



Role of Ethical Culture in Creating Public Value

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ABSTRACT

The concept of public value is very important for public sector organization and it is considered that there is no more important topic in public administration and public policy than public value. The underlying principle of the public value concept is that the value to citizens should guide the operations of public organizations on the delivery of public services. The goal of all sectors of the economy, public and private, is to create or increase the value created by their contribution. The term 'public value' can be defined as what the public values – what they are willing to make sacrifices of money and freedom to achieve, and describes the contribution made by the public sector to economic, social and environmental well-being of a society or nation. The concept of public value has been extended in many different ways but the major focus is on the sources of public value and how to create public value. In this study our main goal is to find the relationship between ethical culture and public value and what is the impact of ethical culture on public value. Ethical culture refers to the ethical quality of a work environment, which is defined as the shared values, norms, and beliefs that can stimulate ethical behavior. Organization's ethical culture is related to its employees' intended responses to observed and ultimately promotes ethical behavior and this ethical behavior is the backbone of public value creation.

Keywords: Public Value, Ethical Culture, Public Organization

JEL Classifications: J10, M10

1. INTRODUCTION

The idea of public value is very important in the current development of studies on public administration (Esposito and Ricci, 2015) and research has paid greater attention to the study of public values (Bozeman, 2007; de Graaf and van der Wal, 2010; Meynhardt, 2009; Andersen et al., 2012; Fisher and Grant, 2013; Hartley et al., 2015).

The concept of public value has been a fascinating issue among public policy makers and managers in the UK, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand, and several developing countries over the past 10 years or so. The inspiring book that facilitates the policy makers is *Creating Public value* by Harvard's Mark Moore (Moore, 1995). More effort has been done in emerging the concept and applying it to the UK context since by the Cabinet Office (Kelly et al.,

2002), in developing countries context (Karunasena and Deng, 2012), the Work Foundation (Blaug et al., 2006), and by Benington and colleagues at Warwick University (Benington and Moore, 2011). Critical observation and discussion is also now developing within the academic community (Stoker, 2006; Bozeman, 2007; Benington, 2009; Fisher and Grant, 2013; Dahl and Soss, 2014; Esposito and Ricci, 2015).

The concept of public value was introduced by Moore (1995) in reaction to neoliberalism. Moore motivated to identify that the public sector can create value. He took public organization as a production function; it recruits the public manager to recognize the actions and procedures that produce public service, and to find methods to add value. The concept of public value finally made it possible to develop another model of governance to the traditional establishment and NPM which is approved by certain governments

and the academic world and it is called as the management of public value (O'Flynn, 2007). To define the meaning of public action and fights against public sector failures it should be form on the independent procedures (Bozeman, 2007). Its supporters stresses that focus should not only be on pursuing efficiency goals, but also on its meaning which is reliable with the expectations of society. This model drives the framework for the failure of NPM to consider citizens' preferences (Horner and Hutton, 2011).

There is usually no approved definition of the concept of public value (Benington and Moore, 2011). Public value can be ethical, if it is supported by a public organization. It can also be real: The value of the product or service provided by public action. Public value may also mean that the value added by the public action for the common good. This progression in the direction of public value continuous; from the theoretical to the real, from target to execution, from the government level to the public level, the difference only refers between the goals and outcomes of public action. Furthermore, what thing create a value for public? Bozeman (2007) differentiates between private values which are based on procedural individualism and public values which is certainly a normative approach. 'The "public values" of a society are those which provides a normative agreement about (1) The benefits and human rights which should be (or should not be) permitted to the citizens; (2) the responsibilities of citizens towards society, the State and others; (3) and the codes on which governments and policies should be based' (Bozeman, 2007). According to (Bozeman, 2007) private values and public values are not opposite, but they are in different catalogues. Public values guide and legitimize public action. Eventually, it is the presence of an agreement which is developed from autonomous processes that makes it possible to define a value as public (Bozeman, 2007; Moore, 1995; Rhodes and Wanna, 2007). Private firms only care about the current shareholders, who only expect a return, while a public sector organizations are accelerative towards the next generation (Spano, 2009).

Public values talks about how a public organization proposes to contribute to society and how Public management methods can play its role between targets and activities. The values supported will be then examined through the organizational objectives and the values which are created due to the results and impact of public action (Colon and Guerin-Schneider, 2015).

Moore (1995) suggests a model built on the role of the public manager, who will design and implements public value creation approaches. This approach is based on three mutually dependent and essential processes. First process describes how public value will explain and postulate the impacts expected by the public. Second process explains the support for planned action which is based on the creation of authorizing surroundings, it means that an institutional framework is required that allows action, as well as the creation and will look after for a compassionate partnership of stakeholders. Third process aims that these approaches must be operationally possible. A working ability must therefore be recognized to control the operational resources (finances, human resources, skills and technologies). Moore brings these three processes together in the form of a strategic triangle.

Most of the public value discussion is concentrated on how to create public value. Talbot (2009) has stated that 'creating public value' might become the 'the next "Big Thing" in public management', as it better corresponds with 'current unrestrained events' (van Eijck and Lindemann, 2012) and it is the final purpose of managerial actions in public sector organizations (Spano, 2009). According to Moore (1995) the essential purpose of public managers is to create public value. (Stoker, 2006) proposes an idea that public sector organizations should make a linkage with other public sector organizations and private sector organizations to create public value. According to (Morse, 2010) public value can be created by Leadership of an organization; by solving the problems, improve competence, effectiveness or equality of public services, improve public service, or respond to public service. Thompson and Rizova (2015) claimed that public value is created by the government by managing risks and promoting stability. Williams and Shearer (2011) highlighted that the effort should be done to find out that who is accountable to create public value.

Mendel and Brudney (2014) contended that Humanity at its best is in the business of creating public value. The public value framework demands public managers to be innovative in their work, helping to distinguish and create what is valuable for the citizens (Hartley et al., 2015). Moore's concept of public value defends cooperative partnerships between public administrators and various groups in society (Prebble, 2015). According to Spano (2009) management control system plays an important role in creating public value in the organizations; it consists of organizational culture, organizational structure and essential control system. (Shaw, 2013) put emphasis on the better environment of an organization for the creation of public value. Spano (2009) proposed that future research may investigate how organizational culture in public organizations affects the creation of public value. Rutgers (2015) concluded that the concept of public value is an uncertain concept, and that is probably as good as it gets.

On the basis of above literature it is clear that majority of researchers discuss the relationship of leadership and organizational culture with public value but there is less emphasis on the ethical aspect of organizational culture in relation to public value therefore the focus of our study is to find out the relationship between ethical culture and public value.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Public Value

Concept of public value is new and in recent year's researchers paid significant devotion towards it. The term public value was firstly used by the Mark H. Moore in his book, *Creating Public Value* (1995) in which he define public value as, "A framework that helps us connect what we believe is valuable ... and requires public resources, with improved ways of understanding what our 'publics' value and how we connect to them." This concept of public value gained less attention during the 1st years after publication, the concept of public value gains importance in Tony Blair's administration during the early 2000s (Bryson, Crosby and Bloomberg, 2014). From there, the concept of public value spread

first to other Westminster systems, namely Australia and New Zealand, and then to Continental Europe (Meynhardt, 2009). In Europe, public broadcasters such as the British BBC, Germany's ZDF, and Austria's ORF have been the most prominent applicers of public value (Diefenbach, 2011).

Kelly and Mulgan (2002) claimed that public value in an organization is built on three building blocks which are services, outcome and trust. The first and most important building block of public value is the services which are provided by the organization to its customers and second building block i.e.; outcome of these services should be positive and valuable for whole society and above all trust of society or customer on the provided services and its result is most important. Even with the best services and positive outcomes, if the public fails to develop any trust on the organization then it will put the concept of public value at risk. Founded on the idea of (Blaug et al., 2006) that only public satisfaction is not enough to measure public value but some others features are also needed like what are the expectation of public before providing them a particular service, and in which manner this service is provided to them and how they use this service. O'Flynn (2007) describes public value as moving away from the philosophical position of market in competition with state facility. Stoker (2006) views public value as a framework for post competitive combined network forms of governance. According to (Rainey, 2009) Public value is a comprehensive approach to think about improvement in public service and public management. The contribution of an organization and the methods of contribution towards society is termed as Public value (Colon and Guerin-Schneider, 2015).

In spite of all the positivity, still, after 20 years the concept of public value has not gained as much importance as it is being used by most authors without any problems. It is an everyday concept that can be used successfully in theory and practice (Rutgers, 2015). On the basis of previous discussion we can define public value as:

The values on which governments and policies should be based for the improvement in public service and public management to provide an opportunity or program to all citizens, by considering them as stakeholder, either they are directly benefit from it or not.

Various supporters claim public value should be seen as an example (Stoker, 2006; Benington, 2009) as a concept (Kelly et al., 2002) a model (O'Flynn, 2005) an experimental device or even a story (Smith, 2004). The term has been compared with lucid choice and neo-liberal theories and with economic and individualistic theories of consumption (Alford, 2008). Benington (2005) compares 'exchange value' (private choice derived from neo-classical economics) with 'public value' that includes economic as well as social and political value. It has also been related to associated concepts such as 'consensual policymaking' (Marton and Phillips, 2005) and the 'public interest' (Bozeman, 2002). Possibly the unclear nature of public value and its various applications fuel its popularity depends on all things to all people.

Bold statements and great expectations are sometimes stated, regarding public value as an important theoretical and practical

"guiding concept." For example, public value is observed as undertaking independent shortfalls in modern public administration (Benington and Moore, 2011) it is progressively used in managerial training (Jorgensen and Rutgers, 2015); it is presented as "a hard-edged tool for decision-making" (Alford and O'Flynn, 2009), and "a rigorous way of defining, measuring and improving performance" (Cole and Parston, 2006). Due to the attention on public values, it has been stated that we are even entering a "new era in public management" (Talbot, 2009).

Some academics think about PVs in terms of fundamental values, sequential ordering, or other junctions or dimensional divisions (Rutgers, 2015). Others intellectualize PVs in terms of "hard" and "soft" values (Steenhuisen, 2009); separate, qualified, managerial, authorized, and public-interest values (Van Wart, 1998); moral, autonomous, skilled, and people values (Kernaghan, 2003); political, legal, organizational, and market values (Nabatchi, 2012),

2.2. Ethical Culture

In the early 1980's, the idea of organizational culture burst out on the management scene (Schein, 2004). Next thing come round is the "identification" of corporate culture; in which organizations began to be acknowledged as best, and subsequently, worst, using measurements that looked far away from ordinary financial performance. To define organizational culture; more emphasize is given on the role of values (Schneider et al., 2013). The ethical dimension that reveals organizational ethics can be define as organizational ethical culture (Treviño et al., 2000). Thus, organizational ethical culture is an exact dimension of organizational culture that labels organizational ethics and forecasts organizational ethical behavior.

Over the past several years, ethical culture has received growing consideration in the business and organizational ethics literature, but still it is underdeveloped in research (Kangas et al., 2015; Silva and Opatha, 2015). The main reason behind that is due to the limited number of tools offered to measure the presence of ethical qualities in an organization (Kaptein, 2008) and absence of empirical proof available with respect to the rationality of these tools (Huhtala et al., 2011).

The ethical feature of organizational culture bring up the principles of right and wrong in an organizational background, and it creates conditions that help to explain and predict the (un)ethical behavior of managers and employees (Huhtala et al., 2011). These principles help to manage the interactions of organizational members when they are involved in organizational activities (Pettigrew et al., 2001). Situations in which ethical concern is required in a work environment can be different from ordinary ethical challenges come across in other fields of life (Crane and Matten, 2007). For that reason, both employees and managers need advices for how to act in ethically challenging situations. For the encouragement of ethical culture; considerable managerial devotion is needed, it means, sensible actions should be taken by the manager so that an environment will be created, in which preferred ethical standards can appear and flourish (Schminke et al., 2005). Earlier studies have put some light on the importance and impact of the ethical culture of organizations. One obvious relationship has been established

between (un) ethical behavior and ethical culture: The stronger the ethical culture of an organization, the less unethical behavior was observed (Weaver and Agle, 2002). Features of ethical culture i.e., leadership, reward systems, apparent justice, morals, they are the main discussion in the organization. The important thing which supports ethical behavior in an organization is the positive moral behavior and employee's awareness that the company's actions are reliable with its policies (Trevino et al., 1999). Brown and Treviño (2006) suggested that stronger ethical culture will boost ethical behavior and it will support the progress and maintenance of ethical leadership in organizations. It is also found that ethical culture of organizations have an impact on organizational commitment: If the culture was supposed as ethical, employees were more dedicated to the organization (Rashid et al., 2004). These studies have, still, operationalized as a one-dimensional concept of ethical culture, without postulating its different sub-dimensions. For example, in the study by Treviño et al. (1998), shows that in the investigative factor study, all 14 items of different features of ethical culture resulted in a single factor. Kaptein (2008) was the first to enhance the concept of ethical organizational culture by using multiple normative dimensions, which focused on the ethicality of corporations in terms of their qualities. The Corporate Ethical Virtues model (CEV model) is based mainly on Solomon's (2004) theory of business ethics. According to Solomon, the Aristotelian approach to business ethics "begins with the two-pronged idea that it is individual virtue and honesty that count, but good corporate and social policy encourage and nourish individual virtue and honesty" (2004, p. 1023). Kaptein's (2011) model differentiates between eight merits, which can encourage ethical behavior in managers and employees in an organization: (1) Clearness; real and understandable expectations concerning the behavior of employees; (2) congruency of managers; the level to which managers act as a good example in terms of ethics; (3) congruency of management; the level to which the senior management behaves in accordance with ethical expectations; (4) possibility; conditions created by the organization to enable employees to fulfill with normative expectations; (5) supportability; the level to which the organization supports ethical behavior among management and employees; (6) transparency; the extent to which the magnitudes of behavior of managers and employees are noticeable; (7) discuss ability; the chance to discuss ethical matters, such as ethical problems or supposed unethical behavior; and (8) sanction ability, the level of implementation of ethical behavior through punishment for behaving unethically and rewards for behaving ethically. This model and its measure, which is described next, were employed in our study.

Kaptein (2008) has developed a self-report questionnaire for determining the ethical culture of organizations based on the CEV model. The previous version of the scale, called Integrity Thermometer was used in two recent studies of large U.S. samples. The first study inspected the relationship between ethical culture and ethics programs and showed that different dimensions of ethical culture had different relationships (in terms of significance, strength and nature) with the scope of an ethics program. For example, ethics programs seemed to participate mainly to increase the clearness of the ethical culture in organizations (Huhtala et al. 2011).

2.3. Ethical Culture and Public Value

We recommend that ethical culture will be associated with public value by drawing on social information processing theory (SIPT; Salancik and Pfeffer, 1978). SIPT proposes that individuals should look to their surroundings for indications to describe their work environment and to understand suitable methods to behave. Ethical culture can work as an assistant to individuals in order to help them to know about what kind of (un) acceptable and (un) ethical behaviors are present in the work unit. The social environment or ethical culture in this case, delivers information to individuals as to see the suitability of public value in the work environment. The ethical culture also provides signals to individuals as how others think in the work environment about acceptable public value. These apparent actions and approaches and behavior of others update individuals' to think about important and appropriate public values which are likely to be rewarded and what values are not. Thus, the ethical culture is responsible for providing full understanding and meaning of acceptable public value in the work unit, which helps individuals to decide the suitable ways to behave. In other words, work culture provides individuals with the group standards about suitable public value in the unit. Therefore, if ethical culture is higher in highlighting ethical actions, employees will have higher public value.

Present research has studied the relationship between ethical culture and employee behavior. Ethical culture is defined as "those aspects and conventions of organizational behavior that either encourage the organization to operate in a sustainable way or deter it from doing so" (Riivari and Lamsa, 2013).

Treviño et al. (2000) studied that there is a positive relationship between ethical culture and ethical behavior as well as between ethical culture and organizational commitment. (Kaptein, 2011) found that the organization's ethical culture is linked to its employees' future responses to detect the wrongdoings. This result supports the idea that the ethical culture of an organization encourages ethical behavior. Riivari et al. (2012) examined through a trial study the role of ethical culture on organizational advancement and found that the two are linked. Huhtala et al. (2011) examined the role of ethical culture in the professional well-being of managers and found that ethical culture is positively related with managers' work commitment. The results of these studies show that an organization's ethical culture is associated with different organizational results (Riivari and Lamsa, 2014).

Main objective of this study is to find the relation of ethical culture with different dimensions of public value. (Sawhney et al., 2005) Sawhney and Chason (2005) found in their case study that for the application of successful lean thinking the major machineries are organization's culture and its associated organizational behavior. Somers (2001) related organizational cultural features to employee behavior in the framework of formal and informal controls. Marksberry et al., (2011) found that the lean problem solving technique of plan-do-check-act can result in major improvements but for this the organizational standards, values and beliefs have to change before this can be achieved.

Existing literature has postulated that organizational culture and corporate environmental sustainability are closely related, but

with flaws in business culture being responsible for obstructing environmental progress. Considerably, weaknesses in culture can constrain sustainability creativities from taking root; strengths in culture can support these creativities. For example, organizations that support employee participation in environmental efforts have proved greater success in reducing the company's environmental impact (Ramus and Steger, 2000). The reasons behind this close relationship between environmental management and company culture have much to do with the nature of environmental issues.

To carry on the energy and proficiency example, a source of great savings is often found in apparently small behavioral changes, such as turning off computers and monitors at the end of the day. These types of unpaid actions, sometimes called organizational citizenship behaviors, are not included in formal job descriptions or motivation structures. To drive unpaid environmental actions, understood cultural factors can play a significant role (Boiral, 2009).

By allowing and developing organizational culture as part of corporate sustainability efforts, companies are able to better mix these sustainability-related initiatives into daily business activities (Baumgartner, 2009). Suitable sustainability plans and activities to the organizational culture also lessen the risk of the company misrepresenting its environmental performance and being observed as fake; that is, the risk of "green washing" is reduced (Abbett et al., 2010).

The ethical culture of an organization and organizational innovativeness were positively related in the public sector: The organization's ethical culture was important to behavioral, planned and process innovativeness. Our results offer support to previous opinions for the positive effect of ethical organizational culture on organizational outcomes (Huhtala et al., 2011). In this research it was revealed that establishing ethical standards and practices can improve behavioral, strategic and process innovativeness in public sector organizations, while in the research by Huhtala et al. (2011), in which the same measurement of ethical culture was applied, it was found that the ethical culture of organizations have an influence on the work commitment of managers. From the result of above research we can conclude that it pays for public sector organizations to invest in the development of ethical organizational culture when their goal is organizational innovativeness (Riivari et al., 2012).

Treviño et al. (1998) also put emphasize on the effects of ethical background on behavior, he suggest that the supposed ethical background fundamentally defines the acceptable or genuine behavior within the organization. Their study results provide support for this statement, indicating that employees who observed the ethical background in their organization to be more positively reported. Views of ethical environment define what is acceptable behavior within a particular work organization, it seems that such perceptions will be more likely to have an impact on behavior than employees' perceptions of what is morally right or wrong (Shafer and Simmons, 2011). This argument is reliable with the empirical results which concluded that certain dimensions of ethical environment had significant effects on employees' self-reported behavioral purposes.

The above definitions of Ethical Culture and discussions documented that, Ethical Culture is a critical part of the organizational culture, and it had been abstracted in several ways, based on different theories. It consists of moral beliefs and rules, which are used to oversee how employees are supposed to behave, when dealing with various parties inside and outside the organization, when making decisions individually and collectively and finally develop public value among employees. Further, Ethical Culture is an intellectual context consisting of ethical beliefs and rules according to which individuals of the organization behave (Silva and Opatha, 2015).

3. CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between ethical culture and public value. After reviewing the literature, we concluded that ethical culture of an organization is an important factor to create public value among employees. The previous literature shows that ethical culture of an organization formulate the ethical behavior of the employees. This ethical behavior motivates employees to provide the best and desired services to its customer without compromising requirements of future generation. Ethical behavior also encourages employees to follow rules and regulation, show professionalism and do not accept any undue pressure from political elites or other pressure groups. This ethical behavior encourages the employee to perform their tasks for the betterment of citizens, their environment, their organization and overall for the future generations. These all characteristics which are created through ethical culture are actually the public value. It is evident from the above discussion that ethical culture is an important factor to create public value among employees.

As public value is considered a most important topic in the field of public administration and public policy therefore our study will provide significant insight to government officials and upper management to establish ethical culture in their organization to create public value. Previous studies reveal that upper management vision and policies formulate the culture of a particular organization and subsequently articulate the behavior of their employees. If upper management is willing to establish the ethical culture in their organization then it will positively create ethical behavior of employees which ultimately create public value.

This study will also help the middle management in an organization to get the better result from their subordinates. This study shows that ethical culture of an organization plays an important role in formulating the behavior of the employees. If immediate supervisor and middle manager treat their subordinate ethically and establish ethical culture in their organization then ultimately it will leave a positive effect on the behavior of their subordinates which leads to better and desired performance on workplace and as result create public value.

Although it is very comprehensive study which clearly indicate that there is positive relation between ethical culture and public value yet it is not free of limitations. The major limitation is that it is just a review of past literature and do not empirically tested. For future researcher it is suggested to empirically validate this study.

It is also suggested to find out the relationship of ethical culture and public value with some potential mediator or moderator like organizational politics or psychological contract.

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