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Ethical Leadership and the Integrity of Public Institutions ***Special symposium issue for Public Integrity***

Guest editors:

Leonie Heres, Utrecht University, The Netherlands
Karin Lasthuizen, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand
Werner Webb, University of South Africa, South Africa

With the rise of populist leaders such as Donald Trump (US), Geert Wilders (the Netherlands), and Marine Le Pen (France) who openly question not only the current roles of administrators and the quality of work, but also the integrity of public institutions, the relations between political and public leaders seem to become more and more strained. Meanwhile, high-profile corruption scandals such as those involving senior officials of the New York Police Department, Spanish mayors, or a former IMF-chief suggest that ethical conduct in the public sector indeed cannot be taken for granted. It is against this background that administrative leaders find themselves under increasing pressure to more proactively safeguard the integrity of their organization and provide employees with clear moral guidance.

In response to the increasing demands on public institutions, many (trans- and international) governmental bodies have implemented extensive ethics infrastructures and programs. Research on ethical decision-making and behavior, however, shows leadership to be a critical factor that cannot be substituted for ethics codes, hotlines, and training: leadership remains a key factor that sets the tone for the rest of the organization and affects the extent to which employees recognize, deliberate, and act on ethical issues in their work.

While empirical research on ethical leadership has proliferated over the last decade, scholars have largely ignored the role of the public-private context in which such leadership exists.

Most studies on ethical leadership are conducted in proprietary business settings and draw exclusively on social and organizational psychological insights. Ethical leadership studies that have either a specific focus on the public sector or examine the role of organizational publicness from a comparative perspective are extremely limited. A few notable exceptions indicate that leadership does in fact matter to the ethics of and within public organizations (Hassan 2015; Hassan et al. 2014; Lawton & Paéz 2015) and—conversely—that the publicness of organizations may be relevant to how leaders can and do exert their role in fostering ethics (Heres and Lasthuizen 2012). However, the full implications of the public context within which administrative leaders operate and attempt to foster ethical behavior remain unclear.

This special issue aims to further the understanding on how the public, nonprofit, and private sectors impact the meaning, processes, and effects of ethical leadership. Topics for papers in this symposium issue may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- What are the interactive effects of ethical leadership between politicians and their political appointees on one hand, and senior civil servants on the other?
- What moral dilemmas do major value changes imposed by political leaders evoke for public administrators? And how can administrative leaders deal with the resistance and role confusion that may result from such value changes, especially when executive leaders and legislative lawmakers may be in conflict?
- How do public, nonprofit, and proprietary organizations compare in terms of conceptions, the prevalence, and effectiveness of ethical leadership, and how might differences (if any) be explained? What role does culture play?
- What is the role of organizational publicness in the emergence of ethical leadership? What, if any, unique impediments do leaders of public organizations face in their practice of ethical leadership?
- How can leaders ensure that public values are maintained and protected amidst blurring public and private sector boundaries, and in public-private partnerships? What are the implications of collaborative or network governance structures for the effects and scope of ethical leadership?
- To what extent are public leaders able to instill moral norms and values in semi-public organizations, such as nationalized banks or public hospitals?
- How is ethical leadership understood and practiced in transnational and international governmental institutions? How do leaders deal with the—sometimes fundamental—cultural differences in moral values and norms that occur in international intergovernmental collaborations?
- How and to what extent does ethical leadership of top-level public management contribute to the responsiveness of governments, the credibility of governments, and to citizens' trust in government? And, how is ethical leadership contingent on and responsive to (country) culture(s), and the level of corruption within public institutions, to begin with?

By bringing together papers on ethical leadership and the integrity of public institutions, either from a sector-specific or a comparative public-private sector perspective, this symposium issue highlights the value of incorporating public administration research and theory into the field of ethical leadership—and vice versa. It is thereby hoped that it will inspire further research in this area. Moreover, by focusing on the public domain, the aim is to provide public officials with insights that help them to better understand and deal with the unique characteristics of the context in which they operate and how that shapes, and perhaps deters, their efforts to foster ethics.

Manuscripts are due no later than 1 December 2018

Papers should not exceed the maximum of 5,000 words, including references. Preference is given to empirical papers that are robust and theoretically informed, but theoretical and normative papers will also be considered. Authors are invited to submit their manuscripts to Public Integrity for double-blind review through the journal EMS: <https://www.editorialmanager.com/publicintegrity/default.aspx>.

Please note that all manuscripts should comply with Public Integrity style guidelines as detailed on the Journal website, see:

<http://explore.tandfonline.com/cfp/pgas/mpin-general-cfp>.

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