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The effects of rule following leadership behavior on civil servant in the Dutch civil service: A civil servant behavioral study
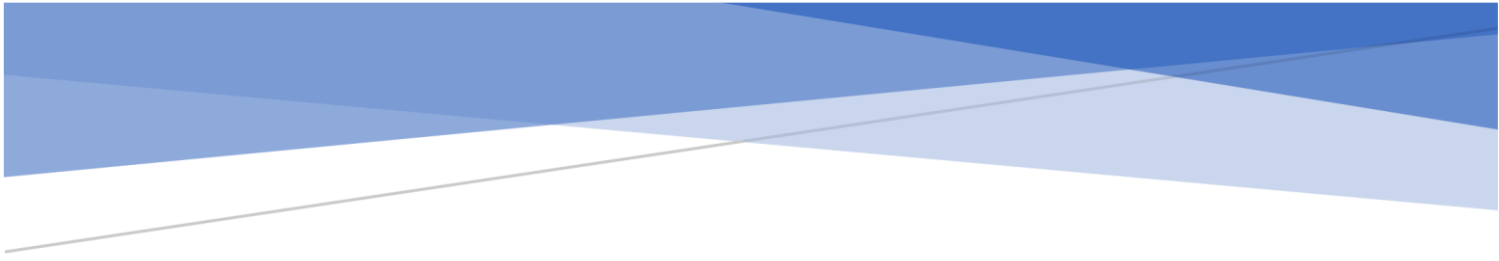
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The effects of rule following leadership behavior on civil servant in the Dutch civil service

A civil servant behavioral study

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1. Introduction

On January 15th, 2021, the entire Dutch cabinet of Rutte 3 resigned. The reason for this was the allowances affair, which in Dutch is known as de toeslagenaffaire (van Gurp, 2021). The issue was that thousands of parents were falsely accused of being frauds and were in turn treated accordingly. Their allowances were stopped, and they had to pay back all that they had received earlier. This put a lot of families into debt. The result was that thousands of people, many children, had to live and grow up in poverty. The effects of this scandal can not be overstated as it destroyed people's lives, had people evicted from their homes, and resulted in the end of countless relationships. The psychological damage caused, can not be solved by dismissing debt and by handing out additional money (parlementaire ondervragingscommissie Kinderopvangtoeslag, 2020).

The reason why the Dutch government acted the way it did, started with the so-called "Bulgarenfraude". The scandal involved groups of Bulgarians who collected allowances from the Dutch government without having a right to them. To combat this fraud, the Dutch government introduced stricter policies. These policies had the goal of limiting fraud with the allowances. This worked, but a little too well. It seemed that the heads of the civil service interpreted the new laws in a very strict manner and instructed their subordinates to follow the rules to the letter (parlementaire ondervragingscommissie Kinderopvangtoeslag, 2020).

So how can it be that civil servants went along with the strict adherence to rule-following? When they could have also chosen to break the rules more regularly to benefit the needs of the citizens? The mechanism that decides whether or not a person breaks or follows the rules can be seen as a matter of weighing the costs versus the benefits (Bolino & Grant, 2016). Managers can influence this mechanism by trying to influence either the perceived costs or benefits of an action, depending on whether they believe that rule-breaking is desirable or not.

The belief that there are benefits to rule-breaking, or how it is called more recently "prosocial rule-breaking" (PSRB), is relatively new. Elisabeth W. Morrison pioneered this idea. In her article, she points out that literature up till that point had focused mostly on the bad sides of violating rules, while she believes that there should be put more emphasis on the prosocial side of breaking rules. (Morrison, 2006, p. 5) This idea of Morrison was noticed and has resulted in a plethora of articles researching the effects of prosocial rule-breaking (Van Kleef, Homan, Finkenauer, Blaker, & Heerdlink, 2012), how we can increase it (Wang & Shi, 2021) (Fleming,

Prosocial rule breaking at the street level: the roles of leaders, peers, and bureaucracy, 2020), and how we can quantify it (Dahling, Chau, Mayer, & Gregory, 2012).

Bolino & Grant try to nuance this position, in their article, arguing that there are both good and bad aspects of being prosocial. They argue that we should not see prosocial as something inherently good as it can be used by employees to rationalize unwise, unethical, or harmful acts (Bolino & Grant, 2016, p. 5). They go on to connect three prosocial concepts, namely prosocial motivation, prosocial behavior, and prosocial impact (PSI), by stating that they influence each other in a perpetual cycle. They explain that although every individual has a cap on the amount of prosocial motivation they can feel, they will need repeated exposure to the PSI of their work to keep benefitting from this increase in motivation (Bolino & Grant, 2016, p. 49). Increased motivation will then cause people to engage in more prosocial behavior, like PSRB. Grant points out, however, that we are dealing with a perceived PSI. Meaning that there is a difference between what employees believe to be their impact and their actual impact (Grant, 2008b). This also means that employees are selective about how they perceive their impact. In the case of the allowance affair. Employees might see their work as prosocial as they are making sure that less tax money is wasted, and frauds get the punishments they deserve. As long as they do not know that they are harming innocent people, who just made a mistake, the harm can continue while the employee believes that their work has a prosocial impact.

Where the theorist believes that PSRB has a net benefit in the workplace, managers in public the public sector tend to disagree, as can be seen in the example above. This discrepancy first came to light with the article of Van der Wal and Lasthuizen in which they ranked several values based on survey responses from 382 managers, who originate from both the private as well as the public sector. The top 2 actual most important values for the public sector appear to be accountability and following governmental rules (Van der Wal, de Graaf, & Lasthuizen, 2008, p. 473). Interestingly, serviceability was ranked at a low 10th place. Van der Wal remarks that even though public management reforms, which started a decade before his article, were focused on things like outward-oriented, socially responsive, and citizen- and customer-friendly public management styles, this has probably not yet sieved through to the workplace (Van der Wal, de Graaf, & Lasthuizen, 2008, p. 476). Tummers and Knies used the results of Van der Wal, et al to create two of their four key public leadership roles, for which they developed quantitative scales (Tummers & Knies, 2016). This thesis focuses on the second role, namely rule-following leadership.

1.1.　　Research question

Due to the severe negative impact that the allowance affair had on Dutch families, and the lack of disobedience from the civil servants, questions about the workings of PSRB become more interesting. In particular, the effect of RFLB is of importance, not only because it is the most closely linked form of leadership behavior, but also because it was hinted to be an important factor in the report of the child allowance committee. These considerations lead to the following research question: *To what extent does rule-following leadership behavior moderates the relationship between prosocial impact and prosocial rule-breaking behavior in the Dutch civil service?* To figure this out, this thesis will make use of an existing database of survey responses from 840 Dutch government employees, collected from the Dutch central government, which focused on how managers and employees experience leadership and other contextual factors in their work environment.

1.2.　　Societal Relevance

By answering this research question we gain more insight into the workings of PSRB. This is of importance to leaders regardless of their views on the desirability of PSRB. By knowing what, and how certain concepts influence PSRB, leaders can increase their effectiveness by changing their behavior accordingly. More effective leadership helps organizations achieve their goals more efficiently since there is less wasted potential in the organization. When leaders understand what influences PSRB and how they can steer its intensity, they can use PSRB as a tool for more nuanced outcomes, which would be difficult to achieve when focusing merely on the formalization of tasks.

Another benefit of this study is that it could be used as a way of determining the extent to which leaders are responsible for certain outcomes. For the allowance affair, this would mean that we get insight into the extent that the kind of leadership behavior could be responsible for the strict adherence of the civil servants to the rules, and therefore the serious consequences that this brought for Dutch families. If the leaders can indeed be seen as responsible for the impact, or lack thereof of PSRB, then this would suggest that policymakers should think of a policy to guide the amount of RFLB of the leaders in the civil service.

1.3.　　Scientific relevance

Since most literature, up till this point, has focused on how and to what extent we can increase PSRB, an underexplored area is how we can decrease it. A recent study does suggest

that the formalization of rules and threats of punishment can diminish employees' willingness to break rules, by increasing the perception of the costs of doing so. This study however falls short, of determining whether or not employees perceive themselves as performing less PSRB (Fleming, Prosocial rule breaking at the street level: the roles of leaders, peers, and bureaucracy, 2020). A study in 2021 found the first evidence that leadership behavior can influence PSRB. Inclusive leadership behavior would be able to increase PSRB through psychological safety and leadership identification while leader-member exchange moderates the indirect effect of inclusive leadership on PSRB through psychological safety. The underlying idea here is that: "when employees perceive the inclusive characteristics of leaders, employees will be confident that by engaging in PSRB, they will not be subjected to the blind criticism of their leaders and that they will meet the expectations of their leaders, as a result of which they may engage in further PSRB" (Wang & Shi, 2021, p. 2156). While it would be interesting to see what the impact is of RFLB on psychological safety and leadership identification, it would not seem fitting. The reason for this is that there is no indication that RFLB would have the aim to either increase or decrease this phenomenon, in contrast to inclusive leadership. This study, therefore, analyses leadership behavior through another proposed mechanism, namely through the mindset of a cost-benefit analysis. With this mechanism in mind, Inclusive leadership would influence PSRB by diminishing the costs, and possibly even increasing the benefit side of the analyses.

1.4.   Roadmap

This thesis is structured as follows. In chapter two, a literature review is presented about the main topics of this thesis, namely PSRB, RFLB, and PSI. In the same chapter, the hypothesis of this study will be laid out and explained. In the third chapter, the methodology will be described. Here will be explained where the data comes from, how the variables are operationalized, and what the design of the research is. In chapter four, the results will be presented. Which will be discussed in chapter five. After this conclusions will be drawn, implications will be described and future research suggestions will be given in chapter 6

2. Theory

To answer the research question, this chapter will focus on expanding on the three main concepts of this thesis, namely: PSRB, RFLB, and PSI to clarify the mechanism that binds the

concepts together. Based on the literature, hypotheses, are formulated about these relationships which cumulate into a single conceptual framework displayed at the end of the chapter.

2.1.　　　Prosocial rule-breaking.

The concept of PSRB was, as explained in the introduction, first introduced by Morrison in 2006. Admittedly she did make use of earlier research, on rule violations, like that of Vardi & Weitz (2004), who used the term organizational misbehavior and defined it as: "acts in the workplace that are done intentionally and constitute a violation of rules pertaining to such behavior" (Morrison, 2006, p. 8). She also took the liberty to borrow the concept of prosocial from Brief and Motowildo (1986) whom she claims defined prosocial behavior as: "acts performed with the intention of promoting the welfare of another individual, a group or the organization". She also claimed support from closely connected ideas about "positively intended behavior that wandered closely to the edge of rules" (Morrison, 2006, p. 8).

With all these ideas combined she pioneered the new concept of PSRB which she defined as: "any instance where an employee intentionally violates a formal organizational policy, regulation or prohibition with the primary intention of promoting the welfare of the organization or one of its stakeholders" (Morrison, 2006, p. 6). The fact that this definition, as well as the definitions of prosocial behavior in general, have survived up till this point shows the merit and support, they have in the scientific community.

To explain this concept further it needs to be taken apart into three parts, namely the part that it is necessarily other-oriented, that it violates rules, and that it is intentional. (1)The concept is necessarily other-oriented in the sense that actions should primarily benefit other individuals, groups, or organizations. If the actions primarily benefit the employee then it is not considered prosocial. It needs to be stressed that this is different from altruistic acts which supposedly only benefit someone else (Morrison, 2006, p. 6). Prosocial behaviors are allowed to benefit the employee but should primarily benefit others. (2)The concept encompasses acts that are focused on violating rules, which is to say, formal rules. It is not considered PSRB if norms are broken, or rules that are not meant to be enforced. Only explicitly defined organizational policies, regulations, or prohibitions are relevant to this concept (Morrison, 2006, p. 6). (3)The last important part is that acts need to be intentional. It does not count if an employee breaks a rule by accident, or because they were not informed about the rule. So the employee needs to be

aware of the rule, needs to understand the rule, needs to know the possible consequences, and still acts in such a way that he breaks the rule (Morrison, 2006, p. 6).

Although these criteria would seem sufficient, disagreement among scholars exists on the question of whether or not there should be a distinction between rule-breaking and rule-bending. Some, argue for a binary approach, where you either follow the rules, or you do not (Fleming, Prosocial rule breaking at the street level: the roles of leaders, peers, and bureaucracy, 2020, p. 1194). While others, like (Tummers, Bekkers, Vink, & Musheno, 2015), argue for a distinction. The reason for this is that some rules can be partially applied. In cases where the situation does not entirely fit within the framework of the rules, employees might partially apply the rules to the best of their ability instead of outright rejecting helping a customer. The distinction is made clear in the different definitions. Where rule-bending is defined as: "Adjusting the rules" and rule-breaking as: "Neglecting or deliberately obstructing the rules" (Tummers, Bekkers, Vink, & Musheno, 2015, p. 10).

2.2.   Prosocial impact.

Based on the concept of prosocial behavior, PSI refers to: "the degree to which employees' efforts protect, promote, or contribute to the welfare of others" (Grant, 2008, p. 51). This concept however should be seen as a perception or feeling. Since it can be the case that people see the impact of their work but, due to cultural differences, perceive the impact differently (Bolino & Grant, 2016, p. 32). It is for this reason that we focus on the perceived PSI since it is not always a necessity for employees to see proof of their impact, for them to feel as if they have PSI (Bolino & Grant, 2016, p. 38).

Although Grant, coined the term "prosocial impact", it is closely related to earlier concepts like task significance "The degree to which the job has a substantial impact on the lives or work of other people, whether in the immediate organization or in the external environment" (Hackman & Oldham, 1976, p. 257). And: job meaning: "the perceived value of one's work or the extent to which a person cares about his or her work and believes that it matters in important ways" (Morrison, 2006, p. 16). Even Grant, and his companions, have used alternative terms closely related to this like: perceived impact, potential impact, or positive impact (Grant, et al., 2007, p. 53). From this switch, we can see that the term PSI with a focus on the perceived impact has survived as it is still being used in more contemporary articles (Bolino & Grant, 2016, p. 38).

While PSI is used in this thesis, a note should be made to the antithesis, namely antisocial impact. While they seem to be the opposites of poles of one continuum, Grant argues that they are more akin to positive and negative emotions. He argues that since we can have a multitude of emotions about a singular event, we can also perceive our impact in multiple ways, and at the same time. To illustrate this, he gives an example of a nurse that gives someone a vaccine. On the one hand, the receiver gets negatively impacted since their skin gets damaged and they get sick for a little while. But on the other hand, they are positively impacted since they become better protected from a disease (Bolino & Grant, 2016). It is because of this mechanism that Grant argues that prosocial behavior is not inherently good, as was mentioned in the introduction.

2.2.2. The relation between PSI and PSRB.

While there is no known research linking PSI directly to PSRB there is a model, suggested in a systematic review by Bolino and Grant (2016), that links PSI indirectly through Prosocial motivation to PSRB. They point out that the studies that they reviewed hint towards a cycle, which suggests that: "Prosocial motives lead to prosocial behaviors, which in turn strengthens perceptions of prosocial impact" (Bolino & Grant, 2016, p. 49). The mechanism at work here is a cost-benefit analysis for the actor in question (Bolino & Grant, 2016, p. 50). When the perceived costs exceed the perceived benefit of the action for the actor, he or she would refrain from taking it. With this model and the simple mechanism taken into account it becomes easy to see how, with all other variables stable, an increase in PSI would lead to an increase in PSRB. Based on these considerations the following hypothesis is constructed:

H1. The prosocial impact will be positively related to prosocrule-breakingking.

2.3. Rule following leadership.

Another concept that tries to impact PSRB is RFLB. This concept comes from the literature that focuses on the 'public' aspect of leadership. Leadership in general has been researched quite extensively, but only recently have public administration scholars taken up the task to come up with jargon that best suit their field of study (Orazi, Turrini, & Valotti, 2013). The reason for this was that the view on leadership was dominated from a psychological and business perspective (Van Wart, 2003). This perspective was further strengthened by New Public Management which sought to take private management practices into the public sector. Although academics disagree about the desirability for this. The road was open for concepts

related more to public sector values (Van Wart, 2003). This was deemed insufficient for public administration since the values and goals of organizations and leaders differ a lot from that of the private sector (Wal, Huberts, & Kolthoff, 2006). Although the names, definitions, and measurements for similar concepts are still regularly revised, signs are there that scholars are coming closer to an agreement on certain key concepts.

One of these concepts is RFLB. As stated in the introduction, Tummers and Knies were the first to conceptualize this variable as part of their four public leadership roles. These four roles are (1)accountability, (2)following governmental rules and policies, (3)political loyalty, and (4)network governance. They based the first two concepts on the work of van der Wal, whose research pointed out that accountability and lawfulness were perceived to be the first and second most important values for the public sector respectively. Van der Wal defined lawfulness as: "an act in accordance with existing laws and rules" (Van der Wal, de Graaf, & Lasthuizen, 2008, p. 470). The definition that Tummers and Knies used was: "leaders who encourage their employees to act in accordance with governmental rules and regulation" (Tummers & Knies, 2016, p. 7). This last definition suits well within the framework of how Yukl describes the concept of Leadership behavior, namely as a broad concept that encompasses a large variety of behaviors "used to influence the performance of a team, work unit, or organization" (Yukl, 2012, p. 68). Even though Tummers and Knies's definitions were appreciated, their 21-item scale was deemed too long and was therefore replaced by an 11-item scale to be better utilized for research within the domain of public administration (Vogel, Reuber, & Vogel, 2020).

Although not explicitly stated in their articles, both Tummers & Knies and Vogel, Reuber & Vogel made use of perceived RFLB. The questions from their lists are all from the point of the employee about the leader in question. The reasons for this are clear in the sense that different people experience the same amount of encouragement differently and will therefore answer to the extent that it is relevant for them. This however does mean that a lot of encouragement can occur without employees seeing it as excessive.

2.3.2. The mitigating role of RFLB on the relation between PSI and PSRB

While there is no known research linking RFLB to PSRB nor the relationship between PSI and PSRB, there are related concepts linked to PSRB. In his article, Flemings (2020) mentions an array of studies that find significant correlating variables with rule-breaking in general. These variables are rule-value conflicts; ethical climate; organizational power;

position; gender; age and ethnicity. He further proclaims that the Green tape theory explains that the attributes of the rules in question influences compliance; that rule formalization and rule consistency contribute to less rule deviation and that certain professions are less likely than others to break rules (Fleming, Prosocial rule breaking at the street level: the roles of leaders, peers, and bureaucracy, 2020, pp. 1193-1194). This last point is interesting since, in his study, rule consistency is related to favorable attitudes toward PSRB.

The results in his article indicate that "formalization and threats of punishment diminish employee's willingness to break rules, while rule consistency and co-worker rule violations trigger PSRB" (Fleming, Prosocial rule breaking at the street level: the roles of leaders, peers, and bureaucracy, 2020, p. 1191). He states that rule formalization was expected to negatively impact PSRB since evidence supports a positive association between formalization and rule-following (Fleming, Prosocial rule breaking at the street level: the roles of leaders, peers, and bureaucracy, 2020, pp. 1198-1199). The concept of threats of punishment was put together from two variables, namely certainty of detection and severity of punishment. These concepts were expected to negatively impact PSRB since they were positively linked to workplace compliance (Fleming, Prosocial rule breaking at the street level: the roles of leaders, peers, and bureaucracy, 2020, p. 1200).

The mechanism at play between RFLB and the relationship between PSI and PSRB is that RFLB increases the cost side of the cost-benefit analyses. By creating an environment where actors perceive a high chance of detection; understand that there are relatively high sanctions; and when they have no good excuse for breaking the rules, the costs rise. It is due to this mechanism and the supporting theory that the following hypothesis is constructed:

 H2. Perceived rule-following leadership will have a mitigating role in the relation between perceived prosocial impact and prosocial rule-breaking.

2.4.   Conceptual model

Figure 1: Conceptual model
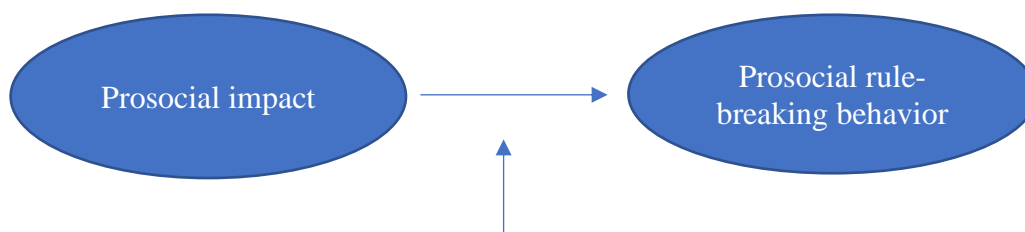
3. Methodology

Where chapter 1 introduced the main concepts and the research question, and where chapter two expanded on the main concepts, and mechanisms and introduced the hypothesis and the conceptual model. This chapter aims to explain how the hypothesis will be tested to be able to answer the research question. In this chapter, the origin of the data, how this data was operationalized, and how the analyses have been performed can be read. Every step mentioned in this chapter was carried out by using Stata.

3.1.   Research design

To test the hypothesis two quantitative studies, need to be performed. H1 needs a regression analysis to test whether and how strongly PSI is related to PSRB. H2 needs a regression with an interaction term to test whether and how strongly RFLB interacts with the relation of H1. The research is across cases since we want to generalize the findings from the sample for the entire population. For these analyses, secondary data is used due to the limited time available. The data consists of cross-sectional data and was collected through survey methods, namely questionnaires. The questionnaire existed out of closed questions with limited options which provides consistent and comparable data which can be collected from a large group of people. The data was cleaned up and tested for its usability before it was analyzed.

3.2.   Data Collection

As mentioned above, secondary quantitative data was used from survey responses which were collected, from the Dutch central government, by the Leiden Leadership Centre (Groeneveld, van der Voet, Kuipers, & Herms, 2021). The survey aimed to identify leadership behaviors, present in the Dutch central government, as perceived by both the managers and their employees. The survey targeted three main groups, namely the managers from the Dutch Office of the Senior Civil Service (n=1702), managers from the central Dutch government who were not part of the former group (n=2413), and government employees which did not have, formally, any managerial responsibilities (n=6119). For this thesis, the sample consists of central government employees since we are interested in the effects of RFLB behavior on their behavior. Besides identifying leadership behaviors, the survey also mapped out related

variables, contextual variation, and personal characteristics. Out of the seven content-related modules two were used in this thesis. Namely, 4 which has questions about intentionality and performance,e and, 7 of which consisted of questions about Leadership in a political-administrative context. From these two modules, nine questions were considered relevant. Three were connected to the dependent variable, PSRB. Three to the independent variable PSI and three to the independent variable RFLB. The questions are presented in Table 1. While the survey questions were based on or inspired by prior research, the extent to which the researchers adopted them varied. The questions for RFLB were directly taken from an article (Vogel, Reuber, & Vogel, 2020). The questions for PSRB were derivatives of the questions presented in an article (Dahling, Chau, Mayer, & Gregory, 2012). And the questions regarding PSI were inspired by an article that did not present any questions in its text (Grant, 2008). All questions were answered on a 1 to 7 scale and are presented in table 1. From 1 = Strongly disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Somewhat disagree; 4 = Do not disagree, do not agree; 5 = Somewhat agree, 6 = Agree to 7 = Strongly agree. For control variables both gender and age were selected since these are the only variables present in the dataset that had evidence supporting their correlation in regards to PSRB, see chapter 2.3.2. Gender was answered on a 1-4 scale where 1 was Male, 2 was female, 3 was other and 4 was private. Age was filled in by the respondent typing in their age.

Table 1: Survey questions

Prosocial rule-breaking behavior:
1. If necessary, I break rules or procedures that get in the way of the best end result for the citizen.
2. If necessary, I bend rules or procedures so that I can achieve the best end result for the citizen.
3. If necessary, I ignore rules or procedures that prevent me from achieving the best end result for the citizen.

Prosocial impact:
1. I am very aware of the positive impact my work has on society.
2. I think my work adds value to society.
3. I think my work enables me to be of added value to society.

Rule following leadership behavior:
1. My supervisor emphasizes to me and my colleagues that it is important to follow the law.
2. My supervisor gives me and my colleagues the means to properly follow governmental rules and regulations.
3. My supervisor ensures that we accurately follow the rules and procedures.

3.3.   Sample description

In total 1029 employees responded, resulting in a response rate of 16.8%. From these responses, 189 had to be omitted due to missing data. This means that 840 employee responses were used in this study. From this group, 55% identified as male, 39% as female, less than 1% as other and 5% preferred not to share their gender. The youngest person was 24, the oldest was 70. The average person was 49 years old and had worked 18 years within the government of which 12 years within the same ministry. 44% see themselves as being part of the executive side of government, with inspection 22%, policy 19%, business operations 10% and 5% see themselves as part of another group. The tables containing these numbers are present in Appendix A.

3.4.   Measurements

Once the data had been cleared of missing responses, it was time to operationalize our concepts. While the survey provided descriptions that grouped certain questions, it was still deemed necessary to test their compatibility. To do this principal axis factor analyses with oblique rotation were done to see if the suggested sub-variables could indeed be grouped. Tables 1 and 2 show the factor analyses, the correlations, and the descriptive statistics. The sampling adequacy of the data was verified with a KMO of .8159 which is considered Meritorious (statisticshowto, 2022). The quality individual groupings of the variables resulted in Cronbach's alphas of 0.8612 for PSRB, 0.8878 for PSI, and 0.8000 for RFLB which can all be considered adequate (Cortina, 1993). Since there are no differences in value between the different questions, a simple edition and deviation sufficed. For all three variables the three questions the answers were combined and divided by 3 to come up with the average response to each variable.

Table 2: Factor analyses and descriptive statistics

Variable	Factor1	Factor2	Factor3	Mean	SD
PSRB 1	**0.9372**	-0.0205	0.005	3.310	1.714
PSRB 2	**0.9387**	-0.0080	0.0117	4.202	1.728
PSRB 3	**0.8978**	0.0415	-0.0109	3.319	1.722
PSI 1	0.0706	**0.7736**	-0.0197	5.127	1.399
PSI 2	-0.0283	**0.7675**	0.0298	5.612	1.283
PSI 3	-0.0233	**0.8315**	-0.0102	5.299	1.380
RFLB 1	-0.0286	0.0032	**0.6971**	5.131	1.451
RFLB 2	0.0509	-0.0080	**0.7073**	4.8	1.496
RFLB 3	-0.0148	0.0076	**0.7859**	4.682	1.469

Table 3: sub variable correlations

Variable	PSRB 1	PSRB 2	PSRB 3	PSI 1	PSI 2	PSI 3	RFL 1	RFL 2	RFL 3
PSRB 1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PSRB 2	.6293***	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
PSRB 3	.7761***	.6177***	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
PSI 1	.0928**	.1317***	.0123	1	-	-	-	-	-
PSI 2	.0771*	.1139***	-.02	.7118***	1	-	-	-	-
PSI 3	.0786*	.1175***	.025	.6844***	.7877***	1	-	-	-
RFLB 1	-.0485	-.022	-.0735*	.142***	.1622***	.1887***	1	-	-
RFLB 2	-.0687*	-.0544	-.0701*	.1926***	.178***	.2142***	.5751***	1	-
RFLB 3	-.1126**	-.1295***	-.1375***	.1234***	.1387***	.1433***	.6688***	.4735***	1

N = 840; * = p < .05; ** = p < .01; *** = p < .1

3.5. Validity and Reliability

The descriptive statistics of the sub-variables show some interesting results which allow us to say a few things about the internal validity and reliability of the data. The considerable difference between PSRB 1 and 3 on the one hand and PSRB 2 on the other, with the means of 3.3 and 4.2 respectively, showcases some merit to the claim that PSRB is a non-binary, see chapter 2.1. Furthermore, we can see a relatively big distinction between RFLB 1, and RFLB 3, with corresponding means of 5.1 and 4.7. Where RFLB 1 seems to more closely represent the detection mechanism more, and RFLB 3 more closely represents the sanction mechanism. Showcasing that employees tend to perceive these forms of RFLB as distinct phenomena. The lack of difference between the PSI sub-variables might suggest that these questions are considered too similar to merit three questions to simulate the phenomenon of PSI. The differences between the sub-variables, which form the main variables, showcase that the respondents made conscious decisions when answering the questions. This together with the anonymousness of the questionnaire, makes the probability that the responses are both internally valid and reliable quite high.

3.6. Data-analyses

Before testing the hypotheses, an analysis was done regarding the variables: PSRB; PSI; RFLB; Age; Gender. A correlation matrix was created and a summary of the data was extracted for these variables. Since the data appeared up to standards, the testing of the hypotheses could take place as planned. This was done by making use of two multiple-regression analyses. The first hypothesis is tested by running the first regression with PSRB as the dependent and PSI as the independent variable with the use of RFLB, Age, and Gender as control variables, as can be seen in equation 1. And the second hypothesis is tested by running the second regression with PSRB as the dependent variable, the interaction term as an independent variable, and Age and Gender as control variables as can be seen in equation 2.

1: $PSRB = C_0 + B_1 * PSI + B_2 * RFLB + B_4 * Age + B_{5,6 \text{ or } 7} * Gender$

2: $PSRB = C_0 + B_1 * PSI + B_2 * RFLB + B_3 * PSI * RFLB + B_4 * Age + B_{5,6 \text{ or } 7} * Gender$

Here, C_0 is the coefficient of the constant; B_1 is the coefficient of PSI, B_2 is the coefficient of RFLB, B_3 is the coefficient of the interaction term, B_4 is the coefficient of Age, B_5 is the coefficient of Female, B_6 is the coefficient of other B_7 is the coefficient of private. PSI and RFLB are on a scale from 1 to 7, Age is in years and the 3 gender options are either 0 or 1. With a 0 in gender, you get the results for the male population, regardless of the selected coefficient.

To create a better understanding of the effect of the interaction term, two visualizations were made representing every possible value of both PSI and RFLB. The reason why two visualizations were made is that the interaction term does not discriminate to which variable we consider to be the moderating one.

4. Results

Where chapter 3 presented the plan to test the following two hypotheses: *H1. The prosocial impact will be positively related to prosocial rule-breaking; H2. Perceived rule-following leadership will have a mitigating role in the relation between perceived prosocial impact and prosocial rule-breaking.* This chapter presents the results of those tests. With these results we should be able to answer the research question:

To what extent rule following leadership behavior moderates the relationship between prosocial impact and prosocial rule-breaking behavior in the Dutch civil service?

The first section gives insight into the data as It shows the descriptive statistics and the correlation matrix, which shows how the variables are related to one another. The second part shows the regressions that tested the hypotheses and presents 2 visualizations of the effect for both sides of the interaction term.

4.1. Descriptive statistics

Table 4 shows the descriptive of the main variables of this study PSRB, PSI, and RFLB as well as the control variables Gender and Age.

Descriptive statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	SD	Min	Max
PSRB	840	3.611	1.5229	1	7
PSI	840	5.346	1.2248	1	7
RFLB	840	4.871	1.2445	1	7
Gender	840	1.565	0.772	1	4
Age	712	48.698	11.075	24	70

The descriptive statistics show that the employees, on average, answered that they do not disagree, nor that they agree (M = 3,6) that they show PSRB. Furthermore, they answered, on average that they somewhat agree (M = 5.3) that their job has PSI. They also answered, on average, that they somewhat agree (4.9) that their supervisor shows PSRB.

4.2. Correlation matrix

Table 5 shows the correlation analyses which helps to better understand the relationships between variables.

Table 5: Correlations

	PSRB	PSI	RFLB	Gender	Leeftijd
PSRB	1	-	-	-	-
PSI	0.0879*	1	-	-	-
RFLB	-0.1065**	0.2159***	1	-	-
Gender	-0.0575*	-0.1126**	-0.1076**	1	-
Age	0.0838**	0.1082***	-0.0060	-0.2480***	1

* = p < .1; ** = p < .05; *** = p < .01 Numbers between "()" are the standard errors.

The correlation analyses show that all variables correlate with one another, except for Age and RFLB. Age can therefore not be used as a control variable when analyzing the effect of RFLB on PSRB. Since this was not part of the scope of this thesis, this is not seen as a problem for future analyses. That PSI and RFLB are correlated (0.216, p < .05), means that RFLB can and therefore will be used as a control variable when analyzing the relationship between PSI and PSRB.

4.3. Regressions

This part shows the results of two regression analyses in table 6 and shows the visualization of the moderation effect of the interaction term on the impact of PSI on PSRB in graph 1 and RFLB on PSRB in graph 2. The first regression, as presented in table 6, tests the

first hypothesis, and the second tests the second hypothesis. The interpretation of these results show is divided into three parts:

First, according to regression 1, PSI positively affects PSRB (.406, $p < .05$), and since it the result is significant the first hypothesis can be considered confirmed. The total

Secondly, the interaction between PSI and RFLB negatively affects PSRB (-.062, $p < .05$) since this result is also significant, the second hypothesis can be considered confirmed as well. This implies that the positive impact of PSI on PSRB falls with the rising presence of RFLB. The total effect of PSI on PSRB depends on the level of RFLB according to equation 2. A visualization of the effect of this interaction is presented in graph 1.

Third, since an interaction does not discriminate between the variables, the result also implies that the positive impact of RFLB on PSRB falls with the presence of PSI. This is a surprising find since both the theory as well as other regressions show RFLB to have a negative impact on PSRB. The total effect of RFLB depends on the level of PSI according to, equation 2 as above. A visualization of this interaction is presented in graph 2.

Table 6: Regressions

	1	2
Constant	3.383***	1.909**
	(0.406)	(0.919)
PSI	0.104**	0.392**
	(0.048)	(0.179)
RFLB	-0.142***	0.184
	(0.046)	(0.182)
PSI x RFLB	-	-0.062**
	-	(0.036)
Age	0.008*	0.009*
	(0.005)	(0.005)
Female	-0.088	-0.090
	(0.119)	(0.115)
Other	-1.600	-1.126
	(1.077)	(0.541)
Private	0.556	0.551
	(0.513)	(0.542)
F/Wald Statistics	0.0298	0.0002
R-squared	0.0215	0.0358
$N = 712$; * = $p < .1$; ** = $p < .05$; *** = $p <$ .01 Numbers between "()" are the standard errors.		

Graph 1 shows a visualization of the interaction effect of RFLB on the relationship between PSI and PSRB for every value of RFLB.
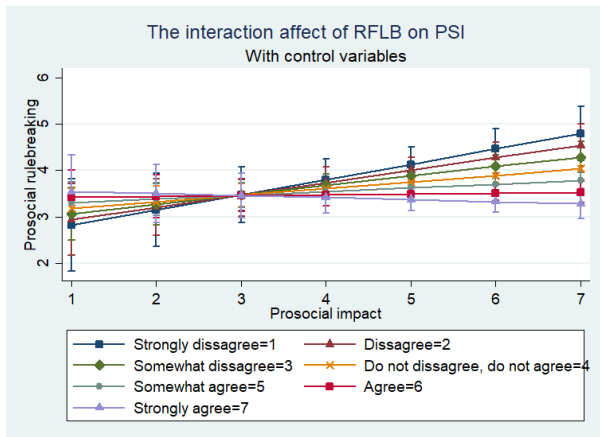
The interaction affect of RFLB on PSI
With control variables

This graph shows two interesting things. The first thing is that the interaction effects of RFLB on the relationship between PSI and PSRB, change around a score of 3 PSI from a net positive to a net negative. This means that for respondents with a PSI score of lower than 3, RFLB has a net positive effect on PSRB. The second thing is that it is possible with an RFLB of 6 or higher, to decrease the value of RFLB to below the constant, resulting in a total net negative.

Graph 2 shows the interaction effect of PSI on the relationship between RFLB and PSRB for every value of RFLB.
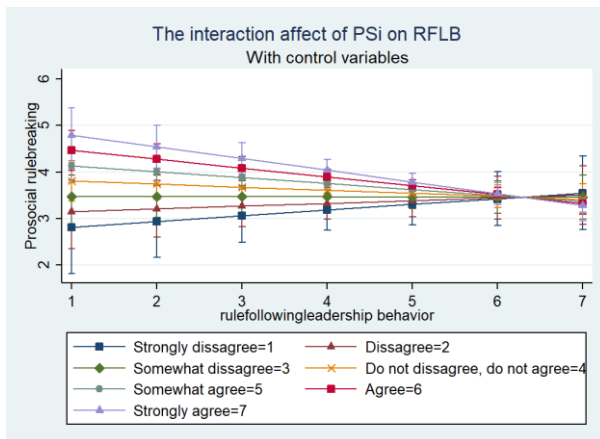
The interaction affect of PSi on RFLB
With control variables

This graph shows two interesting things. The first thing is that the interaction effects of PSI on the relationship between RFLB and PSRB, change around a level 6 RFLB from a net negative to a net positive. This means that for respondents with an RFLB score of higher than 6, PSI has a net negative effect on PSRB. The second thing is that it is possible with an RFLB of 3 or higher, to decrease the value of PSI to below the constant, resulting in a total net negative.

5. Discussion

In this chapter, the results are discussed in light of the theory, and limitations are discussed regarding the generalizability of the results.

The first interesting finding of this study was presented in the methodological section, chapter 3.5. Here you can see a considerable difference between PSRB 1 and 3 on the one hand and PSRB 2 on the other. This is in line with the belief in the theory presented in chapter 2.1. Which is in opposition to the conscious position that Flemings took in his article (Fleming, 2019, p. 1194). The second finding is that all available variables, that were theorized to correlate with PSRB, indeed did correlate with PSRB. This, therefore, adds to the amount of evidence supporting the relationship between them. The third finding is that PSI indeed positively affects PSRB, which confirmed the hypothesis presented in chapter 2.2.2. Since there were no prior papers with evidence for this. It can be considered a first step in figuring out this relationship. However, since it was based on a model (Bolino & Grant, 2016), this result can be seen as evidence of the working of this model. The fourth finding is that RFLB does indeed moderate the relationship between PSI and PSRB. However, it can also be said that PSI moderates the relationship between RFLB and PSRB. This claim can be made since both net effects flip after a certain amount of presence of the other.

5.2. Limitations

The first big limitation is the low external validity of this study. Since the data mainly comes from employees of the Dutch central government, the results cannot be generalized to other sectors, or countries. The data was also collected in a single year meaning that, since cultural attitudes concerning PSRB, PSI, and RFLB change over time, the responses are not necessarily reliable for the same group in a couple of years.

The second limitation is the low R-squared of the model. Since the variables only explain a very small percentage of what affects PSRB, no real understanding can be presented regarding the workings of this behavior.

6. Conclusion and implications

To conclude, this study has provided evidence that supports both hypotheses 1 and 2. Regression 1 shows that PSI positively impacts PSRB, and regression 2 shows that RFLB mitigates the impact of PSI on PSRB. Graph 1 shows that the mitigation can even go as far that an RFLB of the highest score (7) swaps the positive impact of PSI on PSRB for a negative impact. The mitigating effect of RFLB however only occurs when PSI has a score of at least 3. The findings give us the possibility to answer our research question. *"To what extent does rule-following leadership behavior moderates the relationship between prosocial impact and*

prosocial rule-breaking behavior in the Dutch civil service?" the answer would be: to a rather large extent.

6.1. Practical implications

The result of this thesis shows two effects of RFLB on PSRB. On the one hand that it can moderate the impact of PSI, but it is also reliant on PSI. With a low PSI, RFLB can be counterproductive to its intended effect. With a high PSI, it can completely negate the impact of PSI on RFLB. The results show that leaders should be able to use RFLB as a tool to decrease the amount of PSRB in their organizations, however, they can only do this if their subordinates perceive at least some PSI.

As for the example in the introduction, this means that there is reason to believe that the actions of the leaders of the Dutch national government are true to be blamed for the results of their RFLB. With their strict adherence to rules, they can indeed have caused employees to abstain from engaging in PSRB, resulting in the large negative effects of the allowance affair.

6.2. Implications for future research

This thesis adds to the body of research done on PSRB. It provides evidence that supports the idea that leadership behavior can influence the PSRB of employees. It provides evidence that supports the idea that controlling mechanisms like increasing the perceived chance of detection, the perceived increase of sanctions, and the formalization of rules decrease the amount of PSRB.

Future avenues for a study about PSRB are plentiful. For starters, the inspiration for this thesis has not yet been fully researched. The effects of other leadership behaviors on PSRB are still unknown or unproven. It would be interesting to figure out if there are behaviors that have a stronger negative impact than RFLB or a stronger positive impact than inclusive leadership behavior. Furthermore, the mechanism of the grants model of the prosocial circle can be investigated more. Do all these variables directly impact prosocial motivation, or is there another variable that is affected? It might also be interesting to see what other impacts RFLB has. There may be an even larger divide between it and PRSB. It can be the case that it directly diminishes job satisfaction or that it negatively impacts the employee-leader relationship. It is because of these unknown unintended consequences that we should watch

out for relying too much on RFLB in our organizations. The unknown unintended consequences are a motivating reason to do more research in this field of study.

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Appendix A

Gender	N	%
Male	464	55.24
Female	325	3.69
Other	3	0.36
Private	48	5.71
Domain		
Beleid	162	19.29
Inspectie	188	22.38
Uitvoering	367	43.69
Bedrijfsvoering	79	9.4

Anders	44	5.24

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Age	712	48.7	11.1	24	70
Years government	774	18.1	12.9	0	48
Years organization	752	11.6	11.2	0	46