore, the value differences among employees should also be considered when forming work teams, because the value differences among their members can have an important effect on their job attitudes (Kirkman and Shapiro, 2001). In this sense, the importance of managing by values (Dolan 2006) will to be significant within those organizations of the public sphere in order to align the different values of the public-sector employees with the mission of the organizations where they work.

The results of this study can also be of interest among policy makers. In this sense, policy makers should consider if the value systems of public employees reflect the value system that one should expect from a public servant. For example, we have seen that in some groups the importance of the ethical dimension is extremely low; this can become problematic for some job positions within public administrations, as the ethical standards that are presupposed are very high. Future studies should assess how public employees' values can explain unethical decisions. In addition, the results found in the present study represent an interesting line of research to be developed further. Specially, focusing on how the personal values of public-sector employees might relate to a subset of organizational and job outcomes; following the recent trend to consider the effects of personal characteristics of public servants on public organizations (Esteve et al., 2013). Furthermore, another interesting venue of research would be to assess the value congruence of the members of groups of

employees and see how these affect variables such as their performance, or their well being within the organization.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1: Classification of Values According to the Tri-axial Model

Ethical-Social	Economical-Pragmatic	Emotional-Developmental
Candor (67.0%)	Accuracy (83%)	Happiness (72.3%)
Respect (66.1%)	Structure (79.8%)	Pleasure (69.4%)
Honesty (63.8%)	Completion (76.5%)	Satisfaction (67.2%)
Authenticity (57.9%)	Efficiency (72.4%)	Affection (64.1%)
Integrity (57.1%)	Effectiveness (72.4%)	Adventure (62.4%)
Credibility (52%)	Preparedness (67.6%)	Playfulness (61.5%)
	Usefulness (66.6%)	Acknowledgement (60.3%)
Care (55.1%)	Expertise (65.6%)	Passion (59.4%)
	Logic (63.0%)	Optimism (59.2%)
	Professionalism (63.0%)	Growth (58.0%)
	Teamwork (62.8%)	Appreciation (57.8%)
	Knowledge (61.0%)	Humor (54.5%)
	Synergy (61.1%)	Achievement (50.2%)
	Support (60.9)	
	Contribution (59.5%)	
	Discipline (57.3%)	
	Punctuality (56.8%)	
	Leadership (53.6)	
	Realism (52.3%)	
	Adaptability (50.9%)	

Figure 1: Tri-axial Model of Top Values among Public-sector Employees

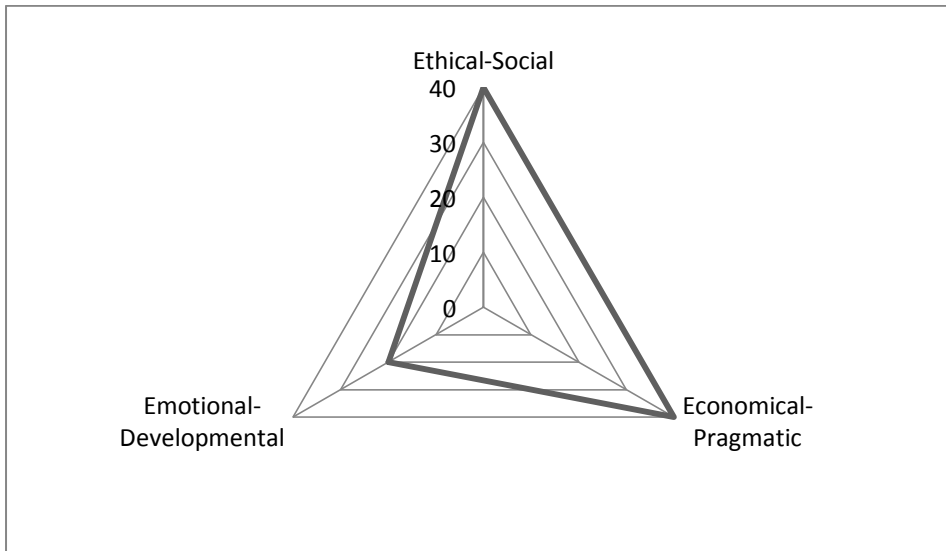


Figure 2: Tri-axial Model of Top Values among Public-sector Employees for Males and Females

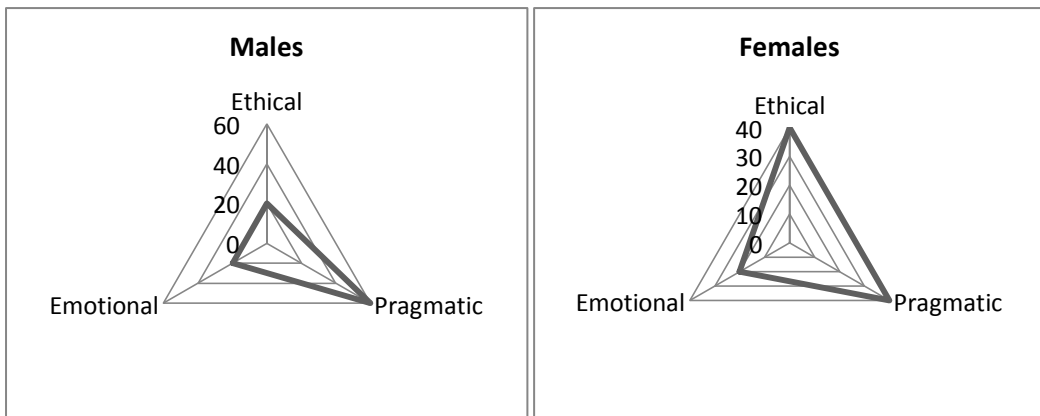


Figure 3: Tri-axial Model of Top Values among Public-sector Employees According to their

Job Level

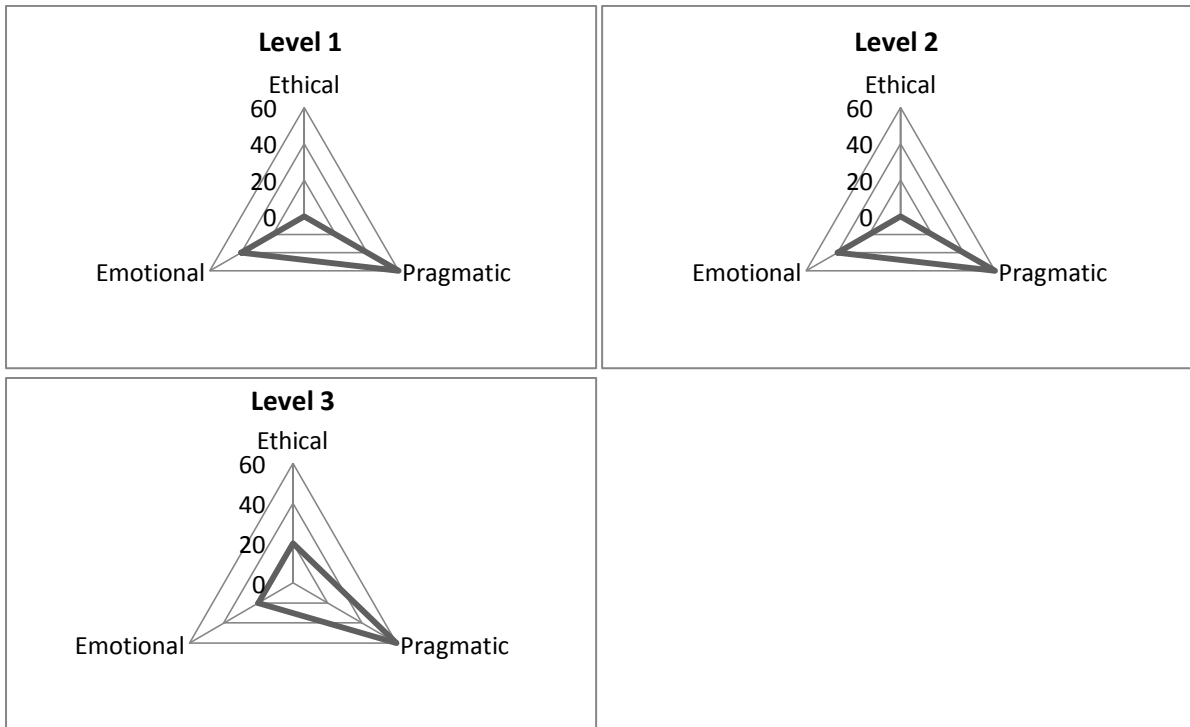


Figure 4: Tri-axial Model of Top Values among Public-sector Employees According to their Formation Level

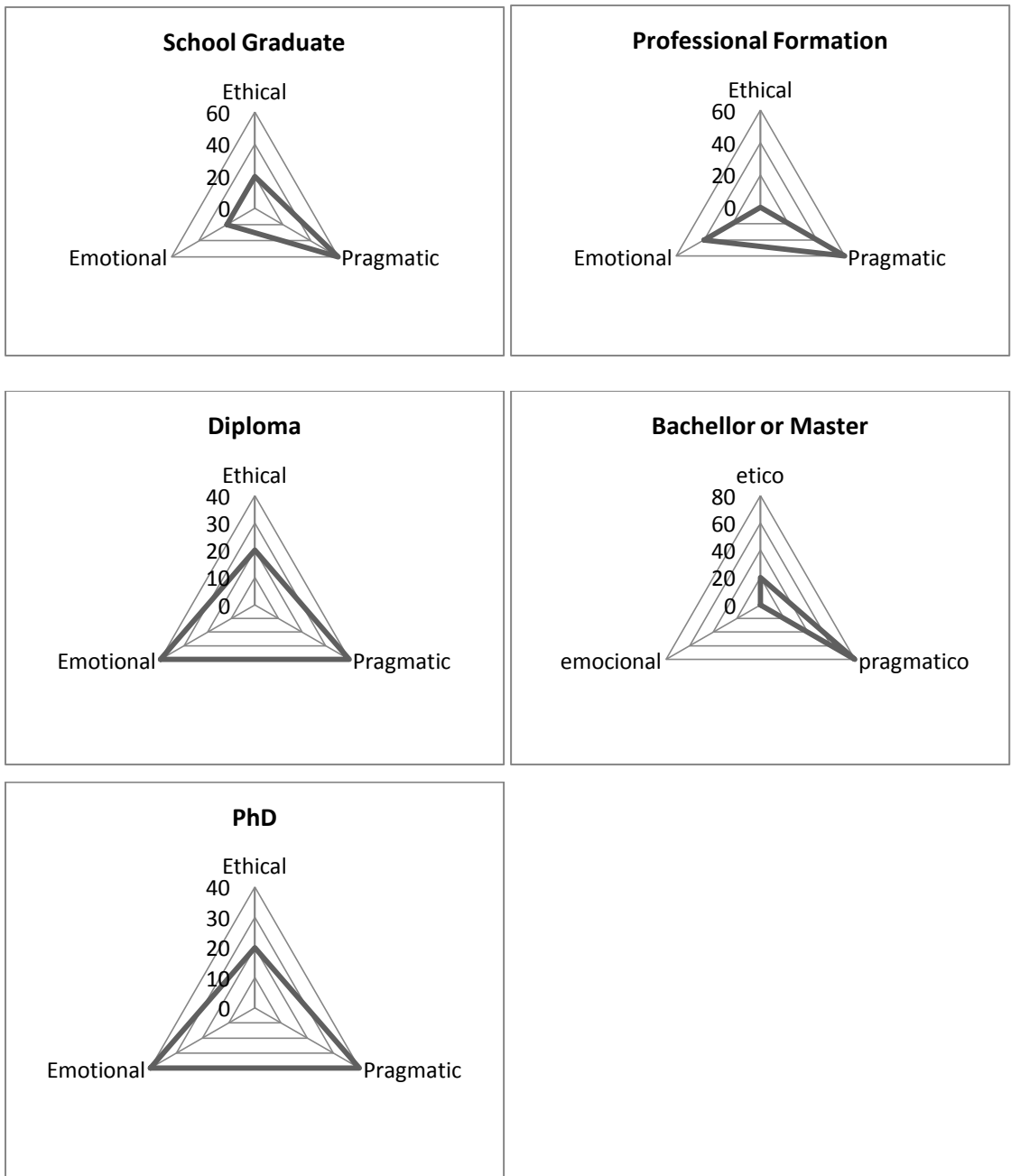


Figure 5: Tri-axial Model of Top Values among Public-sector Employees According to their

Tenure

