Public employees in hybrid organizational contexts: what commitment anchors and what HRM practices?

Employés publics dans les environnements hybrides : Quelles ancres d'engagement et quelles pratiques de GRH ?

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ABSTRACT

Using an exploratory qualitative approach, we analyze the workplace commitment anchors of public officials working in post-bureaucratic contexts. The concept of Public workplace commitment broadens Organizational commitment to conditions and professional realities not exclusively related to organizations and bearing hybrid characteristics. This research identifies what commitment anchors are dominant and typical of post-bureaucratic public environments, alongside the traditional anchors described in the literature (organization, work team, supervisor, job, profession), and examines their implications in terms of public HRM. By mobilizing an analytical framework based on the multiple anchors of the relationship to work, we provide a deeper understanding of the workplace commitment of public employees.

Key-words

Public Work Place Commitment, commitment anchors, hybrid public sector organizations, public HRM

RÉSUMÉ

Mobilisant une approche exploratoire, nous analysons les ancres d'engagement au travail chez les agents publics œuvrant dans des contextes post-bureaucratiques. La notion d'Engagement au travail élargit le concept d'engagement organisationnel (Organizational Commitment) à des conditions et réalités professionnelles non exclusivement liées aux organisations et présentant des caractéristiques hybrides. Cette recherche permet d'identifier quelles ancres d'engagement sont dominantes et typiques des environnements publics post-bureaucratiques, à côté des ancres classiques identifiées dans la littérature (organisation, équipe de travail, superviseur, emploi, profession), tout en analysant leurs implications en termes de GRH publique. En mobilisant un cadre analytique basé sur les ancrages multiples de la relation au travail, cette étude permet une compréhension plus fine de l'engagement au travail des agents publics Suisses.

Mots-clés

Engagement public au travail, ancres d'engagement, organisations publiques hybrides, GRH publique

1. CONTEXT AND ISSUE

Marked by the significant managerial reforms carried out in the OECD countries (C. Hood, 1991; Christopher Hood & Peters, 2004; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2009; Reichard, 2002), current public administrations attempt to find the right balance between public service values (and standards) and those inherited from the business world (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991); which notably emphasize performance, and a "customer" focus. This is where *Post-bureaucracy* progressively appears (Christensen & Laegreid, 2007; Emery & Giauque, 2016; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011): a new hybrid environment upending the codes, values, and motivations which at the foundation public employees' attitudes and behaviors. Numerous studies in this field, especially those looking at Public Service Management (PSM) (Desmarais & Gamassou, 2014), attest to deep questioning with respect to these issues. If a large body of literature has taken up the question of identity-based reconsiderations and the new outlines of the *public ethos* (Buffat, 2014; I Fortier & Emery 2012; Giauque, Ritz, Varone, & Anderfuhren-Biget, 2012; Horton, 2006), another, even larger body of literature, focuses on the specific values and motivations of public personnel, thus challenging the dominant logic of managerial reforms (Giauque, Anderfuhren-Biget, & Varone, 2013; J.L. Perry, 1996; W. Vandenabeele, Steijn, Camilleri *et al.*, 2008). Oppositely, very few recent studies have looked at public employee commitment, and when that is the case, they mainly focus on *organizational* commitment, in the tradition of research based on the three-dimensional concept developed by Allen and Meyer (J. P. Meyer, D.J. Stanley, L. Herscovitch, & L. Topolnytsky, 2002a). Yet, it is important to offer models that more clearly characterize the specificity of workplace commitment in the public sector (G. A. Boyne, 2002; Buchanan, 1974; Nyhan, 1999), particularly in an increasingly hybrid environment, in which both public and private management values and principles coexist. This is now an era when career trajectories are becoming more and more nomadic, even "protean" (Franck Biétry & Laroche, 2011; D. Hall, 1976). It thus seems both empirically and theoretically appropriate to extend the concept of organizational commitment beyond the boundaries of public organizations.

While recognizing the moderating effect of the NPM reforms, most studies done on the organizational commitment of public employees in post-bureaucratic environments (Steijn & Leisink, 2006) have almost always focused on their precursors (Castaing, 2006; Giauque, Resenterra, & Siggen, 2013; Jung & Ritz, 2014; Rayner, 2012). These studies reveal determinants that are specific to the public sector such as Political support for reforms, notably from managers (Oh & Park, 2011; Yang & Pandey, 2009) ; Public service motivation (PSM) (Camilleri, 2006; Markovits, Davis, Fay, & Dick, 2010; J.L. Perry, 1996), the Psychological contract (PC) (Vandenberghe, 2005), and the congruence between individual goals and values and those brought by current public service reforms (Giauque, Resenterra, *et al.*, 2013). However, these precursors of organizational commitment have shed no particular light on the new anchors which are likely to galvanize 21st century public employees. Following upon the work of scholars who conceptualized multiple commitments, several authors now recommend integrating the other side of the multi-dimensionality of the concept of organizational commitment : its foci (also called anchors in this paper), and their related discretionary behaviors (T. E. Becker, Billings, Eveleth, & Gilbert, 1996; Van Dick, Wagner, Stellmacher, & Christ, 2004). Consequently, the shortage of research focusing on post-bureaucratic working environments, which tend to reveal an alteration of the relationship to work and of the individual-organization bond (Diefenbach, 2009), justifies the need for a new conceptualization of the workplace commitment of public employees.

2. GOALS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Commitment refers to a force binding the individual to a specific action with respect to a given anchor, which (force) translates through an attitude or behavior meant to maintain this bond (J.P. Meyer & L. Herscovitch, 2001). As such, it is liable to stem from various anchors such as the organization (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; John P. Meyer & Allen, 1991; R.T. Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982), the union (Barling, Wade, & Fullagar, 1990; Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson, & Spiller, 1980), the job and the profession (Blau, 1985; John P. Meyer, Natalie J. Allen, & Catherine A. Smith, 1993), the team and the supervisor (T. E. Becker, 1992; Hunt & Morgan, 1994; Locke,

Latham, & Erez, 1988), the career, etc. (D. T. Hall *et al.*, 1996).

While the literature struggles on the difference of commitment levels between public and private sector employees, and hence on the specificity of public sector organizational commitment (G. A. Boyne, 2002; Goulet & Frank, 2002), we hereby propose a broader conceptualization of commitment through the concept of "Public Workplace Commitment". We hereafter mean to explore and discover its most salient anchors. For the purpose of this article, PWPC means: ***The way public employees self-identify, self-commit, act upon, and express their loyalty, sometimes beyond their own interests, to anchors (goals, values, attitudes, behaviors, social entities etc.) which are more or less salient within their work environments*** (inspired by (Valéau, 2007; W. Vandenabeele *et al.*, 2008).

Upon this extended conceptual base, our goals for the present study are summarized as follows:

1. Examine the workplace commitments of public employees working in more or less hybrid environments (as is generally the case in the Swiss civil service, cf. Emery, 2013).

2. Map the most salient anchors whereby public employees make sense of their workplace commitments, and discuss their publicness, in order to understand how these anchors bear some public features or not.

3. Analyze the implications of these commitment anchors in terms of human capital management.

In the following lines, we will first return to the idea of workplace commitment as a major concept of the employee-employer relationship. Building our argument on the limitations, and the paths yet-to-be explored by this public management scholarship, we aim to show how the multi-dimensionality of commitment is also reflected by the multiplicity of its anchors. Then following the description of our qualitative-exploratory methodology, we will present our results and discuss their implications in terms of public HRM.

3. THE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT
of public sector employees

3.1. Origins of the concept of organizational commitment

The concept of organizational commitment originally appeared around the early 1960s through research done by Becker on Side bets (H. S. Becker, 1960). These bets involve a series of consistent and binding individual decisions. Applied to the workplace context, the theory of side bets makes it possible to explain organizational loyalty. In the post-war years, the great shortage of a skilled workforce and the need for economic stimulus within a context of strong competitiveness, brought about an interest for safeguarding and maintaining resources (human) within organizations. Consistent with organizational theories emphasizing human relationships (Likert, 1961, 1967; Mayo, 1933; McGregor, 1960), researchers wanted to understand, perhaps more than anything else, how to "commit" the hearts and minds, and not only the "hands" of workers. The popularity of the research on organizational commitment is thus explained by its relationship to organizational loyalty and performance, and also by its explanatory power for organizational attitudes and behaviors. Despite the inherent complexity of commitment, which remained for a long time centered on the debate around its attitudinal or behavioral nature (F. Biétry, Creusier, Laroche, & Camus, 2014; Franck Biétry & Laroche, 2011; Riketta, Van Dick, & Rousseau, 2006), or even on its multiple dimensions, the dominance of Allen and Meyer's three-dimensional model (Allen & Meyer, 1990; John P. Meyer & Allen, 1991; J. P. Meyer, N. J. Allen, & C. A. Smith, 1993; J. P. Meyer, D. J. Stanley, L. Herscovitch, & L. Topolnytsky, 2002b) is currently hardly questioned. According to this model, organizational commitment rests on three pillars: Affective commitment (AOC), Normative commitment (NOC), and Calculated commitment (COC). Albeit interesting, there is a-priori nothing specifically public about this model. Furthermore, it is mainly rooted within the organization; which is what inspires the underlying question of this study: How does workplace commitment apply to hybrid public organizations (which simultaneously engage the values and principles of both private and public management) such as those

found in Switzerland, but also in many other OECD countries (Giauque / Emery, 2016)?

3.2. Comparing organizational commitment between public and private employees

Studies comparing the organizational commitment between the public and private sector date from the 1970s and the early 1980s, and mostly coincide with the emergence of public sector managerial reforms. Their results are mostly contrasting: thus, the antecedents of organizational commitment in public employees are generally found in the main categories identified in the literature (individual, organizational, employment characteristics), except for PSM and the Psychological Contract (CP) (J. A. Coyle-Shapiro & Neuman, 2004; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; J. P. Meyer *et al.*, 2002b; Moon, 2000a). On the other hand, we can cite the overriding idea that public managers, or employees in general, are less motivated, less loyal, with a weaker organizational identification (Goulet & Frank, 2002; Moon, 2000b; Odom, Boxx, & Dunn, 1990; Hal G Rainey, 1989; Savery, 1991; Zeffane, 1994). Various arguments are used to explain this difference: for Bourantas, weaker organizational commitment is caused by the gap between the *desired-for* culture and the perceived culture within public organizations (Bourantas, Anagnostelis, Mantes, & Kefalas, 1990). While this cultural difference is recognized by Cho and Lee in their sample of Korean public employees, they conclude that it is not enough to explain a resulting difference in commitment level (Cho & Lee, 2001). Several years earlier, Goulet and Frank (1995) found that the lower level of public employee commitment was related to their resorting less to extrinsic rewards, on account of certain legal principles tied to equal treatment and fairness. This explanation is, however, rejected by other authors for whom the most important element in employee commitment is to be found in the satisfaction of their intrinsic needs (J. A. M. Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2003). The meta-analysis of 44 empirical studies conducted by Boyne (2002) concluded that the lower level of organizational commitment in the public sector is linked to inflexible procedures and bureaucracy, and indirectly to the relationship between work performance and rewards.

Nevertheless, he makes the following statement: three-fifth (3/5) of the studies analyzed reveal higher commitment levels in the private sector, while the others (2/5) conclude that public employees are the most committed, or that it is difficult to make a decision in terms of commitment level (G. A. Boyne, 2002). These results echo the observations formulated in the 1990s, leading researchers to adopt a relative view of the *organizational* dimension of workplace commitment in the public sector (Danny L Balfour & Wechsler, 1990; Danny L. Balfour & Wechsler, 1991, 1996). In light of the preceding developments, our study looks to examine the possibility (besides the organization) of other important workplace commitment anchors for public employees.

In short, the literature has not yet resolved the question as to whether the difference in commitment between public and private employees dwells in its meaning or its nature; particularly in the managerial or post-bureaucratic environments of the public sector (Danny L Balfour & Wechsler, 1990; Clugston, Howell, & Dorfman, 2000).

4. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT
in the post-bureaucratic workplace

4.1. Workplace commitment in the public sector: a multi-anchor commitment

The classic definition of organizational commitment, based upon organizational loyalty, depicts the situation at the beginning of the 1980s: an era in which the entirety of one's professional life was experienced most often in a single organization. Following that logic, an individual "had a career" mostly in one single organization. However, this is difficult to apply to today's context, characterized by increasingly nomadic careers and involving an evolution of one's expectations towards work (F. Biétry *et al.*, 2014). By referring to the literature on the universal targets of workplace commitment (but in this study, we prefer to use Edgar Schein's (1993) concept of anchors[1].

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[1] Schein, 1993.

Originally coined for "Career anchors", we think it better portrays the pervasive idea in the definition of commitment, that it is a binding and retaining force.), it can be said that several studies demonstrate how public commitment presents characteristics which are not necessarily in line with the organization. Indeed, some studies have focused on such commitment anchors as: supervisors (T. E. Becker *et al.*, 1996), career (Ellemers, de Gilder, & van den Heuvel, 1998), or job (John P. Meyer *et al.*, 1993). Certain scholars even consider the regional entities of geographically dispersed organizations among the possible anchors of workplace commitment (Scott, 1999). Today, anchors such as the work, team, career, supervisor, and organization, ten to be considered as *universal* or *generic* in the study of workplace commitment (T. E. Becker, 1992; Aaron Cohen, 1999; Fornes & Rocco, 2013; Morrow & Wirth, 1989). Yet in their majority, those studies on workplace commitment foci have mainly been focused on private companies, or even managers (Danny L Balfour & Wechsler, 1990; Cho & Lee, 2001; Zeffane, 1994) whom we know often display a higher level of commitment as compared to subordinate employees (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; J. P. Meyer *et al.*, 2002b; Riketta, 2002).

4.2. Workplace commitment anchors: a dynamic to be discovered

An organization is not a monolithic block, meaning that the conceptualization of a multiple commitment, focused on different sub-groups or components of the organization is a *natural* assertion (A. Cohen, 2006; Morrow & Wirth, 1989; Reichers, 1985). In that vein, commitment anchors have commonly been defined as either : an entity (organization, work unit, etc.), an abstract idea (a policy), or the result of an action such as goal achievement (T. E. Becker, 1992; Bishop & Dow Scott, 2000; John P Meyer & Lynne Herscovitch, 2001; Siders, George, & Dharwadkar, 2001). Given the plurality of existing axiological references in contemporary public organizations, mostly due to their hybrid nature (Y. Emery & Giauque, 2014), it is probable that a greater number of new anchors can be unearthed. On the other hand is the issue of their relative importance and the relative importance of certain commitment anchors. Lewin's field theory (1943), and later the theory of nested commitments coined by Lawler (1992), offer an interesting framework to

analyze the inherent dynamism of workplace commitment anchors. Field theory is based on the idea of psychological proximity and examines certain factors producing greater effects on individual behaviors (Lawler, 1992; Kurt Lewin, 1943). The theory of nested commitments explains the development of workplace commitment for individuals nested in different organizational sub-groups (Lawler, 1992). Behind these two complementary theories resides the idea that the most psychologically salient anchor drives the individual's focal or discretionary behavior (Stets & Burke, 2000). The authors who have joined this research stream first became interested in dual commitments, in particular towards the organization and the supervisor in order to examine their eventual conflicting relationships (T. E. Becker, 1992; Bentein, Vandenberghe, & Dulac, 2004; Siders *et al.*, 2001). They reached the conclusion that the supervisor, as a proximal or distal anchor, best explains workplace performance. Nevertheless, whether proximal, local, or latent, the multiple workplace commitment anchors are not mutually exclusive, but simply reflect the complexity and diversity of employee-employer relationships (J.-W. Kim & Rowley, 2005).

Taking multiple commitment anchors into consideration in the public sector implies a recognition of individual and empathetic forms of investment at work, alongside the explicit bond to the organization (Paillé, 2009 ; Cohen, 2006, Stinglhamber et Vandenberghe, 2003). Because we are talking about eliciting the anchors of public employees' commitment, the publicness of these anchors is also relevant. In other words, is the hybridness of contemporary public organizations, especially in Switzerland, reflected in the commitment anchors to be identified?

In conclusion, some gaps are apparent in the important body of research on workplace commitment, both in the pertinent anchors for post-bureaucratic contexts, and in their publicness, not to mention their potential dynamic interactions. The exploratory method developed in this study sheds light on the dominant anchors of workplace commitment within the public sector, thus opening up the path to a contextualization specific to post-bureaucratic working environments.

5. METHODOLOGY

This study is founded on a qualitative exploratory approach, given the shortage such designs in studies on workplace commitment, be it in public or non-public organizations. It also comes out of a constructivist and interpretive posture which recognizes that individuals, while overdetermined by the socio-professional frameworks in which they evolve, also transform these frameworks in their own right, throughout the multiple interactions experienced within these organizations[2] (Creswell, 2008). By thus broadening the array of possible options, our qualitative approach favors the emergence of a new concept of Public workplace commitment – *PWPC* – resting on its multiple anchors (Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2013).

5.1. Profile of respondents and interview procedures

For the current study, we met with a total of 29 public sector employees (see Appendix 1 for an exhaustive list). Respondents were women and men not occupied in managerial positions, with an average seniority of 10 years (Min = 3 yrs.; Max = 30 yrs.). Employees were either "generalists" employed in the public sector (in this case, support activities) or, conversely, typical public employees. They worked in various working environments or domains. Indeed: the municipal level of a central public administration, a health organization, a university research center, and a public transportation institution. They were between 25 and 59 years old (M=42): an appropriate profile for this study, since we wanted to recruit individuals with a certain "distance" with respect to their public position. With their relative seniority, the respondents could look backwards and reflect on their public sector employment experience. It should be mentioned that women were slightly overrepresented in our sample (17/29), and nearly half of all individuals worked at generic positions (12/29), often occupying support functions in Human Resources, finance, or planning.

Without explicitly describing the goal of our study, we

did provide respondents with information regarding the interview conditions, explaining that it would be confidential and anonymous, the potential use of any gathered data, as well as the possibility of respondents having access to the data, but also to the final product of the research. Interviews were conducted using a guide with questions focused on the three themes of identification, attachment, and loyalty. These themes are those mostly used in organizational commitment scales (John P. Meyer & Allen, 1991; Richard T Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). Throughout the interviews, we paid attention to maintain an attitude of openness, in line with the exploratory dimension of the study. Following are excerpts from the interview guide, illustrative of each of the three axes:

- *Identification*: To what **do you most identify** in your work? What defines you the best professionally?

- *Attachment*: To what are you the most **attached**? Would you be ready to quit your current job if this element no longer existed (the object of your attachment)?

- *Loyalty*: What has the greatest impact on **your desire to continue to work** here (in the public sector)? Why?

The interviews, which lasted about an hour (between 45 minutes and 1h20), were all recorded. The identification of public sector commitment anchors authorized a selective transcription, targeting only the excerpts of interest as well as any citations which might be used to illustrate certain arguments for the present study.

5.2. Analytical Techniques

The analyses were made with the NVIVO[3] qualitative analysis tool. A first round of coding retained the themes mostly cited by the respondents as potential commitment anchors (= nodes in the Nvivo vocabulary). We then used an open coding procedure (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), to thematically unveil more than a hundred

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2 In the sense of *Verstehen*, as used by Weber, for whom the interpretive approach designates a reflexive reconstruction and an interpretation of others' actions, in such a way so that the meaning of intentions emerges along with the individual's goals.
3 NVivo qualitative data analysis Software; QSR International Pty Ltd. Version 10, 2012.
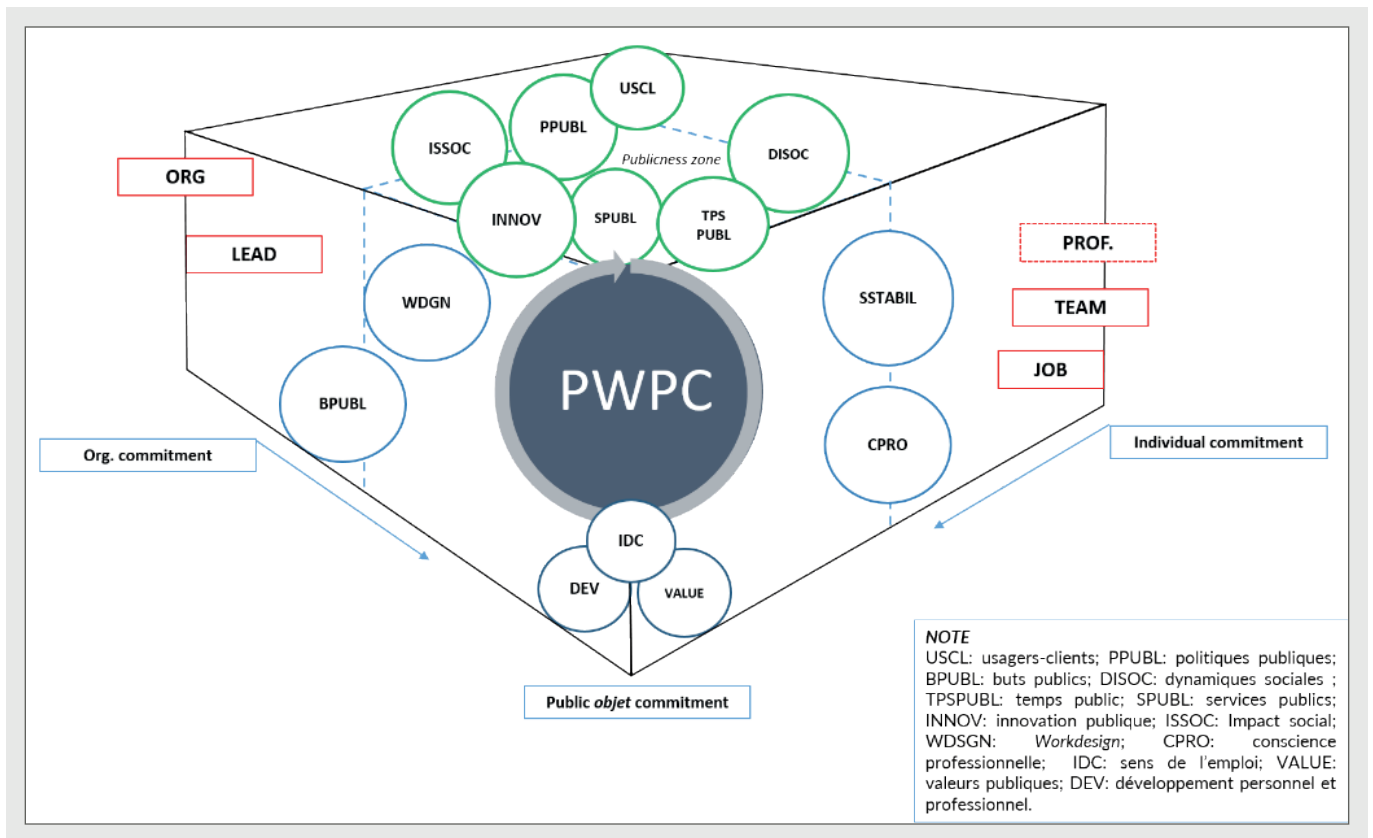
Figure 1 – Public workplace commitment: a three-dimensional anchoring

items. In a second round, the interviews were re-read in order to bring forth different categories of anchors. This process, which is reminiscent of the axial coding recommended in qualitative research linked to grounded theory (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2013; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), made it possible to discover thematic groups (clusters of nodes) forming different commitment anchors. Meaningful words, phrases, or paragraphs were used as coding units, while also including our interview notes. Figure 1 illustrates the results of our analyses, to be commented in the next chapter.

6. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Our analyses reveal several facets of workplace commitment. These facets encompass different possible commitment anchors of the employees we interviewed. These anchors may be organized into clusters, notably around their *individual* (CIND), *organizational* (CORG), and "*public*" (CPUBL) orientations. Together, the three orientations form a three-dimensional space for Public workplace commitment (see Figure 1). Nevertheless, there remain opportunities of interplay

between these categories: the publicness zone, at the heart of this three-dimensional space, crisscrosses the anchors moving away from the Individual and Organizational axes, as well as those anchors which do not fit in the two (organizational and individual) categories. Within this publicness space, mobilized here as a working hypothesis, the public workplace commitment anchors transcend both the employee's individuality and the organizational level as shown by the arrows in Figure 1.

In sum, the workplace commitment in the public settings we investigated rests on multiple anchors, more or less individual, organizational, or *extra-organizational* (possibly public) in kind. We comment on this in the following section.

6.1. Workplace commitment in the public sector: multiple anchors

The workplace commitment anchors, revealed here through successive groupings and comparisons (until several relatively exclusive categories were obtained), are defined and illustrated in the Table in Appendix 2.

We emphasize this study's contributions by using a color code. Thus, the green boxes designate the workplace commitment anchors not included among the five classic anchors (in red). As a reminder, the latter are the Organization, the Supervisor, the Working Team, the Job, and the Ca-reer/Profession[4]. These anchors more or less feature a public specificity, as can be guessed by their labelling as *Public Service* (SPUBL), *Users of Public Action* (USCL), *Public Policies* (PPUBL), *Public Time* (TPUBL), etc. This public specificity would be worth testing. For the sake of simplification, we hereby use the term "public anchors" to characterize them. Indeed, the main goal of the current study is to explore the existence of extra-organizational anchors, especially those that are especially salient in the work environments studied. It should be noted that a single anchor amongst those discovered, namely *Personnel and Professional Development* (DEV), is marked in orange. The reason is that it would hardly be classified amidst the classic workplace commitment anchors, and even less so with those that are a priori public in kind.

As a remainder, according to the model proposed by Fornes and Rocco (2013), we can still subdivide the classic workplace commitment anchors into two subgroups: Firstly, *individual* commitment, alludes to the strength of the employee's identification with the values of his/her peers (colleagues or TEAM), his job (JOB) and career (CAREER). Next, *Organizational* commitment which, strictly speaking, regroups commitment toward the organization itself (ORG), and toward the supervisor (LEAD): the latter being considered a symbolic representation of the organization. Alongside this classification, our interviews further reveal other potentially public commitment anchors. From these results, clusters of workplace commitment anchors can also emerge following a different logic from that proposed by Fornes and Rocco (2013).

6.2. Possible clusters of workplace commitment anchors

Reconsidering the individual, organizational and public dimensions of *Public Workplace Commitment* (*PWPC*), four clusters of anchors are identifiable: the first cluster is depicted in red in Figure 1, and is composed of organizational and individual anchors. Typically those found among the *universal* commitment anchors (JOB, TEAM, LEAD, and ORG) (Morrow, 1983; Reichers, 1985). The second cluster assembles two commitment anchors, half-way between the individual and the public levels: Professionalism (CPRO) and Job Security and Stability (SSTABIL). This second cluster also encompasses two anchors regrouping the Organizational and extra-organizational (public) levels: Workdesign and Public Goals (respectively, WDGN and GOALS). The particularity of this cluster is that it is composed of commitment anchors straddling two different dimensions. While Professionalism represents an individual's character traits, it also remains intrinsically linked to commitment to an ethic (of public service). Commitment to Workdesign exceeds commitment to an organization as such, while commitment to Public Goals implies both the organization's goals and more abstract goals related to public action.

The third cluster is that of commitment anchors which are *a priori* public. These anchors are mainly: Dynamics of Social Interaction at work (DISOC); Social and Societal Impact of public action (ISSOC); Innovation in the Public Sector (INNOV); Public Policies (PPUBL); Public Service (SPUBL); Time management in public organizations and companies (TPSPUBL); and Public Service Users/Customers (USCL).

Finally, a last cluster contains commitment anchors shared by all the three dimensions mentioned above (VALUES, DEV, IDC). This anchoring, which could be considered the "heart" of workplace commitment in the public sector, not only dwells on the dominant Public Sector Values (VALUES), but also on Personal and Professional Development (DEV), as well as the sense of the operational activities achieved, as embodied in Professional, role and Career Identity (IDC). These are, according to our analyses, the "DNA" of

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[4] Here, Organization = ORG, Supervisor = LEAD, Working Team = TEAM, Job = JOB, Career/Profession = PROF.

workplace commitment. Therefore they occupy a central position in Figure 1's *Publicness zone*.

We hereby discuss the theoretical and practical implications of Public workplace commitment as previously described.

7. DISCUSSION

Several remarks can be made at this stage: firstly, the commitment anchor toward profession (PROF) did not appear at all through our interviews. The fact that our sample was primarily composed of individuals having generic functions, and from nearly none of the established professions of the civil service (police, fire department, nursing, doctor, teacher, etc.) is a likely explanation of why we were unable to uncover commitment anchors linked to Profession from our respondents. Furthermore, the Professionalism anchor (CPRO), identified in this study, is not at all comparable to the commitment toward the Profession. Indeed, this anchor was generally shared by all our non-professional respondents with respect to the importance accorded to work well done. Thirdly, a Personal and Professional Development (DEV) anchor emerged, which is hard to consider as a typical public anchor. Commitment to Personal and Professional Development has a more direct link to the individual orientation of workplace commitment. This anchor is also not mentioned in the literature among the universal workplace commitment anchors (Aaron Cohen, 1999, 2000; Morrow, 1983).

7.1. Towards specifying a Public workplace commitment

We hereafter come back to the anchors that are neither specifically individual, nor organizational, and whose publicness appears as more salient. As mentioned above, this specificity remains to be confirmed, notably in a more extensive study using a validated measuring scale. Which is why, after having explored the dimensionality of public workplace commitment as an emerging concept to be developed, we technically examined the publicness of a-priori public commitment anchors according to existing criteria (of publicness) (Hal G Rainey, 2011) (H. Rainey & Bozeman, 2000).

Public sector workplace commitment anchors: exploring their dimensionality

Four dimensions come out from the workplace commitment anchors identified in our study: *Public service* as an ultimate anchor of workplace commitment in the public sector no matter the type of organization; an emphasis on *Career* and the individual's development throughout his Profession; the Organization through all it brings and symbolically represents; the particular way of working in the public sector (Workdesign). That is the "State organization employer" brand (Charbonnier-Voirin, 2015; Yves Emery & Kouadio, 2017; Goujon-Belghit, Gilson, & Bourgain, 2015). To complement the organizational brand, made up of the latter's goals and identity, the employer brand is related, in a more concrete manner, to the way in which the work is organized and time is managed (Brewster, Sparrow & Harris, 2005).

In what follows, we detail these different dimensions: first, Public workplace commitment seems (according to our respondents) to be rooted in what constitutes the *raison d'être* of public action: its goals and specific logics. More than anything else, this anchoring in public goals and policies envisions the social and societal impact of public service. Public workplace commitment is thus anchored in the attachment to public service users (beneficiaries) located at the end of the chain. This is how the values and ideals brought forward by public service give a meaning to the job performed, often via genuine social innovations. This first and strongly public service-oriented anchoring reminds us of the abundant literature on Public Service Motivation (Hondeghem & Vandenabeele, 2005; S. Kim & Vandenabeele, 2009; J. Perry & Wise, 1990; James L Perry & Vandenabeele, 2015; Wouter Vandenabeele & Hondeghem, 2005). In a less common register, the results of our analyses unveil the positioning of the individual as a an actor involved in the solving of public challenges. In this last example, the administration is sometimes the one that most invests in up-do-date equipment, while trying to balance its own resources with the orientations chosen by political stakeholders (Emery 2009). Within this framework, the State appears as a leading actor of social innovation. For this, it can rely on the legitimate use of sovereign power to decide which societal model is to be developed. At the same time, this anchoring

around public innovation remains surprising because of the enduring reputation of public organizations as refractory to all forms of individual initiatives, most notably because of a strong legislative and political base (Barry Bozeman, 2000; De Araújo, 2001; Giauque *et al.*, 2012; H. G. Rainey & Steinbauer, 1999).

Given the close connection between the concepts of motivation and workplace commitment, it isn't surprising that a substantial part of the anchors revealed by this study are oriented toward the goals, service, and beneficiaries of public missions. Our study thus contributes to broadening the concept of organizational commitment, by applying the same reasoning (used in the scholarly stream of Public service motivation) to workplace commitment; one whereby Public workplace commitment would be an extension of Public Service Motivation. Indeed, the public workplace commitment anchors identified here have a strong social and societal orientation, depending on the activity performed. This is not only linked to a proximity with the strategic and decisional level of public policies. It is also visible in the respondents' involvement in any activity meant for users/customers (J.L. Perry, 1996; W. Vandenabeele *et al.*, 2008). Attachment to users seems to be what gives a particular sense to the positions held by public employees. That is a strongly sought after social connection, reminiscent of certain conceptualizations of professional ethos. In fact, an epitome of the institutional values and motivations of public employees (Isabelle Fortier, 2013; Kernaghan, 2000). Public ethos also comes out of the social dynamics implied by certain jobs within the public sector. It is therefore rooted in the cultural process which contributes to making sense of public action (Newman, 2004).

As public goals and missions are put forward, in the civic tradition of public administration – for instance impartiality and fairness - (Boltanski & Thévenot, 1991), all the approaches addressing the importance that public employees grant to the general interest and the pursuit of the common good stand out (Chanlat, 2003; Esteve, Urbig, van Witteloostuijn, & Boyne, 2016; Giauque, Anderfuhren-Biget *et al.*, 2013). In line with the ideals of public service and

citizen service, a particularly important anchor, even fundamental for the public employees interviewed, remains the Values shared within the organization and their working environment. Here, the scholarship on Person-Environment Fit reminds us that the congruence between the individual and his or her working environment is, more than anything, a matter of congruence between personal values and the work environment's dominant values (Kristof, 1996; Schneider, Brent, & Goldstein, 2000). This can take the form of supplementary congruence, when an individual holding some values joins a population (organization) that already mostly shares the same values. It is considered complementary when, in a perspective of organizational change, new values and skills are added to pre-existing ones within the organization. For many authors who refer to the foundational research done by Rokeach (1973), sectorial values might well explain the attitudes and behaviors of public employees (Lyons, Duxbury, & Higgins, 2006; Nabatchi, 2012; Rokeach, 1973; Stoker, 2006; Van Wart, 1998; Vigoda-Gadot & Meiri, 2008). Sectorial values also feed another essential element of workplace commitment: the meaning given to the very tasks performed: the purpose of the job performed, sometimes its social and societal impact, if not its contribution to personal and professional development.

We also see, in the Public Service anchoring (both of position and of career) which can serve to specify the public component of civil servants' professional identity (Bourgault & Van Dorpe, 2013; Rouban, 2010, 2014). We conceive of this professional identity as a composite construct, because it gathers the majority of State employees into the same body. Although a "body" of *public people* does not formally exist in Switzerland, it still constitutes a "collective identity" with a clear empirical grounding[5]: in fact, a "collective identity" shared by the majority of our respondents. This identity is definitively what they expect to fit with their work environment (Kristof-Brown, Zimmermann, & Johnson, 2005; Schneider *et al.*, 2000).

The professional and collective identity of public employees involves social dynamics, feeding another

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[5] There is no formalized pathway for entering the Swiss public service. For that reason, it is considered an open Administration integrating its human resources according to competency criteria. Contrary to countries like France or Germany, the absence of this secondary socialization in public employment makes it difficult, a priori, to form a body identity.

major anchor of workplace commitment: the specific conception and organization of work in the public sector. Indeed, the complexity, richness and sensitivity of the tasks accomplished in public administrations require a particular organization. This implies a different relationship to *Time*. For instance, the quality of decision-making processes, in cases where some citizens are granted or deprived of certain rights (especially in prudential activities[6]), necessitates taking the required time to make fair and impartial decisions. This public Time encompasses something that is particularly important for our respondents. Important in the sense that it contributes, besides the commonly fed stereotypes on bureaucracy, to the provision of a quality public service. As defined in this study, *Public Time* recalls the criticisms linked to using quantitative indicators for measuring public performance (Bentein *et al.*, 2004; Organisation de coopération et de développement économiques (Paris), 2011). In reality, this Time represents one of the most essential resources of public action (Knoepfel & Varone, 2008). In addition, public employees willingly invest much more time in their roles, provided that it serves public utility.

As a corollary to this *Public Time*, *Workdesign* refers to a work climate that promotes social interactions. Which means a certain conception of the workspace visible in personnel management practices (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Wright, 2004). Here, we mean collaborative dynamics and mutual assistance, characteristics of daily work in service organizations. Far from damaging performance, social interactions facilitate the achievement of the common goals to serve the organization and the public. A welcome flexibility given the complexity of many public service missions (Brown, 2004; Ketkar & Sett, 2009; Magnusson, Boccardelli, & Börjesson, 2009). Such a *Workdesign* participates in the support that the public employer gives to its employees. It is should be noted that the concept of organizational support here is expanded to include any type of social interaction beyond the single employer-employee relationship (J. A. Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007; Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davislamastro, 1990; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Two other factors complete the dimensionality of Public workplace commitment: the first designates an anchoring on individual careers. This anchoring can be found, for example, in the meaning that our respondents looked for, in the different tasks they are assigned to no matter the employer. The meaning of work questions the finality of the job performed, sometimes its social and societal impacts, if not its contribution to personal and professional development. More specifically, it is about the kind of job occupied and then performed, with a professionalism that facilitates, *in fine*, the future employability of State personnels. In the post-bureaucratic context, which characterizes most public Swiss organizations today, the responsibility for developing one's employability, notably through a set of tools provided by the organization, remains an essential element of the Psychological Contract (Emery & Huerlimann, 2004; Lemire, 2005).

The second factor bears on the public organization in its core essence: its goals and missions as well as the social groups (working team, project group) hosted. This anchor is obviously not the most dominant amongst the respondents. This is only half surprising, because weak organizational commitment levels in the public sector have been reported since the earliest comparative studies with the private sector (Danny L Balfour & Wechsler, 1990; Danny L. Balfour & Wechsler, 1996; Bourantas & Papalexandris, 1992; G. Boyne, Jenkins, & Poole, 1999; G. A. Boyne, 2002; Moon, 2000b; Zeffane, 1994). These studies tend to relativize the centrality of the organizational anchor in the formation of Public workplace commitment. They lead us then to reconsider the true nature of this commitment, especially its publicness (Barry Bozeman & Moulton, 2011).

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6 Champy (2012:80-94) mobilizes the concept of prudence, introduced by Aristotle, to designate, in the public sector, the activities for which "the direct application of scientific knowledge or routines is proven false by the complexity and the singularity of the situation or the problem to treat."

Public sector workplace commitment anchors: what of publicness?

Even if the public specificity of the identified commitment anchors, as envisaged in this study, remains to be confirmed, it is clear that none of these commitment anchors (to our knowledge) has been considered earlier in the literature on workplace commitment (Herscovitch & Meyer, 2002; H. Klein, 2016; J. P. Meyer *et al.*, 2002a; John P Meyer, Stanley, & Vandenberg, 2013; Morin *et al.*, 2011). As a result, in gauging our commitment anchors against their publicness, we need to mobilize the literature hitherto essentially focused on the distinction between public and private organizations. This can be made in light of its main trends: fundamental, generic, normative and dimensional publicness (Allison, 1987; Barry Bozeman, 2007; Barry Bozeman & Moulton, 2011; Christensen, 2012; Haque, 2001). These studies are part of a long tradition of comparative research between the public and private sectors, trying to explain, among other things, the attractiveness of public or private employers (Ritz & Waldner, 2011). In its dimensional perspective, several other criteria of publicness complement those only based on the economic and political authority in the publicness research.

Finally, publicness can be founded on the following complementary criteria: the management style, the underlying finalities of public activities (collective interest), the size of the beneficiary base, as well as the values orienting public action. These criteria may be, for some, remobilized for evaluating the publicness of our commitment anchors. Among those revealed in this study, five are particularly pertinent for this exercise: for example, the fact that public policies emanate exclusively from the governments or political authorities is enough to qualify the *Public Policies* (PPUBL) and *Public Service* (SPUBL) anchors as being public. These policies and services differ from those emanating from the corporate environment due to their large social impact and the important number of stakeholders potentially involved, while remaining sheltered from market competition (Antonsen & Jørgensen, 1997; Haque, 2001; H. Rainey, 2009). On the other hand, the goals of public service, as a

.service to the population (ISSOC), are a reminder of normative publicness: that which makes of *Public Values* (VALUES) the ultimate clue of publicness (B. Bozeman, 2002; Barry Bozeman & Sarewitz, 2005, 2011; Christensen, 2012; Haque, 2001; Kernaghan, 2000; Van der Wal, 2008). Finally, the relation to temporality (TPSPUBL) also bears a strong public footprint justified by the very nature of the tasks performed in certain fields of activity (taxes, justice, social), which in many instances necessitate an equitable and egalitarian application of the laws (Buffat, 2014).

The richness of these extra-organizational anchors of Public workplace commitment, naturally lead us to inquire about their possible integration into some human resource management practices in the public sector.

7.2. Human resource management and Public workplace commitment anchors

By broadening Public workplace commitment to its multiple anchors, this study may contribute to HR practices in the public sector, notably by serving as a base for individualized practices (Wisard, 2007). In what follows, we demonstrate the importance of integrating these multiple anchors into a modern conception of workplace commitment.

Multi-anchor commitment: a renewed approach to workplace relations in the public sector

Several arguments can be brought forward to support a conception of multi-anchor workplace commitment. The first, and most important, is that the public system is split into social sub-groups and action areas, which represent as many workplace commitment anchors for public employees. Next, the pioneering work by Morrow, Reichers and Cohen from the early 1990s has importantly contributed to reinforce the idea that the organization is an anchor amidst other ones within the workplace. Even better, the definition of the concept, at first strongly centered on the organization[7], has itself evolved toward the idea of a force

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7 "... the relative strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (Richard T Mowday *et al.*, 1979: p.226).

"*that links an individual to a social or non-social target and to the appropriate actions for this target*" (John P. Meyer, Becker, & Van Dick, 2006, p. 666). Since the organization is not really a monolithic block (because of the various social sub-groups hosted), it would be deceptive to perceive in the commitment to the employing organization the only link to one's job. Indeed, many employees find themselves involved in different organizational sub-groups. They develop potentially different forms of attachment, belonging, loyalty, and thus commitment, toward these groups (Lawler, 1992). At the same time, more recent studies report workplace commitment as a psychological bond characterized by voluntary dedication and responsibility toward one or several anchors: possibly an entity (organization or institution), a person, or even an abstract idea etc. (H. J. Klein, Molloy, & Brinsfield, 2012). On the other hand, several studies demonstrate that paying attention to specific workplace commitment anchors brings a better precision to predicting the behaviors related to these same anchors (Stinglhamber, Bentein, & Vandenberghe, 2002; Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe, 2003).

In short, public workplace commitment is rooted in a multi-modal relational system revolving around the goals, values, and missions of the public sector. By mobilizing Lewin's field theory, the nearest anchors (physical or psychological proximity) can be envisioned as those with the greatest influence on individual attitudes and behaviors (K. Lewin, 1951; Kurt Lewin, 2008). For example, if the *Public Values* anchor is, from an employee's perspective, the most proximal in his commitment profile, it will probably exert the greatest influence on that employee's attitudes and behaviors at work (Lawler, 1992). Indeed, the mutual assistance and courtesy noted in a public employee would come more from an attachment to certain values than from the relationship with the organization.

Finally, taking multiple workplace commitment anchors into consideration in the public sector supposes a recognition of the individual and empathetic forms that can be taken by workplace investment, alongside other forms of investment intimately linked to the organization (Paillé, 2009; Stinglhamber & Vandenberghe, 2003). In the remaining lines, we analyze the implications of this multi-anchor approach in terms of human capital management.

Implications for Human Resource Management

If it is true that commitment drives an individual to adopt behaviors in line with the expectation of organizational goals (Siders *et al.*, 2001), this performance also depends on the degree of physical or psychological proximity (salience) to one or several anchors encapsulating the individual's workplace investment. With human resource management practices which are sensitive to the commitment anchors of public employees, the organization definitively becomes the venue where the individual's particular commitment profiles can be expressed.

Based on the results of the present study, we propose five areas where the identified workplace commitment anchors could be integrated into human resource management practices. Of prime importance are the practices favoring Person-Organization Fit (according to the logic of *Attraction-Selection-Attrition*) (Schneider *et al.*, 2000). These ones also involve a broader conception of performance management (Y. Emery, Wyser, Sanchez, & Martin, 2008), which promotes a greater flexibility in the operational management of tasks as well as workplace relations. Moreover, congruence practices may support the development of a user-oriented employability (Lemire, 2005; Véniard, 2011). These practices may also foster the democratization of workplace relations, thus favoring horizontality as much as possible.

In addition, these measures would contribute to ensure the compatibility of the employee's most overriding personal or professional identity markers, with those existing within the organization. HR managers can for instance focus on anchors such as values and identification with a position or a profession (here, VALUES, IDC). These anchors would be precious for recruiting individuals who are particularly sensitive to public values and missions (Ritz, Brewer, & Neumann, 2016). They could also serve to establish an employer brand truly built up around the organizational identity and the underlying goals of public service and missions (Berthon, Ewing, & Hah, 2005; Charbonnier-Voirin, 2015).

On the other hand, public performance would improve if it is conceived in all its complexity (Bossaert, 2005; Broeder, 1996). Which implies a better definition of

the *Workdesign* (WDSGN) strategy. Workdesign is essentially the position adopted by the contextualist approaches of performance management (Pichault & Schoenaers, 2011). In this version of "*Management by Objectives*" adapted to public organization management, HRM practices would be more oriented towards the promotion of team work and collective evaluation models showcasing the final results of public action. Such practices would find a greater echo in individuals whose workplace commitment anchor is *Workdesign* (J. A. M. Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002).

The concept of *Workdesign* is also bound to the Time management at work. Customarily disparaged by the harshest critics of public administration, Time management could become the centerpiece of a quality approach in the public sector. As illustrated by this study, employees appreciate being given enough time to take the decisions that substantially impact the lives of public service users. An individualization of the management and allocation of time (possibly "à la carte" working hours) would potentially satisfy a need for autonomy and flexibility. This flexibility

ORIENTATION	ANCHORS	HR PRACTICES	ILLUSTRATIVE REFERENCES
FIT (Person-environment)	VALUES SPUBL PPUBL ISSOC IDC	• Recruitment and selection based on P-E Fit • Internal and external *branding* focused on identity and public values	Pfeffer and Veiga (1999) Ritz *et al.* (2016) Walton (1985) Burmann and Zepelin (2005) Charonnier-Voirin *et al.* (2014)
Performance management	DISOC WDSGN TEAM	• Functioning in work teams • Collective performance management • *Management by objectives*	Emery and Giauque (2012) Gould-Williams (2004) Pichault (1993) Rodgers (1991)
Managerial flexibility and workplace relations	WDSGN TPSPUBL LEAD	• Individualization of working time • Equal treatment and organizational justice	Fournier (2015) Tremblay *et al.* (2010) Tekleab *et al.* (2005)
Development of user-oriented employability	CPRO ISSOC USCL DEV	• Coaching/mentoring • User orientation in management	Allen and Eby (2008) Emery (2004) De Vos *et al.* (2011)
Democratization of working relations	WDSGN LEAD DISOC	• Participatory management • Transformational leadership	Wright *et al.* (2012) Avolio *et al.* (2004) Savery (1991)

Table 1 – High-potential HRM practices for workplace commitment

does not rest only on self-management, but is inscribed in the managerial practices based on fairness and equal treatment (J. A. Coyle-Shapiro & Shore, 2007; Tessema, Tsegai, Ready, Embaye, & Windrow, 2014; Tremblay, Cloutier, Simard, Chenevert, & Vandenberghe, 2010). Among the latter can be found as many measures participating in the democratization of workplace relations as well as the development of a better citizen-oriented employability (Emery & Huerlimann, 2004; Véniard, 2011).

Overall, far from relying on its "rational" and instrumental aspects only, the individuals' expectations in workplace relations are as much intrinsic as they are intangible. Table 1 below summarizes the HRM practices which could be mobilized around the five areas that structure our workplace commitment anchors.

7.3. Research limitations and complimentary research

Because of its exploratory nature, this study is of limited generalizability our results. Our respondents, taken in their specific contexts, with their specific backgrounds, hardly cover all the configurations of Swiss public administration. This is the case despite our efforts to ensure a maximum variability in the recruitment of respondents, for the sake of conceptual and argument "saturation" in the sense of Strauss and Corbin (1997). In parallel, women and generic functions (generally support jobs) of the public sector are overrepresented in the final sample. The overabundance of generic functions in our sample most likely reduced the possibilities of discovering commitment anchors which might particularly concern people with activities situated at the heart of the public action. We are perfectly aware of this choice: these generic functions potentially offer a point of comparison with similar positions in the private sector, thus making it possible to uncover a somehow public-specific workplace commitment.

From a methodological stance, the subjectivity of the researchers could have contaminated the choice of the thematic clusters conceptualized here as workplace commitment anchors. On this point, and by departing from the anchors identified here, it would be interesting to launch a larger-scale survey. This would submit this study's workplace commitment

anchors to statistical analyses, both exploratory factorial and confirmatory, using a sample that would be relatively representative of the Swiss civil service. We believe such a study would probably enhance the internal and external validity of our conceptualization of public workplace commitment (Churchill Jr, 1979; Nezlek, 2007; Roussel & Wacheux, 2006; Vancouver, Millsap, & Peters, 1994). At the same time, our analysis of the implications in terms of HRM, theoretical at this stage, could be more systematized in a later stage of the current study. For example, other researchers could compare the perception that different workplace commitment profiles have on the recommended HR practices. In the same vein, it would be interesting to analyze the impact of practices integrating the most pertinent anchors for public organizations.

Finally, based on the anchors discovered here, a publicness test in another article could start with building up a standardized measurement scale. To do so, we would need a sharper definition the criteria of anchor publicness. These criteria currently exist in the literature comparing public and private sector organizations. By expanding them, it would be possible to see how they apply to the workplace commitment anchors revealed here. The idea of a public-service oriented commitment is already a good approach, which could further integrate the public values and professional ethic of State employees.

CONCLUSION

The original objective of this research was to explore the workplace commitment of public employees working in hybrid environments. We then wished to discuss the publicness of the identified workplace commitment anchors as well as their possible implications in terms of public HRM. The 18 workplace commitment anchors revealed here confirm the interest of a multi-anchor approach of workplace commitment in the public sector. Among them can be found specificities which are more or less public in kind, and which still remain to be confirmed via a quantitatively larger survey. Nevertheless, the variety of anchors illustrates the need for a broader definition of public workplace commitment. Such a broad definition would contribute to relativize, at least conceptually, the importance of the *organizational* level in Public workplace commitment.

Based on our results, we can posit that Public workplace commitment mostly describes public employees' striving to maintain a strong identity of their position and career. Public workplace commitment is furthermore founded on public service values, which are expressed in environments that are a fertile ground for rich personal and professional developments. Public Human resource practitioners should thus understand that their personnel's commitment is crafted around its symbolic dimensions, very often supported by a system of varied anchors, of which the organization as such is but one aspect. On this basis, certain Human capital management practices, especially devoted to performance and career development, would benefit from being reconsidered. More generally, the theme examined in this paper can serve as the basis for a discussion on the way new modes of organization in the public sector tend to re-dynamize employment relationships.

APPENDIX 1 - SURVEY PARTICIPANTS LIST

Alias	Code	Gender	Age	Tenure	Organization	Position	Job type	Organization type
MS	NY01	F	42	10	Communal administration 1	Secrétaire de direction	Support	Public
MCF	NY02	F	55	8	Communal administration 1	Office manager	Support	Public
FJ	NY03	F	50	10	Communal administration 1	Business partner	Specialist	Hybrid
MCP	NY04	F	30	5	Communal administration 1	HR Specialist	Specialist	Public
LT	NY05	M	29	5	Communal administration 1	Project manager	Support	Public
FT	NY06	M	36	8	Communal administration 1	Network electrician	Technical	Hybrid
AB	NY07	F	33	10	Communal administration 1	Administrative assistant	Support	Hybrid
PD	FI01	M	49	13	A Communal administration 1	Group manager	Specialist	Public
ER	FI02	F	38	10	Cantonal administration	Assistant to the director	Support	Public
ES	FI03	F	38	15	Cantonal administration	Assistant to the director	Support	Public
CD	UN01	F	50	20	University	Assistant to the director	Support	Hybrid
SB	UN02	F	25	1	University	HR assistant	Support	Hybrid
VG	UN03	F	40	8	University	HRBP	Specialist	Hybrid
NC	UN04	F	30	11	University	HR Advisor	Support	Hybrid
LM	UN05	F	28	7	University	HR Advisor	Support	Hybrid
NZ	GE01	F	45	8	Communal administration 2	Administrative assistant	Specialist	Public
LA	GE02	F	47	13	Communal administration 2	Photographer	Specialist	Public
JP	GE03	F	52	13	Communal administration 2	Technical collaborator	Technician	Public
JB	EM01	F	40	10	Nursing home	Cleaner	Technician	Hybrid
BX	EM02	M	40	10	Nursing home	Care assistant	Technician	Hybrid
CB	EM03	F	42	15	Nursing home	Assistant to the director	Support	Hybrid
AR	MB01	M	50	7	Public transportation company	Chauffeur	Technician	Public
EL	EC01	M	63	25	Cantonal social insurance office	Administrative collaborator	Specialist	Public
IS	EC02	M	60	25	Cantonal social insurance office	Administrative collaborator	Specialist	Public
KM	AS01	F	48	18	Federal dpt. of migrations	Asylum specialist	Specialist	Public
TT	AS02	F	55	25	Federal dpt. of migrations	Asylum specialist	Specialist	Public
YZ	AS03	F	28	3	Federal dpt. of migrations	Asylum specialist	Specialist	Public
JG	AS04	M	45	26	Federal dpt. of migrations	Asylum specialist	Specialist	Public
IF	DP01	F	50	19	University hospital	Assistant to the director	Support	Hybrid

Table 2 – Respondents' list

APPENDIX 2 - TABLE SUMMARIZING THE WORKPLACE COMMITMENT ANCHORS

ANCHORS	CLUSTER	DEFINITION	EXTRACT
BPUBL (Public Goals)	**PUBL**[8] **+ ORG**	Missions and organizational goals	*"Personally, I prefer to take care of the strategic aspects of the city's policies. As a result of my training, it is how I express my interest for politics. I find this is better than lining up figures in an Excel spreadsheet. (…) I can easily situate myself within any type of environment as long as strategy is involved and I have a social aim. (…) There has to be a goal that I share."* NY05
DISOC (Dynamic and social interactions)	**PUBL**	Dynamic and interpersonal social interactions characterized by creating and knitting social connections between colleagues	*"I feel good here because I'm doing what I love. I meet plenty of people who enrich me. The team is really there, we all get on really well. There is also the possibility of continuing to develop, to get more training, but also the relationship quality with people, the exchanges."* NY04
IDC (Professional identity, role and career)	**PUBL**	Professional identity, role and career	*"I think that I'm a transmission belt between the departments and the management."* UN01
INNOV (Public innovation)	**PUBL**	Perception of the public sector as a framework allowing one to be at the cutting edge of technology and testing certain innovations	*"There are small things that we're developing in our practice, for example we don't force people to come to us, we attract them to come to us, that we're sharing when we interact."* EM03
ISSOC (Social and societal impact)	**PUBL**	Social and societal impact of the job and the activities performed	*"This is what we should all be thinking about when we're working in public service. Especially in a municipality, we establish services; we construct infrastructures with returns that come directly back to us. We see it right away."* NY05
WDGN (Workdesign – organization and conception of work)	**PUBL + AORG**	HRM logic promoting flexibility, autonomy, and participation	*"Here I find that the director trusts us for the most part. He tells us, "ok, I'd like you to do 'this' this year" and then he doesn't really worry about how we're going to do it, as long as by the end of the year we have succeeded."* NY03
PPUBL (Public policies)	**PUBL**	Proximity with the decision-making level and the Public Policies in which the activity is centered	*"What interests me is the notion of project, the notion of developing. (…) it's important that there is a proximity with the policy. Typically the staff".* NY05
SPUBL (Public Service)	**PUBL**	Meaning of one's work through its public service aspects	*"I take pride in finding solutions for people. I take pride in seeing that people are taken care of. Because our vocation is to be there, to support them, to help them."* FI02
TPS PUBL (Public Time)	**PUBL**	Qualitative time enabling a decision that is more just and equitable, notably in supervisory activities	*"Time works differently for us. We need to make decisions, conduct research. We really can't let anything just pass. This time enables us to provide a quality service!"* NY03
USCL (Customer-Users)	**PUBL**	Users or customers, depending on the case	*"But always keep in contact with the people, something which is essential for an administration to work well. I think that this contact is really useful (…). I wouldn't want everything to become automated, and that people would do everything via Internet."* FI02

8 Public anchor.

ANCHORS	CLUSTER	DEFINITION	EXTRACT
VALUE (Public values)	**PUBL**	Convergence between personal and organizational values which guide actions ("fit")	*"I wouldn't work, for example, for an oil and gas company. Simply because my personality, my personal nature is strong in how I am at work." I want to speak about my values."* GE01
SSTABIL (Job Security and Stability)	**IND + PUBL**	Security and stability of one's job	*"I think that it's a way to have salaried photography work. I know that if I don't work here, I don't know if it would be possible for me to live as a freelancer. To do that, one has to know how to sell oneself and that's not a part of my personality (…) being freelance also means taking risks, in terms of customers, and retirement insurance, etc. This is why that the job security element here working for the city (or another job) is actually really important."* DCA01
DEV (Personal and professional development)	**PUBL + IND + ORG**	Personal and professional development leading to fulfillment within one's workl	*"I really like the trainings. They often focus on the way in which to handle the most difficult cases, like Alzheimer patients, and those who are the most stressed or agitated. What really matters is being effective. One has to know how to do one's best."* EM03
CPRO (Professionalism)	**IND⁹ + PUBL**	Professionalism and a love of a job well-done	*"Positivity and empathy are personal values that I find in my organization. But without a doubt the most important is professionalism. This means doing one's job well, with respect. For example, I cannot leave thinking that there is still something to do; that my work isn't completed. Some people have no problem just going home! No hesitation. It's an I-don't-care-about-anything attitude."* EM03
TEAM (The working team)	**IND**	Working team, collective work, collaboration between colleagues and other services	*"We collaborate a lot with the city services: the water services, the green spaces, urbanism, etc. It's a way of functioning, we are obligated to all collaborate a little together. If we don't listen to one another, then nothing works anymore."* NY03
JOB (Work in the public sector)	**IND**	Job in the civil service	*"When I talk about my job (in the public sector), I think well-being."* GE01
LEAD (Leader/supervisor)	**ORG¹⁰**	Leader, supervisor, manager or top management	*"I think that it (my loyalty) is first directed toward my department head, because she is the person I depend on, who gives me tasks and trusts me. And then loyalty to my council member comes second. We have a good relationship and he shares and discusses projects with me. For the last three years there is a real feeling of complicity, also because he appreciates my work."* NY05
ORG (The Organization)	**ORG**	The organization in all that it reflects as an image	*"I am proud to work in XXX because it's a lively city, it's an open city, which tries to move forward, find solutions. (…) because even if it takes a long time, it's a city that tries to move into the future."* NY05

9 Individual anchor.
10 Organizational anchor.

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