Global Review of Humanities, Arts, and Society (GRHAS)

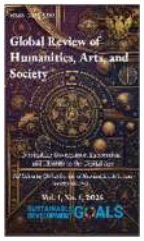
Vol. 1, No. 1, 2025 | pp. 59–72

EISSN: 3052-539X (Online Only)

https://doi.org/10.63802/grhas.v1.i1.1

Navigating Governance, Expression, and Identity in the Digital Age

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Explaining Public Service Motivation among Female Civil Servants: The Role of Organizational Culture and Leadership in South Korea

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Abstract:

This study explores the impact of organizational culture (OC), perceived leadership (PL), and work-life balance (WLB) on public service motivation (PSM) among female civil servants in South Korea. Utilizing data from the 2023 Korean Civil Service Survey (N = 3,196), hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to assess the direct effects of OC and PL, and the potential moderating role of WLB. The results show that both OC and PL have strong and significant positive effects on PSM, confirming their roles as key organizational drivers of motivation. While the proposed moderating effects of WLB were not statistically supported, its inclusion as a personal well-being factor reflects its continued relevance in public sector work environments. This study further contributes to the PSM literature by introducing a gender-sensitive lens, highlighting the intersection of organizational structures and gendered experiences in shaping public employee motivation. The findings offer implications for both theory and practice, especially in the context of inclusive human resource management and civil service reform in East Asia.

Keywords: Public Service Motivation, Organizational Culture, Perceived Leadership, Work-Life Balance, Gender

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1. Introduction

1.1 Research Background

Public Service Motivation (PSM) has emerged as a crucial factor influencing the performance, engagement, and ethical behavior of civil servants. Defined by Perry and Wise (1990), PSM refers to an individual's intrinsic motivation to serve the public interest. Numerous studies have confirmed its positive effects on the public sector employees' job satisfaction, commitment, and performance (Brewer & Selden, 1998; Vandenabeele, 2007).

Despite extensive research on PSM, cross-national findings reveal significant variations in how cultural, organizational, and individual factors shape PSM. For example, innovative government managers, particularly highly educated female officials in IT sectors, report significantly higher PSM than the average civil servant (Rosa et al., 2020). In Switzerland, cultural values, social trust, and political ideology differentially influence PSM dimensions among municipal employees (Anderfuhren-Biget, 2012). However, in Indonesia, there is no significant difference in PSM between permanent and contract employees, challenging assumptions about employment stability and motivation (Yudiatmaja, 2017). Meanwhile, in China, public and private sector job seekers prioritize stability, high salaries, and leadership opportunities, yet public sector aspirants, especially women, exhibit stronger public service values (Ko & Han, 2013).

South Korea presents a particularly relevant context for examining these dynamics. As a traditionally hierarchical and male-dominated bureaucracy shaped by Confucian values, the country has undergone rapid modernization, bureaucratic expansion, and recent reforms aimed at improving gender representation in the public sector. However, gender disparities persist in leadership roles and in achieving work-life balance. While more women have entered the civil service in recent years, they often face structural constraints that affect their motivation and organizational engagement. These conditions make Korea a compelling case for studying how organizational culture and leadership perceptions, coupled with personal factors like work-life balance, influence public service motivation.

Organizational culture and leadership styles play a crucial role in shaping employee performance, motivation, and commitment (Mandasari et al., 2023). Empirical studies show that organizational culture significantly improves employee performance in 89% of reviewed articles, while leadership style positively influences performance in 63% of cases (Mandasari et al., 2023). Leadership transformation from passive-avoidant to transactional and transformational styles enhances performance measurement and fosters an achievement-oriented culture (Garengo & Betto, 2022). Similarly, organizational culture profiles are linked to leadership styles and the successful implementation of management practices like lean manufacturing (Tortorella et al., 2020). These insights suggest that organizational culture and leadership perceptions are crucial antecedents of PSM.

1.2 Research Problem & Gap

Existing PSM studies primarily focus on Western public sectors, overlooking gender-specific experiences in East Asian bureaucracies. While research has explored organizational culture (OC) and leadership perceptions (PL) as PSM antecedents (Christensen & Wright, 2011; Moynihan, Pandey & Wright, 2012), few have examined how work-life balance (WLB) moderates these relationships, particularly for female civil servants.

Work-life balance (WLB) policies have been recognized as critical for job satisfaction and organizational commitment among public servants (Hur & Hwang, 2019; Malik et al., 2010; Puspitawati & Mujiati, 2023). Studies show that flexible work arrangements, family-friendly policies, and workload management significantly enhance civil servants' motivation. A study even quantifies a 42.1% direct effect of

WLB on job satisfaction (Puspitawati & Mujiati, 2023). Conversely, poor WLB practices correlate with declining work motivation and commitment (Esteve et al., 2017). However, how WLB interacts with organizational culture and leadership perception to shape PSM remains underexplored, particularly in hierarchical, male-dominated bureaucracies like South Korea.

Thus, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating how organizational culture and leadership perceptions influence PSM among female civil servants in South Korea, and how work-family conflict moderates these relationships.

1.3 Research Purpose

This study aims to:

1. Examine the direct effects of organizational culture (OC) and leadership perceptions (PL) on PSM.

2. Investigate the moderating role of work-family conflict (WLB) in these relationships.

3. Provide empirical insights from South Korea, an East Asian country with a unique bureaucratic culture and gender dynamics.

1.4 Research Contributions

This study makes several contributions:

- Extends PSM research by incorporating gender dynamics in a non-Western context.

- Integrates work-family conflict as a moderator, offering a more nuanced understanding of PSM antecedents.

- Provides policy recommendations for improving female civil servants' motivation and retention.

1.5 Paper Structure

The rest of this paper is structured as follows: Section 2 reviews relevant literature on PSM, organizational culture, leadership perceptions, and work-family conflict. Section 3 develops the theoretical framework and research hypotheses. Section 4 describes the methodology and dataset. Section 5 presents the results, followed by discussion and policy implications in Section 6. Finally, Section 7 concludes with limitations and future research directions.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Public Service Motivation (PSM): Theory, Dimensions, and Development

Public Service Motivation (PSM) is shaped by socialization processes within institutions such as family, education, and work (Vandenabeele & Schott, 2020). For PSM to lead to meaningful outcomes, a degree of organizational alignment is necessary. Empirical research confirms that PSM positively influences job satisfaction and ethical behavior but may also result in emotional exhaustion if unmet by supportive environments (Lee & Park, 2025).

Cross-national studies show significant variation. For example, Rosa et al. (2020) found higher PSM levels among female public servants in IT roles. Anderfuhren-Biget (2012) reported cultural and ideological influences on PSM dimensions in Switzerland, while Yudiatmaja (2017) found no significant differences by employment status in Indonesia. In China, female job seekers prioritize public service values more than their male counterparts (Ko & Han, 2013). In the post-pandemic context, Park and Kim (2025) showed that PSM's effects on performance may differ significantly depending on institutional resilience and leadership continuity.

2.2 Organizational Culture and Its Impact on PSM

Organizational culture shapes behavioral norms and value alignment in institutions (Schein, 2010). Within the Competing Values Framework (CVF), clan and adhocracy cultures promote innovation, participation, and altruism, which are conducive to fostering PSM (Bright, 2005; Christensen & Wright, 2011).

Mandasari et al. (2023) found that organizational culture enhances performance in 89% of studies, while Ilham (2017) linked it to employee satisfaction. In Korea, hierarchical culture can suppress motivation unless accompanied by adaptive and supportive elements (Shim & Park, 2024; Han & Ryu, 2024). Yalçın (2025) highlights how value-aligned cultures improve psychological safety and increase job-related engagement. Post-COVID, adaptive and innovative cultures are particularly vital to sustaining motivation and mission clarity (Park & Kim, 2025).

2.3 Perceived Leadership and Its Motivational Mechanism

Transformational and ethical leadership styles are central to motivating public servants, especially when they align organizational and personal values (Wright & Pandey, 2010; Moynihan et al., 2012). Ethical leadership has also been found to mediate organizational citizenship behavior via PSM (Quynh et al., 2025).

Garengo and Betto (2022) and Yalçın (2025) emphasize how leadership affects performance systems and well-being. In South Korea, generational and gender-based leadership perceptions vary significantly (Yoo & Park, 2024), making leadership style a crucial antecedent of motivation for female civil servants. Rigid bureaucratic leadership structures may obscure transformational potential unless cultural change is also embraced.

2.4 Work-Life Balance (WLB) as a Moderator

Work-life balance (WLB) is essential for sustaining employee engagement. Studies show flexible policies and workload management enhance satisfaction and motivation (Malik et al., 2010; Caillier, 2013). while Mussagulova (2025) link poor WLB to burn out. Noordeen (2025) adds that automation technologies can reduce WLB strain by minimizing administrative load.

WLB may also amplify or buffer the influence of leadership and culture on motivation. Park (2024) found that family-friendly policy satisfaction moderated the link between PSM and innovation among women. Syed et al. (2025) noted that inconsistent WLB policies in Pakistan's public sector undermine female motivation. Hussein (2025) emphasizes that WLB is pivotal in employee retention strategies across sectors, highlighting the manager's role in enabling sustainable motivation systems.

2.5 Summary and Research Gaps

Public Service Motivation (PSM) has been widely studied across various national and organizational contexts. Existing literature confirms its positive influence on job satisfaction, ethical behavior, and public sector performance. At the same time, studies show that this motivation can be undermined by rigid organizational structures, misaligned leadership styles, and lack of work-life balance (WLB), particularly in high-pressure bureaucracies.

Despite a growing body of research on PSM, there remain several critical gaps. First, few studies adopt an integrative approach that simultaneously considers organizational culture, perceived leadership, and WLB as determinants or moderators of PSM. Second, research on the moderating role of WLB—particularly how it influences the strength of motivational antecedents—remains underdeveloped. While WLB is often examined as a direct predictor of job satisfaction or burnout, its interactive effects with organizational dynamics are less explored.

Third, although gender differences in PSM have been

acknowledged, empirical studies focusing on female public servants, especially in East Asian bureaucratic contexts such as South Korea, are still limited. In these settings, gender norms, work expectations, and institutional rigidity interact in complex ways that may suppress or reshape public motivation. As such, female civil servants may experience motivation differently depending on how leadership, culture, and WLB intersect.

This study seeks to fill these gaps by examining how organizational culture and perceived leadership influence PSM among Korean female civil servants, and how WLB moderates these relationships. This integrated approach contributes to both theory and practice by highlighting context-sensitive dynamics that shape public service motivation in hierarchical, gendered institutions.

2.6 Hypotheses Development

Based on the reviewed literature and identified gaps, the following hypotheses are proposed to guide the empirical investigation:

H1: Organizational culture positively influences public service motivation.

Organizational cultures that emphasize collaboration, mission alignment, and ethical norms are expected to foster higher levels of PSM among employees (Christensen & Wright, 2011; Mandasari et al., 2023; Han & Ryu, 2024). In hierarchical public institutions, a shift toward adaptive or participatory cultures may enhance intrinsic motivation, especially for underrepresented groups such as women.

H2: Perceived leadership positively influences public service motivation.

Leadership styles characterized by vision, empathy, and ethical commitment—such as transformational and ethical leadership—are positively associated with PSM (Wright & Pandey, 2010; Quynh et al., 2025). These leadership behaviors strengthen employees' value alignment and enhance public-centered commitment.

H3: Organizational culture positively influences perceived leadership.

The perception of leadership is shaped by organizational norms and expectations. Supportive and participatory cultures are likely to encourage employees to interpret leadership behaviors more favorably, reinforcing trust and engagement (Garengo & Betto, 2022).

H4: Work-life balance moderates the relationships between (a) organizational culture and PSM, and (b) perceived leadership and PSM, such that these relationships are stronger when WLB is high.

Work-life balance enhances psychological resources and reduces stress, enabling employees to respond more positively to supportive organizational features. High WLB may thus strengthen the motivational impact of both culture and leadership (Park, 2024; Mussagulova, 2025; Syed et al., 2025).

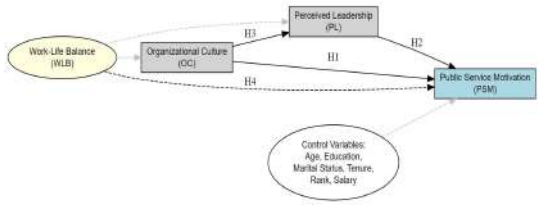


Figure 1 Research Model

3. Research Methods

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative cross-sectional design to examine the relationships between organizational culture, perceived leadership, work-life balance (WLB), and public service motivation (PSM). Data were collected using a structured questionnaire, and analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and hierarchical regression methods.

3.2 Data Source and Sample

The data are drawn from the 2023 Public Service Life Survey conducted by the Korea Institute of Public Administration (KIPA) in August 2023. The target population includes full-time civil servants from central ministries and local governments, excluding temporary, research, or part-time staff.

To focus on gender-specific dynamics of public service motivation, this study extracted a subsample of female civil servants from the original dataset. After excluding cases with missing values, the final valid sample consisted of 3,196 respondents from a wide range of central and local government institutions.

3.3 Measurement of Variables

All variables were constructed using items from the 2023 Public Service Life Survey. Responses were recorded on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree):

Public Service Motivation (PSM): Measured with six items from Q30, reflecting civic responsibility, social value, altruism, and engagement. Example: "Serving the country and citizens is very important to me."

Organizational Culture (OC): Two items from Q21 (Items 3 & 4) were used to capture perceptions of innovation and collaboration. Example: "Our organization emphasizes creativity, innovation, and challenge."

Perceived Leadership (PL): Four items from Q20 (Items 3–6) were used to assess transformational and supportive leadership. Example: "My supervisor provides a clear vision of the future."

Work-Life Balance (WLB): Three items were selected from Q5 and Q6, covering satisfaction with parenting leave, flexible work, and telecommuting. Example: "I am satisfied with the flexible work arrangements."

Control Variables: Gender, age, education, marital status, year of entry, job grade, and monthly salary were included as control variables.

3.4 Analysis Methods

This study used R and SPSS software for data analysis, including the following procedures:

Descriptive statistics (mean, SD, skewness, kurtosis) and Cronbach's alpha were computed to assess distributions and reliability.

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to explore bivariate associations between OC, PL, WLB, and PSM.

Hierarchical regression was used to test direct effects (H1–H3) and moderation effects (H4). Variables were mean-centered, and interaction terms (OC×WLB, PL×WLB) were computed to test moderation. Multicollinearity was checked via VIF.

4. Results

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the central tendencies and distributional properties of the study variables. As shown in Table 1, the average score for Public Service Motivation (PSM) was 18.30 with a standard deviation of 4.02, indicating a moderately high level of public motivation among respondents. Organizational Culture (OC) had a mean of 6.53 (SD = 1.49), while Perceived Leadership (PL) had a mean of 11.99 (SD = 3.35). The average score for Work-Life Balance (WLB) was 9.37 (SD = 1.64), reflecting a relatively neutral to positive perception of work-life support.

In terms of distribution, skewness values ranged from -0.343 to 1.263, and kurtosis values ranged from 0.296 to 2.469. Although the kurtosis of WLB slightly exceeded the

conventional ±2 threshold, all variables were generally within acceptable ranges for parametric analysis, suggesting that the data are approximately normally distributed and suitable for subsequent regression analyses.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Main Variables

Variable	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
PSM	18.30	4.02	-0.143	1.110
OC	6.53	1.49	-0.198	0.480
PL	11.99	3.35	-0.343	0.296
WLB	9.37	1.64	1.263	2.469

4.2 Correlation Analysis

To examine the bivariate associations among the key study variables, Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated. Table 2 presents the results of the correlation analysis.

Public Service Motivation (PSM) was significantly and positively correlated with Organizational Culture ($r = .315$, $p < .001$) and Perceived Leadership ($r = .324$, $p < .001$), providing initial support for Hypotheses 1 and 2. A weaker but statistically significant correlation was found between PSM and Work-Life Balance ($r = .038$, $p = .034$), indicating that WLB may play a limited but noteworthy role in shaping public motivation.

Organizational Culture was moderately correlated with Perceived Leadership ($r = .429$, $p < .001$), supporting Hypothesis 3. However, Work-Life Balance showed no significant correlation with Organizational Culture ($r = .016$, $p = .527$) or with Perceived Leadership ($r = .022$, $p = .216$), suggesting that WLB may act more as a moderator than a direct predictor.

All correlation coefficients were well below the threshold of multicollinearity concern ($r < .80$), indicating that the variables are sufficiently distinct to be included in regression analyses.

Table 2. Pearson Correlation Matrix

Variables	PSM	OC	PL	WLB
PSM	1	.315	.324	.038*
OC		1	.429	.016
PL			1	.022
WLB				1

*p < .05, p < .01 (two-tailed)

4.3 Regression Analysis

Hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to examine the effects of organizational culture (OC), perceived leadership (PL), and work-life balance (WLB) on public service motivation (PSM), including the moderating effects of WLB. Four models were tested sequentially.

Model 1: Control Variables Only

Model 1 included five control variables: age, education, tenure, marital status, and job type. The model was significant, $F(5, 3189) = 38.804$, $p < .001$, with an R^2 of .057, indicating that these background factors explained 5.7% of the variance in PSM. Among them, **age ($\beta = .170$, $p < .001$)** and **tenure ($\beta = .096$, $p = .006$)** showed significant positive effects.

Model 2: Adding OC and PL

Model 2 added organizational culture (OC) and perceived leadership (PL). The model showed a substantial improvement in explanatory power, with **$\Delta R^2 = .127$**, **$R^2 = .185$**, F change = 249.091, $p < .001$. Both predictors had strong and significant positive effects:

OC → PSM: $\beta = .215$, $p < .001$

PL → PSM: β = .232, p < .001

These results support **H1 and H2**.

Model 3: Adding WLB

In Model 3, work-life balance (WLB) was added to examine its direct effect on PSM. The increase in explanatory power was not statistically significant, **ΔR² = .001**, **R² = .185**, F change = 1.994, p = .158. The effect of WLB was positive but not significant:

WLB → PSM: β = .023, p = .158

This suggests that WLB has a limited direct impact on PSM and may instead function as a moderator.

Model 4: Adding Interaction Terms (OC × WLB and PL × WLB)

Model 4 included the interaction terms OC × WLB and PL × WLB to test for moderation effects. However, the addition of these terms did not significantly improve the model, **ΔR² = .001**, **R² = .186**, F change = 0.417, p = .659. The interaction effects were both statistically non-significant:

OC × WLB → PSM: β = –.015, p = .844

PL × WLB → PSM: β = .014, p = .443

Thus, **H4a and H4b were not supported**.

Table 3. Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results Predicting Public Service Motivation

Predictors	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Age	.170*	.183*	.183*	.184*
Education	.027	.040*	.039*	.039*
Tenure	.096*	.036	.034	.033
Marital	.026	.036	.032	.032
Job Type	.011	–.004	–.002	–.002
OC		.215*	.183*	.182*
PL		.232*	.241*	.243*
WLB			.023	.023
OC×WLB				–.015
PL×WLB				.014
R^2	.057	.185	.185	.186
ΔR^2	—	.127	.001	.001

*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Overall, the hierarchical regression analysis results provided strong empirical support for most of the proposed hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1 (H1) was supported, indicating that organizational culture (OC) positively influences public service motivation (PSM).

Hypothesis 2 (H2) was also supported, demonstrating that perceived leadership (PL) has a significant positive effect on PSM.

Hypothesis 3 (H3), which proposed a positive relationship between OC and PL, was confirmed through the correlation analysis, although it was not tested in the regression model directly.

However, the moderating role of work-life balance (WLB) was not supported by the interaction terms in the final regression model.

Neither Hypothesis 4a, concerning the moderation of the OC–PSM relationship, nor Hypothesis 4b, concerning the moderation of the PL–PSM relationship, was statistically significant.

These results suggest that while organizational and leadership factors are key drivers of public service motivation, WLB may play a more limited role as a direct or indirect influencer within this context.

5. Discussion and Implications

5.1 Overview of Findings

This study aimed to investigate how organizational culture (OC), perceived leadership (PL), and work-life balance (WLB) affect public service motivation (PSM) among female civil servants in South Korea. The results confirmed that both OC and PL significantly and positively influence PSM, supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2. Additionally, OC was found to be positively associated with PL through correlation analysis, in line with Hypothesis 3. However, the moderating role of WLB was not statistically supported in the regression analysis. The interaction terms (OC×WLB and PL×WLB) did not yield significant effects, leading to the rejection of Hypotheses 4a and 4b.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

These findings contribute to the growing body of literature on public service motivation (PSM) in several ways:

First, they reaffirm the role of organizational environment and leadership in fostering motivational orientations toward public service, supporting previous work (Vandenabeele & Schott, 2020).

Second, although the moderating effect of work-life balance (WLB) was not statistically significant, its inclusion reflects an evolving effort to integrate public administration and human resource management perspectives, especially in relation to employee well-being.

Third, by focusing on female public employees in the South Korean context, this study adds a gender-sensitive dimension to PSM research, which has often been overlooked in prior studies conducted in Western or gender-neutral settings.

5.3 Practical and Policy Implications

The findings offer meaningful implications for public sector management in South Korea and beyond:

Promoting innovative and collaborative organizational cultures may enhance employees' intrinsic motivation to serve the public.

Leadership development programs that emphasize transformational and supportive leadership styles can further increase motivation and performance.

Flexible work arrangements and family-friendly policies can help employees maintain work-life balance, which—although not found to have a significant moderating effect in this study—remains an important factor in fostering overall well-being and sustaining motivation.

As public organizations face increasing complexity and citizen expectations, creating enabling environments that nurture both structural and individual-level drivers of motivation remains vital.

5.4 Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations:

First, the cross-sectional nature of the data restricts the ability to draw causal inferences.

Second, the dataset focuses exclusively on Korean civil servants, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other national or institutional contexts.

Future research should incorporate longitudinal or experimental designs, expand to cross-cultural samples, and consider qualitative or mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights into the mechanisms of public service motivation—particularly in gendered work environments.

6. Conclusion and Research Recommendations

6.1 Summary of Key Findings

This study examined the effects of organizational culture (OC), perceived leadership (PL), and work-life balance (WLB) on public service motivation (PSM), using data from the 2023 Korean Civil Service Survey. The analysis focused on female civil servants, with a final sample of 3,196 valid cases. The key findings are summarized as follows:

Both OC and PL significantly and positively influence PSM, indicating that a supportive organizational environment and transformational leadership enhance female civil servants' motivation to serve the public.

OC is positively associated with PL, suggesting that organizational culture helps shape leadership styles, which indirectly contribute to fostering public service motivation.

While WLB did not show a statistically significant moderating effect in the regression analysis, it remains an important personal factor associated with employee well-being and motivation, meriting further exploration in future studies.

The study underscores the gendered nature of motivational mechanisms in the public sector. By focusing on female civil servants, it highlights how gender-related work-life dynamics intersect with organizational and leadership factors in shaping public service motivation.

These findings affirm the applicability of PSM theory in the Korean context and contribute to a deeper understanding of how gender, organizational, and individual-level factors interact in shaping civil servants' motivational orientations.

6.2 Theoretical Contributions

This study proposed an integrative model linking organizational culture, leadership, and motivation, and explored the potential moderating role of work-life balance (WLB). Although the hypothesized moderation was not statistically confirmed, the inclusion of WLB reflects an important step toward integrating individual well-being factors into public administration and organizational behavior theories.

By focusing specifically on female civil servants, the study introduces a gendered analytical lens to public service motivation (PSM) research. This contributes to the ongoing discourse on diversity, equity, and inclusion in public sector scholarship, and underscores the need for gender-responsive motivational frameworks in bureaucratic settings.

6.3 Practical Recommendations

Public organizations should prioritize cultivating innovative and collaborative organizational cultures and invest in leadership development programs that promote transformational and supportive leadership styles, as both were found to significantly enhance public service motivation.

Although work-life balance did not show a statistically significant moderating effect, government agencies are encouraged to expand flexible working arrangements, remote work options, and family-friendly policies to support employee well-being and retention, particularly for female civil servants.

In addition, targeted initiatives to support and develop female leadership should be prioritized, not only to strengthen motivation but also to promote long-term engagement and gender equity in the public sector.

6.4 Research Contributions

This study makes the following contributions to public administration research:

1.Theoretical Contribution: It contributes to the theoretical understanding of Public Service Motivation (PSM) by integrating gender and cultural dimensions into the analysis of motivational drivers in East Asian bureaucratic contexts. Although the moderating role of work-life balance (WLB) was not statistically supported, its inclusion broadens the conceptual framework to consider individual well-being in institutional research.

2.Empirical Contribution: Drawing on nationally representative data from 3,196 female civil servants in

South Korea, the study provides robust empirical evidence for the positive influence of organizational culture and leadership perceptions on PSM. By focusing exclusively on female public employees, it offers a gender-sensitive empirical perspective often absent in PSM literature.

3.Practical/Policy Contribution**:** The findings generate actionable insights for civil service reform, emphasizing the need for flexible work policies, gender-responsive leadership development, and supportive organizational environments to sustain motivation and engagement among female civil servants.

6.5 Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations that should be addressed in future research.

First, the use of a cross-sectional design restricts the ability to draw causal inferences. Future studies employing longitudinal or experimental designs are recommended to better capture temporal dynamics and establish causal relationships.

Second, the sample is limited to female civil servants in South Korea, which may constrain the generalizability of the findings. Future research should consider diverse gender groups, cross-national comparisons, and varied public or hybrid sectors to enhance external validity.

Third, future studies may benefit from incorporating mediating variables such as psychological safety, organizational justice, or professional commitment to explore the underlying mechanisms through which organizational and personal factors influence public service motivation.

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Ethical Statement:

This study makes use of research material produced by the Korea Institute of Public Administration (KIPA) and has been authorized for use in accordance with KIPA's regulations on the ownership and use of public research data. The data are anonymized and publicly accessible, and no additional ethical approval was required.

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