TRACING THE EFFECTS OF POLITICIZATION ON PUBLIC PROCUREMENT
SPECIALISTS' DECISION-MAKING THROUGH VALUES: A STRUCTURAL
EQUATION MODEL OF THE BROKER-PURIST LENS

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ABSTRACT. Currently, our understandings of the dynamics behind the effects of politicization on values and on administrative decision-making remain largely muddled and far from complete. The richness of theoretical accounts, amassed over the past eight decades, has yielded only a limited number of empirical examinations. This failure to develop a coherent collection of empirical works can be for the most part attributed to the complexity associated with studying values, particularly to the lack of clear and testable theories and models. This article attempts to address this deficit and to add to our understandings of the association between values and administrative decision-making at the individual level by explicitly testing the Broker-Purist (BP) model (within a sample of public procurement specialists). It is found that the BP model fits the data well, which suggest the framework as a valid and useful perspective for conceptualizing the effects of environmental politicization on administrative decision-making in public procurement specifically, and in public administration in general.

INTRODUCTION

Public administration scholars have long acknowledged the critical role played by values within the context of public service. From its onset, public administration literature has recognized that personal, professional, political and social values, under one form or another, are inherently imbedded in the nature of administrative decision-making and within most aspects of governance. This is very much reflected within the current body of literature, which provides a

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lengthy list of high quality theoretical discussions on the values-decision-making nexus. Ironically, while the early acknowledgement of values as a critical concern for public administration expanded the theoretical reach of the field, it came at the cost of shattering its philosophical foundations.   Scholarly debates such as Simon[1] (1947/1997, 1952) vs. Waldo (1948/2007, 1952a, 1952b) and Fredrich (1940) vs. Finer (1941) have "condemned" public administration theory to a continuous, and what appears to an unsolvable, deliberation regarding the normative role of values within public administration.

At present, despite the "enormous attention to values and value theory, fundamental disagreements remain about such critical issues as the most useful concept of value, the differences between 'value' and 'valuing', the possibility or a hierarchy of values, the transitivity of individuals' values, and the justification for value-based collective actions – all issues pertinent to public values and public interests" (Bozeman, 2007, p. 113). Nevertheless, given the importance of this topic for public administration as a field, especially within the context of an increasing politicization of public service, the significance of the area is only expected to grow. In fact, a number of scholars have delineated the study of values and their effects on public servants' decision-making as vital for the intellectual growth of the field of public administration (Jørgensen & Bozeman, 2007; Nabatchin, 2012; van der Wal & van Hour, 2009).

While the area continues to receive a relatively significant degree of academic attention, our understandings of dynamics behind the effects of values on administrative decision-making remain largely muddled and far from complete. Moreover, the richness of theoretical accounts, amassed over the past eight decades, has yielded only a limited number of empirical examinations. This failure to develop a coherent collection of empirical works can be for the most part attributed to the complexity associated with studying values, particularly to the lack of clear and testable theories and models.

This article attempts to address this deficit and to add to our understandings of the association between values and administrative decision-making at the individual level by explicitly testing the Broker-Purist (BP) model (Diggs & Roman, 2012; Roman, 2014a). The BP lens provides a parsimonious model for explaining administrative decision-making based on a posited association between

environmental factors and individual values. The model assumes that patterns in a public administrator's decision-making can be explained by one's personal and professional values. More specifically, it argues that if an administrator's environment is highly politicized and one is ill at ease with one's organizational role, one is more likely to make a clear differentiation between one's "on the job" and "off the job" values and therefore engage in a different decision-making pattern. The model due to its claim to predictability, if confirmed, is bound to come with significant implications for administrative practice and public administration theory in general. The main contribution made by this study is that it represents a rare empirical examination of a decision-making model that places values at its core. To this extent, it actively promotes the development of a coherent research agenda on the topic. To the best knowledge of the researcher, this study represents the first empirical evaluation of the BP model.

Beyond this introduction, the discussion in this article is organized in four broad sections. The first section provides a brief overview of the normative streams of thought on the role of values in public service and discusses the complexity associated with research in this area. In the second section, the BP model is introduced and explained in some detail. This is then followed by a discussion on the methodology, model and the instrument that were employed in this study. The last section presents the empirical results and reviews their overall implications. As is customary, a few summarizing thoughts and suggestions conclude the narrative.

DEFINING AND SORTING THE LITERATURE ON VALUES

Defining Values

Values can be defined as "a complex and broad-based assessment of an object or set of objects (whether the objects may be concrete, psychological, socially constructed, or a combination of all three) characterized by both cognitive and emotive elements, arrived at after some deliberation, and, because a value is part of the individual's definition of self, it is not easily changed and it has the potential to elicit action" (Bozeman, 2007, p. 117). To a large extent, it is integral to values "that they need not be 'explained'; rather they *are* 'explanations' for norms or conduct" (Biddle, 1979, p. 295, original emphasis).

A great deal of public administration literature, directly or indirectly, deals with shaping understandings about the struggle to identify, construct and enforce values. Values similar to ideas are powerful political and social mechanisms. "Values include both prescriptions for human behavior...and prescription for other states of affairs....In breadth, values are similar to tasks...However, tasks are set forth explicitly and consensually for collective attainment within social systems, whereas values may be implicit and idiosyncratic to the person" (Biddle, 1979, p. 295). In social psychology, values are typically identified as the outcomes of given set of attitudes (González López & Amérigo Cuervo-Arango, 2008; Maio & Olson, 1995; Rokeach, 1973) while in economics value is usually associated with resource exchange or preferences-based worthiness (Bozeman, 2007).

In terms of public values Jørgensen and Bozeman (2007, p. 355) have argued that "there is no more important topic in public administration and policy." For instance, values, preferences, beliefs and ideas can be located as core elements of the foundation of advocacy coalition (Sabatier & Jenkins-Smith, 1988, 1993) and multiple streams (Kingdon, 1984/2011) frameworks, as well as social construction theory (Ingram & Schneider, 1991, 1993). Simon's bounded rationality perspective (1947/1997, 1957, 1983, 1985) relied, at least originally, on a fact-value dichotomy. As Stone (1999/2002) has elegantly pointed out - in essence, all policies resulting from political and administrative decision-making are, after all, nothing more than reflections of a value-laden struggle over enforcing preferred narratives and ideas. Probably one of the most eminent and eloquent description of the power of ideas (values) pertains to Keynes (1936/2009, p. 328) who argued that "the ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed, the world is ruled by little else."

A Short Review of the Literature

Even the most cursory of overviews of the literature on values, and public values in particular, would make it fairly obvious that there is no scarcity of excellent scholarship. Public administration literature does indeed provide an ample array of quality theoretical texts on the topic. In fact, the mere size and breadth of the literature can quickly make any attempt to summarize and categories it fairly

overwhelming. Yet, while a complete discussion of the literature on values is beyond the scope of this paper, a certain level of detail is still absolutely necessary in order to theoretically place this research and the subsequently tested model.

As it should be expected of any attempt to review such an extensive body of intellectual works, the categorization of the literature will hardly be perfect and will be in many ways a derivative of the researcher's training and perspectives. For considering the ambiguousness and the sheer amount of literature in the area – its summarization can be done in varied ways and there certainly isn't one "best" way. One of the better approaches of achieving the necessary level of detail without sacrificing the appeal of a broad perspective is to roundup the extant body of literature within dominant streams of thought or themes.

Overall, probably the most dominant stream of interpretations, at least in terms of political discourse, revolves around the broad theme of *"bureaucrats are important actors in the politics of public policy."* The literature under this theme suggests that public administrators assume an active role in policy through the exercise of discretion which in essence makes public administration a value-laden semi-political process (Cleveland, 1956; Key, 1958; Stein, 1952; Stone, 1999/2002; Waldo, 1948/2007). Long (1949) has argued that bureaucracies and bureaucrats are regularly driven by own views, interests and values. "Bureaucratic politics" is often considered to be omnipresent within the muddling-through nature of the policy arena (Lindblom, 1959). Agencies and public administrators habitually attempt to use their resources in order to advance their power standings and perspectives (Allison, 1971; Halperin, 1974; Rourke, 1969/1984; Wildavsky, 1964/2000). Bureaucrats will develop political alliances (Cronin, 1980/1990) or will co-opt external parties (Selznick, 1949) in order manipulate and achieve the desired outcomes. On the whole, under this view, the politics of administration is certainly nothing less than a distribution of values, costs and benefits (Dahl, 1947; Easton, 1965). Some of those who see bureaucrats as powerful actors also delineate them as self-maximizing individuals who are assured to fail to uphold the public interest unless strictly monitored (Buchanan & Tullock, 1962; Downs, 1957, 1967; Hayek, 1960/2011; Niskanen, 1971/2007; Tullock, 1965/1987). It is worth noting that under this stream not all

literature caries negative normative connotations. For instance, Long (1952) has asserted that while bureaucracy is certainly powerful in terms of its political inferences, it is also possibly more representative than Congress.

The next important theme can be labeled as *"bureaucrats, too, are people, citizens and professionals."* Within this view public servants are indeed seen as more than mere "cogs" in the bureaucratic machine. They are perceived as citizens guided by more than self-interests. Administrators' personal and professional values don't only matter; they are delineated as crucial for democratic administration. The literature on representative bureaucracy (Denhardt & deLeon, 1995; Kingsley, 1944; Krislov, 1974; Levitan, 1946; Mosher, 1968; Van Riper, 1958), for instance, could be placed under this theme. Although, what is "right" and what is "wrong" is sometimes imposed from the top, on most other occasions it is dictated by bureaucrats themselves, who even if left to their own devices, behave rather democratically (Friederich, 1940; Meier & O'Toole, 2006). "[B]ureaucrats are no different from other people. When faced with choices, they will attempt to make decisions that reflect their own personal values" (Meier, 1993, p. 4). Often, within this stream of literature, it is believed that the roles of public servants draw upon a citizenship constructs; in essence, they are "professional citizens" within the context of their work environment (Cooper, 1991; Kalu, 2003; Frederickson, 1982; Stivers, 1990; Roman, 2015). This view carries recognizable positive normative connotations, such as in the case of the Blacksburg Manifesto (Wamsley et al., 1990). Public servants are delineated as power brokers entrusted to interpret public interest and use their discretion in a manner that would be found fit for its pursuit (Appleby, 1945, 1949; Herrig, 1936; Long, 1949, 1952). Following this line of argument, Rohr (1978/1989) has asserted that public administrators should base their decision-making within the value framework provided the regime values found in U.S. Constitution and the U.S. Supreme Courts' decisions. Rohr (1978/1989) identified freedom, equality and property as the three core values that should be upheld by all public servants. Similarly, Bertelli and Lynn (2006) have placed administrative decision-making within a committed respect of constitutional accountability and the responsible enforcement of separation of powers. Finally, others have turned to virtue as the critical character trait of public administrators

and as the underlying criterion for deciding proper action (Cooper & Wright, 1992; Hart, 1984; Lilla, 1981; Pincoffs, 1986).

The final grand stream of literature can be captured under the theme of *"bureaucrats are few of the many."* Literature in this group upholds that the role played by administrators' personal values depends on the context, and is more often than not quite limited. Administrators are just a few of the many who inhabit the organizational sphere, hence they are a reflection of the larger organizational imageries. Public servants are rarely a "force" in value setting on their own. It is, then, somewhat naïve to believe that a single administrator's values can have a significant impact on administration. As public employees, public servants are byproducts of the organizational cultures (Halperin & Kanter, 1973) and where they stand depends on where they sit (Neustadt & May, 1988). Cooper (1982/2006) and Denhardt (1988) have suggested that, in their decision-making, public servants are forced to navigate through a wide range of organizational webs of constraints and power mappings. This stream encompasses literature that argues that administrators might not be in control of the value sets while employed in the organizational context. For example, Whyte (1956/2002) has suggested the existence of a predisposition of modern organizations to create servile "organization men." Ewing (1977), too, has argued that employees regularly surrender part of their identities and values upon entering the workplace. The organizational dominance theme is also echoed in Scott and Hart's (1979) analysis of the oppressive nature of bureaucracy and Ramos' (1981) examination of the narrowness and intrusiveness of the market-driven values. One of the most prominent recent works within this vein is that of Adams and Balfour (1998/2004) in which the authors asserted that the modernistic technical rationality of today's public administration removes bureaucrats, and their personal values, as identities from the larger process. It is believed the individual conscience has little effect on the broader context of administration mechanics and is easily drowned by and explained away through technical rationality.

This short review of the literature on values and decision-making was not intended to be exhaustive by any means. Moreover, the argument could be made that some works could comfortably fit under more than one category. Case in point being Lipsky's (1980)

examination of street-level bureaucrats, O'Leary's (2006) analysis of guerrilla government and Maynard-Moody and Musheno's (2003) discussion of the citizen-agent narrative. These works simultaneously embrace the role of the public servant as a citizen representative while also remaining acutely aware of the fact that self-interest and personal perspectives play heavy roles in conditioning "what's the right thing to do." Hence, the case could be made that these accounts fall in chorus under the first and the second stream. If it accomplishes nothing else, then, the discussion should make it fairly obvious that the value-decision-making nexus has provided the setting for significant academic interest, which has drawn some of the biggest names in the field. This is especially true in terms of theoretical discussions, even if it has not always led to a coherent set of theoretical nor empirical perspectives.

Despite this extraordinary level of scholarly focus, today we are as close to answering the "big" questions of the area as we were when Simon (1946) mercilessly destroyed the "principles" of public administration. Should scholars, then, give up and reduce this inquiry to the status of futile exercise or captivating classroom debate? The evident answer is – no. The question remains both intriguing and necessary. Moreover, judging by the minimal levels of trust in government, constructing useful understandings regarding the role played by values, particularly public values, in public administrators' decision-making patterns remains as critical as ever. Even the most ardent advocates of individualism cannot negate the dependence of successful democratic governance on its ability to uphold and nurture its publicness (Bozeman, 2007). As, Frederickson (1997) has suggested, "public" carries a special value in public administration. Therefore, the ambiguousness associated with research on values, which provides few guarantees for exacting answers, should not constrain our patience with the debate. For considering all scientific and technological progress of the past century, value-laden decision-making remains at the very heart of the administrative state.

THE PURIST-BROKER MODEL

Over the past few decades, public service in developed countries has become progressively more politicized[2] (Page & Wright, 1999; Peters & Pierre, 2004; van den Berg, 2011). Rourke (1991), for instance, has identified the increasing hostility within the political

environment as one of the three main dimensions that have led to a decrease in bureaucratic power.

> [T]he political environment in which the average administrative agency now operates has become considerably less supportive an increasingly more adversarial. The number of groups interested in what an agency does has multiplied, and their attitudes toward it, even when the agency is pursuing objectives to which the groups are deeply attached, are often quite hostile (Rourke, 1991, p. 120).

One would expect that with growing levels of politicization public administrators would become increasingly sensitive and in tune with the changes in their organizations' political environments. This would lead to them perhaps acting differently in environments that are highly politicized or politically volatile compared to others that are not. Drawing upon open-ended interviews with public servants Diggs and Roman (2012) and Roman (2014a) have identified a "well-behaved" link between perceptions of one's work environment and the nature of the set of values one uses to make decisions. Diggs and Roman (2012) and Roman (2014a) have argued that perceptions regarding one's environmental instability will lead to a differentiation in values underlying work decision-making, which ultimately motivates two, in large part distinct, decision-making patterns. They labeled the two decision-making patterns as broker and purist.

In their decision-making, purists are more likely to emphasize administrative processes, identify one single accountability vector and perceive public involvement in decision-making as undesirable. The rigidity of bureaucratic structures is deeply ingrained in purist decision-making,[3] yet not for what usual suspected reasons – efficiency or neutrality. Neither the former not the latter is the main motive behind purists' faithful adherence to the administrative process. Purists associate with the bureaucratic processes due to their ability to serve as protective mechanisms. Rules and red tape ensure reduction in emotional labor and buffer them from what they perceive to be unstable, perhaps even hostile, work environments. Hence, somewhat paradoxically, purists, as public servants, identify with bureaucratic organizing not on a functional or normative levels, but on psychological grounds.

Brokers, on the other hand, construct their decision-making on personal relationships and professional networks. They attempt to accommodate simultaneously several vectors of accountability and

perceive external involvement in decision-making both as administratively feasible and normatively appropriate. Roman (2014a) has argued that purists are enunciations in practice of the satisficing man as suggested by the bounded rationality framework (1947/1997, 1957, 1983, 1985). The bounded rationality lens, however, is not able to provide a fully suitable explanation for broker type behavior. According to Roman (2014a) as public servants, brokers, see past organizational boundaries and associate with the role of citizen representatives; partly acting as political players in an administrative environment.

The essence of the BP model lies in the underlying assumption that environmental instability motivates a perceived differentiation between personal (off the job) and professional (on the job) value sets[4]. It is important to note here that the emphasis is placed on the "set" not on "values." That is, the model does not hinge on the specific nature of the actual values being endorsed, but rather on whether an individual identifies and constructs a perceived dichotomy between "personal" and "work" values. The model posits that public servants who perceive their environments as instable (purists), either due to being highly political and due to one's own standing within the organization, will attempt to delineate between their personal and professional values employed when making decisions. Those who do not perceive their work environments as highly political and who are comfortable with their organizational standings (brokers) will not discern between the values they hold as public employees and those they hold as social creatures. The former will embrace the bureaucratic process as a protective mechanism, while the latter will welcome administrative discretion and will seek to act entrepreneurially whenever possible.

There are several key assumptions embedded in the structures of the BP model. The first critical assumption is that contextual instability, as estimated by level of one's comfort with one's organizational standing and the level of politicization of one's environment, is linked to a differentiation between personal and professional value sets. Second, embracing the idea that administrative decision-making requires somewhat separate values from one's personal values leads one to embrace a specific decision-making pattern. The model does not concern itself with the nature or provenience of one's values or whether the values are intrinsic/prime

or instrumental[5]. As others have argued (Bozeman, 2007; Moore, 1995; Pesch, 2008; var den Wal & van Hout, 2009), there is no unitary conception of what values are and the set of values guiding human behavior is intrinsically ambiguous (van den Munckhof, 2006). Hence any model assuming a static nature of values would be detached from the reality of practice from the start. Within the BP model, the only point of interest remains a perceived differentiation between value sets; it "assumes away" the inordinate complexity associated with nature of values. What is of import is that the individual believes that such differentiation is real. Third, the broker-purist separation is a dichotomy introduced for purposes of simplicity; in reality the patterns represent that attractor points of a continuum. Fourth, the model does not assume a psychological fixation on one of the two patterns. A public administrator can migrate from one pattern to another throughout one's career or as a result of the developments in one's environment. Finally, it is assumed that other external elements, such personal and institutional dimensions are already factored in one's perception of one's environment. For instance, depending on one's education, training, previous experiences, age, gender or organizational position one might express different perceptions of the same environment. What is essential to remember is that the model does not concern itself with the reasons behind such perceptions but rather with the simple fact that such perceptions might motivate a professed need to discern between personal and professional values.

In bland terms, the BP model suggests that an administrator with a supposedly differentiated value set (a purist) might find a given decision as being tolerable at work; yet, if faced with a similar scenario in private life the administrator (a purist) would probably reject the same decision on the grounds of incongruity with personal values. The BP model assumes that individuals who are not comfortable or established within their organizational environments and find it unstable (purists) will accept certain decision-making patterns as legitimate and rational even if on a personal level, they might not agree with it. This perspective falls in line within the Adams and Balfour's (1998/2004) claim that personal conscience is frequently subordinated to structures of authority, which given their supposedly public nature are seen as more legitimate. This is in many ways also reminiscent of Milgram's (1965, 1974) findings regarding a human predisposition to submit to a perceived authority.

Here it becomes critical to note that due to expectation-behavior link (Biddle, 1979) the perception one's environment being politicized and politically volatile, condition which for the purposes of this paper is labeled "*politicsness*," is factual or complete is not necessary as important as the individual belief that such a condition is present and real. Politicsness is an evaluation fully constructed at the individual level. It represents the subjective and normative interpretation of one's work context. Such perception carries traces of reality only to the extent that it is allowed by the reliability of one's ability to objectively assess one's environment. For example, two administrators who find themselves in similar work environments and enjoy similar professional and organizational standings might describe the same context differently. If one of them feels more comfortable with high levels of uncertainty, or political scrutiny, or one commands a higher ability to influence one's immediate environment, then this individual is more likely to describe one's work context in this case as having low levels of politicsness. The same would not be necessarily true about the second administrator. The appeal of politicsness is that it does not concern itself with objective reality. Whether one's environment is indeed highly politicized or volatile is not necessarily critical; what is of import is that the belief that it is leads the public servant to develop a distinction between the professional and personal values used as basis for decision-making. Figure 1 provides a visual schematic of the BP model.

One would be remiss if one would make claim that politicsness is a freshly coined idea. Like any other concept, it is nothing more than a compilation and reinterpretation of previously delineated knowledge. While the formulation used in this paper might be

FIGURE 1
Broker-Purist Conceptual Model
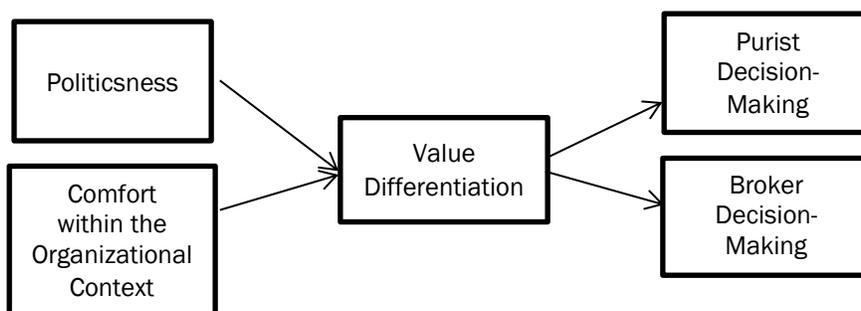
somewhat original, in all other matters, the awareness about the condition has always been part of the literature. For instance, politicsness in many ways draws its logic from Bozeman's (1987) idea of publicness. Bozeman (2007, p. 1) asserted that to claim that "a policy or an institution is "more public" says only that it is more influenced by political authority." The critical difference between the two concepts, then, lies in the fact that politicsness is focused on the level of individual perception. Hence, paraphrasing Bozeman (2007) to say that one's environment has a higher degree of politicsness says only that one perceives that it is shaped by conflicting interests and by discernible efforts of political control. In other words, high politicsness characterizes an environment with high degrees of political volatility, political interference and noticeable levels of politicization.

Although in its theoretical formulation the BP model is quite attractive, there are several weaknesses that should not be overlooked - both in terms of the development of the model as well as its underlining dynamics. First, the model was developed based on mixed-methods research under the condition of a small N, which could make only limited claims to generalizability. Second, the model makes a relatively strong assumption that individual characteristics, organizational roles and institutional structures are already reflected in one's perceptions. Finally, it posits that individuals are sufficiently aware of their values in order to construct a valid opinion about their role in decision-making. While this is to be sure a rather strong set of assumptions and constraints, the model remains elegant and appealing in its parsimoniousness. For targeting only value differentiation it remains modest in its reach, however, if upheld it would provide important generalizability levels and predictive capacity. At a minimum, the model would offer the ability to describe the decision-making patterns within public organizations drawing directly on the developments in their political environments.

METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH AND DATA

Survey Instrument

With limited prior research to go off, the instrument and its specific items reflected the formulation provided by Roman (2014a) and were primarily adopted and tailored to fit broader public administration literature. This represents the first empirical study of

this nature and there were no previous empirical accounts that could have been consulted. In this sense, this research is very much exploratory. Appendix A provides the complete instrument employed for data collection. A pre-test based on 17 responses from colleagues was used to validate the instrument. The critical discussions that followed upon the completion of the pre-test led only to minor changes in the wording of the items.

The questionnaire's on screen presentation consisted of three parts. The first part of the instrument included five-point Likert-type items ranging from "disagree" (1) to "agree" (5), which were employed with the purpose of measuring the five constructs: politicsness, comfort with organizational context, value differentiation, purist decision-making pattern and broker decision-making pattern. All items on the first page were automatically randomized and required an answer. Respondents were not able to proceed to the second page if they did not provide an answer to every item. On the second page participants were required to select three public service values which they found to be most important on the job. Again, the order of the answer choices was randomized and respondents could not proceed to the rest of the survey unless they selected exactly three choices. The final page of the survey asked respondents for their professional and demographic data. For obvious privacy reasons, respondents were not prompted to provide an answer for every single question presented on this page. Yet overall, due to the obligatory nature of the bulk of the instrument items, there were no major issues with missing data. Table 1 presents the five constructs and the instrument items associated with each.

Data Collection and Sample

This study examined the psychological dynamics behind public servants' attitudes and expected behaviors; as such, the individual and individual level perceptions offered the appropriate level of theory and unit of analysis (see James & Jones, 1974; Carr et al., 2003). In line with the original study, here, too, public procurement specialists were targeted as the population of interest. Although the BP model is sufficiently broad to accommodate any administrative context, it was found appropriate to verify it within the specific population that was used to suggest it.

TABLE 1
Constructs and Corresponding Instrument Items

Construct	Instrument Item	Alpha
Politicsness	My work environment is highly political. There are many political interests in play in the decisions that I make. My organization is under significant political scrutiny. Elected officials often attempt to influence my decisions.	.955
Organizational Comfort	I feel very comfortable within my organization. I am satisfied with the role I play in my organization. My comfort levels working in my organization are high. I am pleased with the role I play in my organization.	.952
Value Differentiation	The values that I uphold at work are different than those that I have outside of my job. The values that I use to make decisions at work are not identical with my personal values. I feel that there are clear differences between my personal values and on the job values. In my personal life, I am guided by different values than those I employ at work.	.944
Purist	I always follow procedures even in cases when they don't "make sense." To avoid scrutiny, I never deviate from existing procedures. I follow procedures as closely as possible regardless of the situation. I don't take any liberties when it comes to procedures.	.921
Broker	I don't always follow procedures if such action will result in improved outcomes. I often take it upon myself to decide what decisions are in the best interest of our constituents. I typically find a way to do the "right thing" even if it might conflict with existing procedures. I might overlook existing procedures if I find them not to be in the best interest of our constituents.	.938

The membership of California Association of Public Procurement Officials (CAPPO) represented the sample frame chosen for this research. The latter is a professional association of Californian procurement specialists that boasted 1,221 members at the time of this study. A survey invitation and link to the survey instrument (administered via Qualtrics) was posted on the association's listserv on July 23, 2014. Two more reminders were sent until the collector was closed at the end of August, 2014. A total of 168 of public procurement specialists started the survey with 152 of them completing it.

The average age of the respondents was approximately 45. The sample was evenly distributed by gender. A total of 74 males and 75 females completed the survey (3 respondents did not indicate their gender). Eighty-five (56%) of those responding held non-managerial positions, 53 (35%) were manager, while 14 (9%) were directors or senior executives. Approximately 65% of those responding indicated that they did not associate themselves with a minority group while 31% did (seven respondents did not want reveal their minority association).

Finally, 47% of the respondents indicated that they held at least one procurement certification. Table 2 provides the education levels for those in the sample.

TABLE 2
Highest Degree Completed

Degree	Frequency	Cumulative
High School Degree	18	11.8
Bachelor's Degree	74	60.5
Master's Degree	23	75.7
Professional Degree	2	77.0
Other	35	100.0
Total	152	

METHODOLOGY

Given the scope and nature of the research, structural equation modeling (SEM) was made the technique of choice. SEM is a multivariate methodology that has been suggested to be particularly useful for theory testing based on non-experimental data (Blunch, 2008; Bollen, 2014; Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010; Kaplan,

2009; Loehlin, 1998). SEM is a derivation of the general linear model (GLM), which allows the researcher to simultaneously test several regression equations. It terms of model specification and sample size Bentler and Chou (1987) have suggested a minimum of five cases per parameter estimate or approximately 15 cases per measured variable, very much similar to the expectations under standard ordinary least squares regression analysis (see Stevens, 2009). The full base model tested here is shown in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2
Broker-Purist Base Model
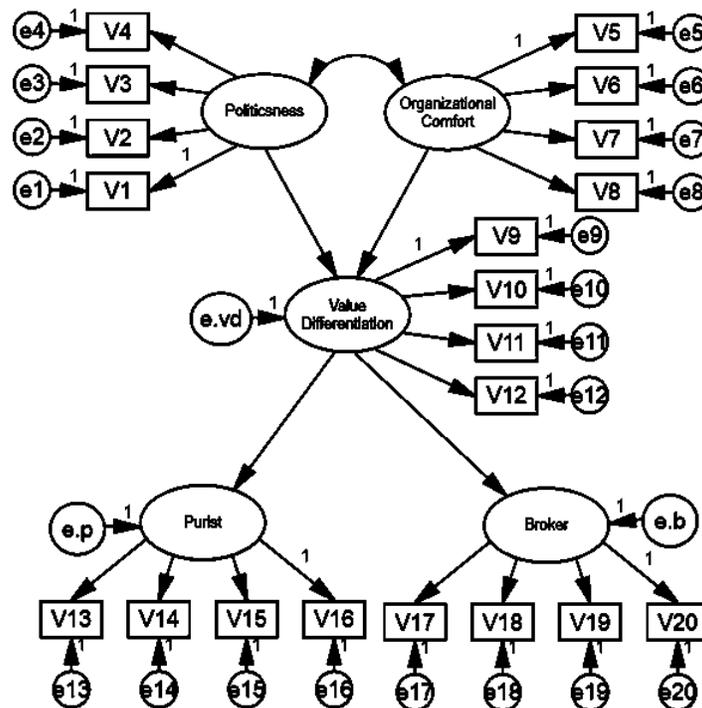
RESULTS

Base Model

The absolute model fit is typically examined via the chi-square test. The null hypothesis is that the model fits the data. The

discrepancy value for the tested model is 239.454 (p<.001, df = 165), which suggests that the null hypothesis should be rejected. Yet, since the chi-square test is sensitive to sample size and non-normality scholars have recommended other descriptive fit statistics as being more appropriate for assessing the overall fit of the model than the chi-square test. The typically preferred fit statics are the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) or Non-Normed Fit Index (NNFI), (Standardized) Root Mean Residual (RMR), Root Means Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) and the Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI) (Bentler, 1990; Kline, 2011). It should be noted here that there is no agreement in the literature in regards to which fit indices are "better" nor which ones to report. For relatively small sample sizes Fan, Thompson and Wang (1999) have suggested that the CFI, AGFI, RMSEA and the NNFI (TLI) as preferred given their reduced susceptibility to sample size. Hu and Bentler (1999) have argued that for a relatively good fit - values of .95 or higher for TLI and CFI and values lower than .08 for SRMR and .06 for RMSEA are needed. Table 3 provides the values for the fit statistics for the base model.

TABLE 3
Fit Indices for the Base Model

	CFI	TLI (NNFI)	NFI	RMSEA	RMR	AGFI
Base Model	.979	.976	.937	.055 (.039 -.069)	.054	.821

Based on the descriptive fit statistics it can be safely assumed that the base model fits the data fairly well. The model can thus be conditionally[6] accepted. As hypothesized, public administrators who identified their environments as politicized and stated low levels of comfort with their current organizations were more likely to indicate a perceived value differentiation (Table 4). Consequently, they were also more likely to follow procedures very closely and take little liberties outside of stated expectations. In simple terms, in highly politicized environments public administrators were more likely to act as "typical rule-enforcing bureaucrats." Public administrators were less likely to state a value differentiation and were more likely to act entrepreneurially when they felt comfortable with their organizational

roles and described their work environments as not being highly political. The standardized regression weights are provided in Appendix B.

TABLE 4
Regression Weights

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Value	<---	Organizational	-.495	.091	-5.444	**
Value	<---	Politicsness	.361	.081	4.439	**
Broker	<---	Value	-.846	.073	-11.594	**
Purist	<---	Value	.776	.068	11.478	**
V1	<---	Politicsness	1.000			
V2	<---	Politicsness	.974	.047	20.818	**
V3	<---	Politicsness	.959	.049	19.569	**
V4	<---	Politicsness	1.016	.047	21.622	**
V5	<---	Organizational	1.000			
V6	<---	Organizational	.937	.049	19.108	**
V7	<---	Organizational	.956	.050	19.220	**
V8	<---	Organizational	.938	.044	21.249	**
V9	<---	Value	1.000			
V10	<---	Value	1.071	.069	15.454	**
V11	<---	Value	1.072	.073	14.718	**
V12	<---	Value	1.047	.064	16.257	**
V16	<---	Purist	1.000			
V15	<---	Purist	1.094	.070	15.601	**
V14	<---	Purist	.963	.070	13.734	**
V13	<---	Purist	.991	.072	13.774	**
V20	<---	Broker	1.000			
V19	<---	Broker	1.078	.055	19.497	**
V18	<---	Broker	.998	.059	16.794	**
V17	<---	Broker	.874	.061	14.348	**

Modified Model

Identifying a good fit for the base model is not necessarily typical. In fact, it's not uncommon for scholars to have to undertake model modifications in order to construct a better fitting model. In order to evaluate whether improvements can be made to the base model modification indices were examined. Although there were no model variances that could have been otherwise considered in a modified model, there were a number of covariances and regression weights

that were good candidates for incorporating into a revised model. Three of the largest modification index values were found for the covariances between e.p and e.b, e4 and e8, and e1 and e3. No additional modifications were deemed appropriate. The revised model has a discrepancy value of 210.496 (p <.05, df =162). The values for the fit indices are provided in Table 5.

TABLE 5
Fit Indices for the Revised Model

	CFI	TLI (NNFI)	NFI	RMSEA	RMR	AGFI
Base Model	.987	.984	.945	.045 (.025 -.061)	.054	.843

Despite the fact that the modified model provides an improved fit, the reduction in the chi-square statistic is not sufficiently large to justify adding these new constraints on empirical basis alone. As a result, given that acceptable fit of the base model, it is advisable to restrain from advocating any modification to the original formulation – the model appears to perform adequately within its original specification.

Limitations

At this juncture, it becomes critical to note that SEM does not provide a magical solution to theory testing. The fact that the model tested here fit the data well does not thoroughly validate the BP model. There might be other equivalent models that would perhaps fit the data equally well. Other, nonequivalent models, too, could perform just as well if not better. Although the alternative model that was examined preformed slightly better than the base model, there were no credible theoretical justifications for its formulation. Along similar lines, for the purposes of this research it was not deemed necessary to examine other non-equivalent models.

Furthermore, there are also a number of limitations that should be reviewed and carefully considered. First, it was not possible to control nor ensure that the final sample was either random or representative. The survey invitation and link were posted on CAPPO's listserv, which made it impossible to verify who received or considered the participation invitation. In addition, CAPPO does not maintain data on the demographic makeup of its membership. This removed the possibility of examining whether the sample was

representative or not. These two issues impose serious constraints on any generalizability claims. Second, respondents were "forced" to provide answers to the majority of the instrument questions. Although convenient from a research perspective, this might have introduced a certain research bias as there might exist a clear difference between those willing to provide answers to all items and those who were unwilling to do the latter (a derivative of non-response bias). Third, the sample used in this analysis was relatively small. Although, it did meet the minimal criteria suggested in the literature, the results would be more reliable if confirmed within a larger sample, especially given the nature of the data. Fourth, some might argue that public procurement as a subarea of public administration is meaningfully different from "typical" public administration. Indeed, by being placed in close proximity to public spending (hence scrutiny) and yielding rather significant power through their purchasing decisions – public procurement specialists might be much more in tune with the politicization of their environments than a "typical" public administrator. Finally, the data were collected using Likert-type items. This raises customary concerns regarding data normality. Even though the underlying distributions of the items might indeed be continuous, given that SEM is sensitive to significant deviations in normality this remains an important concern.

DISCUSSION

The empirical results obtained through SEM analysis lend strong support to the BP model. Moreover, the significant path coefficients and the high R^2 values suggest that politicsness and organizational comfort have significant effects on value differentiation and explain a large part of the variance in this construct (Table 6). Similar conclusions can be reached in regards to the effects of value differentiation on broker and purist constructs. Indeed, at least within the context of this specific sample it is found that public administrators are quite sensitive to their work environments. Their perceptions, in turn, influence the manner in which they allow their values to guide their decision-making. In highly politicized environments and in instances when public administrators are not completely at ease within their work milieus – they might consciously (or unconsciously) "draw a line" between their on the job and off the job values. In simple terms, they might find it convenient, for a

TABLE 6
Standardized Path Coefficients

Path			Standardized Coefficient	R²
Value	<---	Organizational	-.533	.86
Value	<---	Politicsness	.425	.86
Broker	<---	Value	-.841	.71
Purist	<---	Value	.857	.73

number of reasons, to make a clear distinction between professional and personal selves. The choice to act as a bureaucrat can then be understood as nothing more than a buffer from politicized environments. This supports the idea that within bureaucracies, public administrators might deliberately embrace red-tape for purposes of protection from "unfriendly" and scrutinizing environments (Roman, 2014b).

The BP model has a number of extremely appealing qualities. First, in its parsimoniousness it represents a fairly elegant model. Second, it is able to provide a rather simple explanation to the bureaucratic paradox – how bureaucratic organizations can be simultaneously rigid and flexible, isolated and open, indifferent and responsive, stiff and innovative. Third, it represents one of the better recent models that has attempted to parse the complex role that values play in public administration. Finally, it provides a useful perspective for understanding the evolution of public administrators' decision-making and their values within increasingly politicized environments. In this sense, and considering all these advantages, this research has the potential to become a valuable addition to the public administration literature.

The main contribution of this study can be located in the fact that this represents the first de facto empirical examination of the BP model and confirmation of its adequacy. To this extent this study delineates a clear and testable link between the politicization of public administration, the values of the individuals who operate in it and their stated behaviors. The latter is no easy task since all three concepts are mired by ambiguity and operational complexity. Providing testable hypotheses and a starting framework for future research will surely be found useful by scholars. Future research should scrutinize the conclusions reached here with the context of other subareas of public administration. If nothing else, this provides

a utile basis for conceptualizing and promoting empirical research on the role of values in the decision-making by public servants.

CONCLUSION

The nature of an organization's political environment remains an integral consideration of the administrative reality. Current public administration finds itself placed "in a highly unstable political setting where major segments of its constituency are frequently dissatisfied with an agency's efforts on their behalf and where outside experts constantly question whether the agency is doing the right thing" (Rourke, 1991, p. 122). Nelson (1982) has suggested that the history of American bureaucracy is mired by ironies, or at least seven of them. The grant irony, however, is that continuous "efforts to make administration more responsive to political control have had the opposite effect" (Nelson, 1982, pp. 776-777). The BP model and the research presented here seem to confirm Nelson's (1982) intuition – in environments satiated by politics and under increasing political scrutiny public administrators are highly likely to become "bureaucrats" and less responsive to control. For purposes of current governance narratives, which advocate administrative innovation and responsibility, it then becomes extremely difficult to justify politicsness. In aggregate, the findings of this study suggest that administrators who identify their work environment as highly politicized might "abandon" their role as active citizens and embrace detachment and the assumed purity of process. Given that public procurement as a field is under significant transformational pressures and is facing increasing more complex tasks and demands (McCue and Roman, 2012; McCue, Prier, & Swanson, 2015), which are bound to shape the field's nature for the foreseeable future – the consequentiality of this realization can hardly be overstated.

Due to its contextual dependency and vagueness, empirical research on values does not come along very often. When it does come, it is usually in a shape that is prone to critique. This study is certainly not immune to such criticism. Indeed, even the idea of attempting to measure values is controversial in itself. Yet, rather than succumbing to the darkness, this study attempted to light a candle. It is up to future research to examine and challenge whether this candle has been lit in a meaningful place. Future efforts could start from actively challenging the findings presented here. The

possibility of providing further confirmation of the findings presented here surely warrants such efforts.

NOTES

1. Hood and Jackson (1991) go as far as to trace the rhetorical and argumentative nature of public administration to Simon's seminal 1946 article The Proverbs of Administration.

2. Politicization can be defined in a number of ways. One way to define it is as the "the substitution of political criteria for merit-based criteria in the selection, retention, promotion, rewards, and disciplining of members of the public service" (Peters & Pierre, 2004, p. 2). Another way to interpret politicization is to think of it as the increasing effect that political volatility has on the perspectives and performance of public administrators.

3. The expectation that public administrators are responsive (effected/constrained) by rules falls in line with general expectations present in public administration literature (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2015; Page & Wright, 1999; Peters & Pierre, 2004; Terry, 2003).

4. This should not be equated with other approaches to categorizing values such as: private value vs. public value (Bozeman, 2007; van der Wal, 2008); espoused values vs. values in-use (Schein, 1985/2010); ethical, democratic, professional, and people values (Kernaghan, 2003); representativeness, neutral competence, and executive leadership (Kaufman, 1956); or intrinsic and instrumental (Dahl & Lindblom, 1953/2000).

5. See Dahl & Lindblom (1953/2000) or van Dyke (1982) for a discussion on the difference between intrinsic and instrumental values.

6. There are equivalent models that can fit data equally as well as the suggested model.

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APPENDIX A
Survey Instrument
PAGE 1

In what follows, you will be provided with a number of statements related to your work and organizational environments. Please, indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement. (Please, note that each statement requires an answer in order to proceed to the next page).

My work environment is highly political.
There are many political interests in play in the decisions that I make.
My organization is under significant political scrutiny.
Elected officials often attempt to influence my decisions.
I feel very comfortable within my organization.
I am satisfied with the role I play in my organization.
My comfort levels working in my organization are high.
I am pleased with the role I play in my organization.
The values that I uphold at work are different than those that I have outside of my job.
The values that I use to make decisions at work are not identical with my personal values.
I feel that there are clear differences between my personal values and on the job values.
In my personal life, I am guided by different values than those I employ at work.
I always follow procedures even in cases when they don't "make sense."
To avoid scrutiny, I never deviate from existing procedures.
I follow procedures as closely as possible regardless of the situation.
I don't take any liberties when it comes to procedures.
I don't always follow procedures if such action will result in improved outcomes.
I often take it upon myself to decide what decisions are in the best interest of our constituents.
I typically find a way to do the "right thing" even if it might conflict with existing procedures.
I might overlook existing procedures if I find them not to be in the best interest of our constituents.
I think that politics is an important part of public administration.
I believe that elected officials should play an active role in determining the overall direction of public procurement practices.
I feel that the fundamental principles of public procurement should be established by elected officials.
I feel that public procurement specialists should not become involved in determining general procurement priorities (e.g. local, county or state levels) - that is the job of elected officials.

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In their daily work, public administrators are guided by a multitude of public service values. Drawing on their definitions, out of the choices provided below, please select three public service values that you find to be the most important for public procurement. (Please, note that you need to select exactly three before you can proceed to the next page).

Where:

Political responsiveness - being responsive to elected officials.

Representativeness - representing the interest of those less privileged, underrepresented, the community and the public in general.

Political neutrality - keeping a low political profile, being neutral and never engaging in partisan politics.

Knowledge/Professionalism - being knowledgeable in one's field and educating others on important issues or choices.

Ethics - upholding moral values and being guided by ethical principles.

Democratic principles - promoting democratic values such as freedoms, equal opportunities and insuring that citizens' voices are heard.

Collaboration - facilitating dialogue and collaborating with different stakeholder groups.

Stewardship - having a strong sense of duty, promoting and protecting the public interest.

Fiscal realism - maintaining a realistic outlook of financial capabilities and insuring that poor economic decisions are not made.

PLEASE SELECT ONLY YOUR TOP 3 CHOICES.
o   Political responsiveness
o   Ethics
o   Representativeness
o   Stewardship
o   Fiscal realism
o   Knowledge/Professionalism
o   Democratic principles
o   Political neutrality
o   Collaboration

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The following questions will ask some general information about you.

What is the highest degree that you completed?
o   High School Degree
o   Bachelor's
o   Master's
o   Doctorate
o   Professional Degree
o   Other (please, specify)

Do you hold a procurement certification?

How many years have you been working for your current organization?

What best describes the position that you currently hold in your organization?
o   Non-manager

- o   Manager
- o   Director/Senior Executive
- o   Elected Official
- o   Other (please specify)

What is your gender?
What is your age?
Do you consider yourself to be a minority?

APPENDIX B
Standardized Regression Weights

			Estimates
Value Differentiation	<---	Organizational Comfort	-.533
Value Differentiation	<---	Politicsness	.425
Broker	<---	Value Differentiation	-.841
Purist	<---	Value Differentiation	.857
V1	<---	Politicsness	.944
V2	<---	Politicsness	.912
V3	<---	Politicsness	.893
V4	<---	Politicsness	.924
V5	<---	Organizational Comfort	.938
V6	<---	Organizational Comfort	.894
V7	<---	Organizational Comfort	.895
V8	<---	Organizational Comfort	.924
V9	<---	Value Differentiation	.852
V10	<---	Value Differentiation	.903
V11	<---	Value Differentiation	.880
V12	<---	Value Differentiation	.926
V16	<---	Purist	.883
V15	<---	Purist	.887
V14	<---	Purist	.839
V13	<---	Purist	.842
V20	<---	Broker	.903
V19	<---	Broker	.944
V18	<---	Broker	.889
V17	<---	Broker	.829