



A Systematic Review of Human Resource Management Strategies for Enhancing Employees' Public Service Motivation: A Case Study of the Baghdad Health Insurance Department

Nihad Salim Abdul Redha AL-Buslaimy¹, Mahdi Mortazavi^{2*}, Seyed Hosein Kazemi³

¹ Ph.D. student, Department of Public Management, Faculty of Management and Economics, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

² Associate Professor, Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Management, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran,

³ Assistant Professor, Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Management, Tarbiat Modares University, Tehran, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: m-mortazavi@modares.ac.ir

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Abstract

This study systematically reviews the published literature to identify, categorize, and develop an integrated framework of effective human resource management strategies for enhancing employees' public service motivation in the Baghdad Health Insurance Department. To achieve this objective, a systematic review method and an extensive search of reputable scientific databases were employed. The PRISMA 2020 guidelines were used to improve the accuracy and transparency of reporting. The study population consisted of all scientific articles related to public service motivation and human resource management strategies in public-sector organizations. The search and screening process was conducted in several stages, ultimately resulting in the inclusion of 23 articles—16 articles identified through the primary search pathway and 7 articles identified through the supplementary pathway—as the final sources for analysis. The CASP checklist was used to assess article quality, and the data were analyzed through a systematic content analysis approach. The content analysis identified and extracted 12 key components: “leadership emphasizing public values and role modeling,” “the establishment of a service-oriented and ethics-based organizational culture,” “the strengthening of social responsibility and commitment to the public interest,” “job design emphasizing social impact and service to citizens,” “increased task variety and decision-making autonomy,” “the creation of opportunities for direct interaction with stakeholders and receipt of feedback,” “training in public service values and service-delivery competencies,” “the establishment of a clear career path emphasizing advancement in public service,” “continuous learning and constructive feedback for performance improvement,” “job characteristics and the nature of tasks,” “the organizational environment and prevailing culture,” and “organizational justice and job support.” Finally, a conceptual model consisting of five levels—input, mechanism, core, output, and moderator—was developed. The principal contribution of this study is the identification and presentation of an integrated framework of effective human resource management strategies for strengthening employees' public service motivation, with particular emphasis on the central role of public service motivation as the model's core construct. The findings can assist human resource managers and policymakers in public-sector organizations in developing and implementing policies that address employees' needs and expectations, enhance public service motivation, and improve organizational productivity.

Keywords: *systematic review, human resource management strategies, employee public service motivation, Baghdad Health Insurance Department, content analysis*

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1. Introduction

Public organizations operate under conditions in which service quality, administrative legitimacy, responsiveness, and the efficient use of public resources depend substantially on the motivation and conduct of employees. Unlike private-sector organizations, public institutions are not evaluated solely on the basis of profitability or market performance; they are also expected to protect collective interests, uphold procedural fairness, and deliver services equitably to citizens. This expectation is particularly pronounced in health-related public organizations, where employees' attitudes and behaviors can directly influence access to care, continuity of services, public trust, and the perceived legitimacy of government. Consequently, understanding how public institutions can motivate employees to perform beyond minimum contractual requirements has become a central concern in public management and strategic human resource management. Conventional motivational approaches based primarily on pay, promotion, and administrative control provide only a partial explanation of employee behavior in such environments, because many public employees are also driven by prosocial values, civic responsibility, compassion, and a desire to contribute to the public interest [1-3].

Public service motivation has emerged as a major theoretical construct for explaining why individuals enter, remain in, and perform within public-sector organizations. It generally refers to a predisposition to respond to motives grounded primarily or uniquely in public institutions and missions, including commitment to the public interest, compassion, self-sacrifice, and attraction to public policymaking. Although it overlaps with prosocial motivation and altruism, public service motivation is distinguished by its institutional orientation toward public values, collective welfare, and service through government or public organizations [1, 2]. Research has shown that public service motivation is associated with desirable employee outcomes, including organizational commitment, job satisfaction, intention to remain, innovative behavior, and improved performance [4-6]. At the same time, its effects are neither automatic nor uniformly positive; they depend on the organizational setting, leadership practices, job design, perceived justice, and the degree to which employees can translate public-oriented values into meaningful action [7, 8].

The importance of public service motivation is especially evident in public health and health insurance institutions.

Such organizations mediate between government policy, healthcare providers, financial resources, and citizens' needs. Employees must interpret regulations, process claims, communicate with beneficiaries, coordinate with medical institutions, and resolve service-related problems under conditions of administrative complexity and resource constraints. Their effectiveness therefore depends not only on technical competence but also on their willingness to act responsibly, fairly, and compassionately. In a health insurance administration, employees frequently encounter citizens in vulnerable circumstances, and the quality of service delivery may be shaped by whether staff members view their work as routine administrative processing or as socially meaningful public service. Public service motivation can strengthen the perceived significance of such work by linking daily tasks to broader social outcomes, including financial protection, access to healthcare, and distributive justice. Evidence on compassion as a component of public service motivation further suggests that affective concern for service recipients can contribute to improved public service performance [9]. Likewise, research on service-learning indicates that structured exposure to community needs can strengthen commitment to public interest, compassion, and self-sacrificial orientations [10].

Despite its normative importance, public service motivation should not be treated as a fixed personal trait that remains unaffected by organizational practices. Employees may enter public organizations with strong service-oriented values, but these values can be reinforced, weakened, or redirected by the work environment. Human resource management therefore plays a decisive role in shaping whether public service motivation becomes a sustainable source of commitment and performance. Strategic human resource management practices can align employee values with organizational missions through recruitment, selection, socialization, training, performance management, compensation, participation, and career development [11, 12]. When such practices are designed around public values rather than being copied mechanically from private-sector models, they can create a stronger fit between employees' motives and the organization's service mission. Conversely, highly controlling systems, opaque procedures, excessive bureaucracy, and weak developmental support may frustrate employees and erode their willingness to serve.

Recruitment and selection constitute the first point at which public organizations can intentionally strengthen public service motivation. Value-based recruitment allows institutions to assess not only applicants' technical skills but

also their commitment to public interest, ethical service, and citizen-oriented behavior. Person–organization alignment is particularly important because employees who perceive compatibility between their values and those of the organization are more likely to develop stronger commitment and positive attitudes toward work. Human resource practices that communicate public-service values during recruitment and socialization can therefore contribute to more durable motivational alignment [11, 13]. However, the attractiveness of public employment may also be shaped by broader social and cultural expectations. Research in the Middle East has shown that women may prefer public-sector employment because of its social legitimacy, job security, compatibility with gender norms, and perceived respectability, indicating that public service motivation interacts with institutional and cultural conditions [14]. Similar evidence on employee retention suggests that long-term service depends on a combination of value congruence, career stability, professional recognition, and supportive human resource policies [15-17].

Training and development are also central to the cultivation of public service motivation because they translate abstract public values into practical service competencies. Employees require not only procedural and technical knowledge but also communication skills, ethical judgment, problem-solving ability, and an understanding of how their work contributes to public value. Training programs that emphasize service quality, citizen needs, accountability, and professional responsibility can strengthen employees' competence and reinforce the meaning of their roles. Empirical work on empowerment and training in government institutions has highlighted the importance of systematic competency development, participatory evaluation, and the alignment of training with organizational needs [18]. Studies of human capital empowerment likewise indicate that knowledge, participation, access to information, and opportunities for development are essential foundations for effective employee functioning [19]. Learning-oriented interventions can also strengthen self-efficacy and social responsibility, as demonstrated in participatory field-school settings in which knowledge acquisition, collective learning, and autonomy contributed to stronger performance and engagement [20].

Job design represents another major pathway through which human resource management can influence public service motivation. Jobs that are meaningful, varied, autonomous, and visibly connected to citizen outcomes allow employees to experience a clearer sense of impact. In

contrast, fragmented and highly routinized tasks can weaken the connection between effort and public value. Self-determination-oriented research suggests that employees are more likely to sustain intrinsic motivation when their needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are supported [21]. Job enrichment, task significance, decision-making authority, and direct feedback can therefore strengthen the psychological conditions through which public service motivation affects behavior. Strategic approaches to employee motivation similarly emphasize that meaningful job design, recognition, development, and participation are more sustainable than exclusive reliance on financial incentives [22]. In public organizations, job design should enable employees to understand how their actions affect beneficiaries and organizational outcomes, thereby converting service-oriented values into experienced work meaningfulness.

Employee empowerment is closely related to job design but extends beyond formal task characteristics. Structural empowerment refers to access to information, resources, support, opportunities, and authority, whereas psychological empowerment involves employees' perceptions of meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. Both forms are relevant to public service motivation because employees cannot act effectively on service values when they lack discretion, resources, or confidence. Studies of public-sector and governmental organizations have repeatedly identified empowerment as a prerequisite for responsiveness, learning, and performance [23, 24]. The barriers to empowerment often include centralized decision-making, rigid hierarchy, inadequate delegation, limited managerial trust, and weak access to information. These conditions are particularly problematic in administrative settings where employees must respond quickly to complex citizen needs. By contrast, empowerment-oriented human resource systems can enhance ownership, professional confidence, and the belief that individual actions contribute to organizational and societal outcomes.

Leadership is another critical mechanism linking human resource management strategies to public service motivation. Leaders communicate priorities, model ethical conduct, allocate resources, recognize employee contributions, and determine whether participation is substantive or symbolic. Authentic, empowering, supportive, and ethical leadership styles are especially relevant because they foster trust, autonomy, and value congruence. Evidence from public-sector contexts indicates that authentic leadership can improve public employee

performance through motivation, suggesting that leadership behavior activates rather than merely accompanies employee motives [25]. Leadership also influences innovative behavior by creating psychological safety and encouraging employees to translate public service values into new solutions [6]. At the same time, organizational politics can weaken desirable outcomes when employees perceive decisions as self-serving or unfair; public service motivation may mediate some of these effects, but it cannot fully compensate for a dysfunctional organizational environment [26]. Effective leaders must therefore create institutional conditions in which service-oriented behavior is credible, recognized, and supported.

Organizational culture provides the broader normative environment in which leadership and human resource practices operate. A service-oriented culture emphasizes citizen welfare, cooperation, ethics, accountability, and shared responsibility. Such a culture can reinforce public service motivation by making public values visible in everyday decisions and interpersonal relations. In contrast, cultures dominated by red tape, blame avoidance, favoritism, or excessive formalism may weaken engagement and increase counterproductive behavior. Evidence shows that employee involvement and public service motivation are related to performance, while excessive red tape can constrain these positive effects [27]. Cultural alignment is also important in cross-national contexts because the meaning of public service differs across societies. Research among young public servants in China has shown that public service motivation may include culturally specific elements such as collectivism, institutional loyalty, family–nation bonds, and moral duty [28]. Public service motivation should therefore be managed in ways that respect local institutional meanings rather than assuming that a single universal model applies identically across all public organizations.

Organizational justice and supportive employment conditions further determine whether employees interpret human resource practices as legitimate. Procedural justice concerns the fairness of decision-making processes, whereas distributive justice concerns the fairness of outcomes such as pay, recognition, workload, and promotion. When employees perceive performance appraisal and compensation systems as transparent, participatory, and fair, these systems are less likely to be experienced as controlling and more likely to preserve intrinsic motivation [29]. This is particularly important in public organizations, where rigid pay structures and bureaucratic procedures can limit the motivational value of financial incentives. Research

comparing motivational factors across public and private sectors indicates that job security, working conditions, social protection, recognition, and growth opportunities remain important alongside intrinsic motives [30]. Herzberg's two-factor perspective similarly suggests that hygiene factors may prevent dissatisfaction, while meaningful work, responsibility, achievement, and growth more directly strengthen commitment [31]. Accordingly, effective public-sector HRM requires a balance between adequate employment conditions and higher-order motivational practices.

The relationship between public service motivation and employee outcomes is also complex because high motivation may generate both benefits and risks. Public service motivation has been linked to stronger work evaluation, higher performance, and lower counterproductive work behavior when employees operate in supportive conditions [32]. It can also increase commitment and intention to stay, thereby reducing turnover and preserving institutional knowledge [5]. However, employees with strong service values may overinvest themselves in work, accept unreasonable demands, or experience frustration when institutional constraints prevent them from serving citizens effectively. The “dark side” of public service motivation includes possible burnout, stress, and reduced well-being when employees face high demands without sufficient support [7]. Workplace spirituality and employee well-being may therefore function as important mediating resources that sustain service motivation without allowing it to become psychologically harmful [33]. A comprehensive human resource strategy must consequently promote both service commitment and employee well-being.

Recent research has broadened the relevance of public service motivation beyond traditional administrative performance. Public organizations are increasingly expected to support innovation, environmental responsibility, institutional change, and sustainable development. Pro-environmental public servants may contribute to organizational greening when they are given opportunities to participate voluntarily and when their values are aligned with public missions [34]. Likewise, intellectual property and environmental, social, and governance strategies illustrate how institutional policies can influence social and governance outcomes through innovation and evidence-based management [35]. Although such research does not focus exclusively on public service motivation, it underscores the growing expectation that employees and organizations create public value across multiple

dimensions. Change-management research in public service media further demonstrates that employee engagement in organizational transformation depends on professional identity, voluntary participation, organizational structure, and the perceived public interest of change initiatives [36]. These findings reinforce the need for HRM strategies that integrate motivation, identity, participation, and organizational purpose.

The practical significance of employee motivation is particularly evident in public institutions facing bureaucratic pressure and resource constraints. Qualitative evidence from judicial administration indicates that recognition, leadership quality, professional development, fairness, and a human-centered organizational culture can influence both motivation and work efficiency [37]. Systematic reviews of employee job motivation in Iran similarly point to a broad set of individual, organizational, managerial, and contextual determinants rather than a single dominant factor [38]. Public-sector motivation should therefore be understood as the product of an interacting system of recruitment, leadership, job design, training, compensation, culture, justice, support, and career development. This systemic interpretation is consistent with the view that human resource management practices influence employee outcomes partly through public service motivation and related psychological mechanisms [11, 12].

Nevertheless, the literature remains fragmented. Some studies focus on leadership, others on job design, empowerment, compensation, retention, culture, or well-being, while relatively few integrate these elements into a coherent framework. In addition, studies differ widely in sector, national context, methodological design, and conceptualization of public service motivation. Meta-analytic evidence confirms the general relevance of public service motivation for public employees, but also indicates variation in the strength and form of its relationships with outcomes [3]. Conceptual work has likewise called for greater clarity in distinguishing public service motivation from adjacent constructs and in specifying the organizational conditions under which it produces beneficial outcomes [1, 2]. There is therefore a need for systematic synthesis capable of identifying recurring HRM strategies, clarifying their mechanisms, and organizing their outcomes and contextual moderators.

This need is especially important for the Baghdad Health Insurance Department, where employees operate at the intersection of public administration, healthcare financing, citizen service, and regulatory implementation. The

department's ability to provide timely, fair, and reliable services depends on employees who are competent, committed, motivated, and supported by appropriate organizational systems. Yet the transfer of HRM practices from other sectors or countries without systematic adaptation may be ineffective. A context-sensitive framework should recognize the importance of public values, job meaning, leadership, empowerment, organizational justice, support, and cultural conditions. It should also distinguish between macro-level HRM inputs, organizational mechanisms, central psychological processes, employee and organizational outcomes, and contextual moderators. Such an integrated model can provide a more precise basis for policy design than isolated recommendations concerning pay, training, or supervision.

Accordingly, the aim of this study was to systematically identify, categorize, and integrate effective human resource management strategies for enhancing employees' public service motivation in the Baghdad Health Insurance Department and to develop a comprehensive conceptual framework based on the available evidence.

2. Methodology

The present research is a systematic review study. Unlike primary research articles, literature reviews do not generate new data; rather, they evaluate and synthesize previously published findings and provide readers with the best available evidence. In this study, systematic content analysis was used to analyze the data.

The systematic review process in this study was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines (Page et al., 2021). The process consisted of three main stages—review planning, review implementation, and review reporting—and eight operational steps.

To assess the quality of the selected articles, the 10-item version of the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme checklist for quantitative studies was used. This instrument includes 10 key questions addressing different dimensions of a research article, including the research objective, research questions, data-collection method, data analysis, and presentation of results. Each question was assigned a full score of 2, a score of 0 when the criterion was not met, and an intermediate score of 1 when the criterion was partially met. The maximum score for an article was 20, and articles receiving a score above 14, equivalent to 70%, were approved for inclusion in the final stage (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme [CASP], 2018).

2.1. Step One: Formulation of the Research Question

Systematic review studies require clearly defined research questions, as these questions guide researchers toward the achievement of specific objectives. The principal research question of the present study was as follows:

What strategies are effective in enhancing employees' public service motivation in the Baghdad Health Insurance Department?

2.2. Step Two: Designing the Systematic Review Protocol

Designing a systematic review protocol is an essential step in conducting review studies because it determines the research pathway and enhances the transparency, accuracy, and reproducibility of the findings. The review protocol was designed according to the PICO framework—Population, Interest, and Context:

- **Population:** Employees of public-sector organizations, particularly health insurance departments and health-service delivery institutions.

- **Interest:** Managerial strategies, policies, practices, and mechanisms affecting employees' public service motivation.
- **Context:** Public-sector organizations, health insurance departments, and regional administrative structures.

All stages of this study were planned and implemented in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines and the scientific principles of systematic reviewing. This approach ensured that the final set of selected studies could adequately address the research question concerning strategies for enhancing employees' public service motivation in the Baghdad Health Insurance Department.

2.3. Step Three: Identification of Sources and Development of the Search Strategy

Keywords used in reviewing the literature must be selected and examined accurately and systematically. In the present study, the keywords were selected in consultation with expert faculty members and researchers in the field. The search strategy consisted of an organized combination of keywords, phrases, and Boolean operators, including AND and OR, for searching scientific databases.

Table 1. Keywords and Search Strategy Used in the Databases

Search strategy	Databases
("human resource management" OR "strategic human resources management" OR "HRM" OR "HR management" OR "HR practices" OR "human resource practices" OR "personnel management" OR "human capital management" OR "strategic HRM" OR "SHRM" OR "HR strategies" OR "workforce management" OR "employee management" OR "talent management") AND ("public service motivation" OR "PSM" OR "motivation for public service" OR "public sector motivation" OR "employee public motivation" OR "prosocial motivation" OR "OCB" OR "public employee motivation" OR "public interest motivation") AND ("employee motivation" OR "work motivation" OR "job motivation" OR "motivational factors") AND ("motivation determinants" OR "motivation drivers" OR "motivation predictors" OR "motivation outcomes" OR "motivation enhancement strategies" OR "motivation improvement" OR "employee motivation model" OR "public service motivation model" OR "PSM determinants" OR "PSM drivers") AND ("policy implementation" OR "strategic implementation" OR "public policy strategies" OR "organizational strategy" OR "implementation model" OR "process model" OR "public sector reform")	Scopus and Web of Science

2.4. Step Four: Searching the Databases

Following the identification of sources and development of the search strategy, a systematic search of scientific studies was initiated to comprehensively collect evidence relevant to the research objectives.

Search of the primary databases: In the first stage, a structured search was conducted in two reputable scientific databases, Web of Science and Scopus. In Scopus, the search was performed within the article title, abstract, and keyword fields. In Web of Science, the search was limited to the article title field. The systematic search identified 3,763 scientific records as the initial raw dataset.

Supplementary search through other methods: To increase the comprehensiveness of the systematic review and ensure that important studies not indexed in the primary databases were not omitted, a supplementary search was conducted through Google Scholar and other open-access channels. This supplementary search resulted in the identification of 39 relevant scientific records.

2.5. Step Five: Study Selection and Screening

To identify valid scientific evidence and accurately answer the research question, the study identification and screening process was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA guidelines. The screening process followed two

pathways: a primary pathway and a supplementary pathway (Page et al., 2021).

Duplicate-removal stage: Because of overlap in the indexing of articles across scientific databases, 862 duplicate articles were identified and removed based on their DOI, title, and year of publication. Following this initial refinement, 2,901 unique articles remained for further screening.

Accessibility and credibility assessment stage: At this stage, the availability of the full text and the credibility of the publisher were examined, resulting in the removal of four records without valid access. Subsequently, 46 invalid records—including documents without a scientific abstract, editorials, errata, corrections, and retracted articles—were excluded, reducing the number of remaining records to 2,851. A further 1,603 records were excluded because they were unrelated to human resource management and employee motivation. Consequently, 1,248 valid and relevant scientific articles remained.

Initial screening stage—assessment of titles, abstracts, and keywords: At this stage, the titles, abstracts, and keywords of the 1,248 articles were carefully examined in relation to the research question. The reasons for exclusion included a lack of conceptual correspondence with public service motivation and human resource management strategies. Consequently, 1,164 articles were excluded, and 84 articles proceeded to full-text review.

Full-text assessment stage: The full texts of the 84 articles were evaluated using a qualitative and analytical approach. The evaluation criteria included the clarity of the research method, methodological quality, the possibility of

extracting strategies applicable to the public sector, and relevance to public-sector organizational environments. On this basis, 40 articles were excluded because of methodological weaknesses, limited applicability to the public sector, or the absence of usable findings. As a result, 44 articles were considered eligible through the primary pathway.

Supplementary-pathway screening stage: The supplementary search was conducted through open-access scientific websites and backward and forward examination of the reference lists of key articles. These searches identified 39 scientific records. The 39 articles were subsequently evaluated for thematic correspondence with the study domain, including employee public service motivation, public-sector organizations, and health insurance departments. The primary reasons for exclusion included a lack of focus on the public sector and health insurance departments, an exclusive focus on the private sector, and the absence of the concept of public service motivation. These criteria resulted in the exclusion of 14 articles. In the next stage, the remaining 25 articles were evaluated in terms of the possibility of extracting human resource management strategies and policies relevant to employees' public service motivation, resulting in the exclusion of 10 additional articles. Finally, the remaining 15 articles were assessed in terms of scientific coherence, variable clarity, and the quality of results reporting. Eight articles were excluded because of inappropriate structure and scientific content, leaving seven final scientific articles identified through this pathway.

Table 2. Process of Identifying, Screening, and Selecting Studies

No.	Identification pathway	Process stage	Activity or exclusion criterion	Number excluded	Number remaining
1	Primary databases	Initial identification	Search of Scopus and Web of Science	—	3,763
2	Primary databases	Duplicate removal	Matching DOI, title, and publication year	862	2,901
3	Primary databases	Accessibility assessment	Removal of records without valid access	4	2,897
4	Primary databases	Credibility assessment	Removal of editorials, errata, corrections, and records without abstracts	46	2,851
5	Primary databases	Thematic assessment	Removal of records outside the fields of HRM and motivation	1,603	1,248
6	Primary databases	Content screening	Assessment of titles, abstracts, and keywords for conceptual correspondence	1,164	84
7	Primary databases	Final screening	Exclusion because of methodological weakness or limited applicability to the public sector	40	44
8	Other methods	Supplementary identification	Reputable scientific websites and snowballing	—	39
9	Other methods	Initial screening	Assessment of titles, abstracts, and keywords	14	25
10	Other methods	Full-text screening	Absence of an extractable strategy or methodological weakness	10	15
11	Other methods	Final evaluation	Inappropriate scientific structure and content	8	7
12	Integration	Final synthesis	Studies eligible for data extraction	—	23

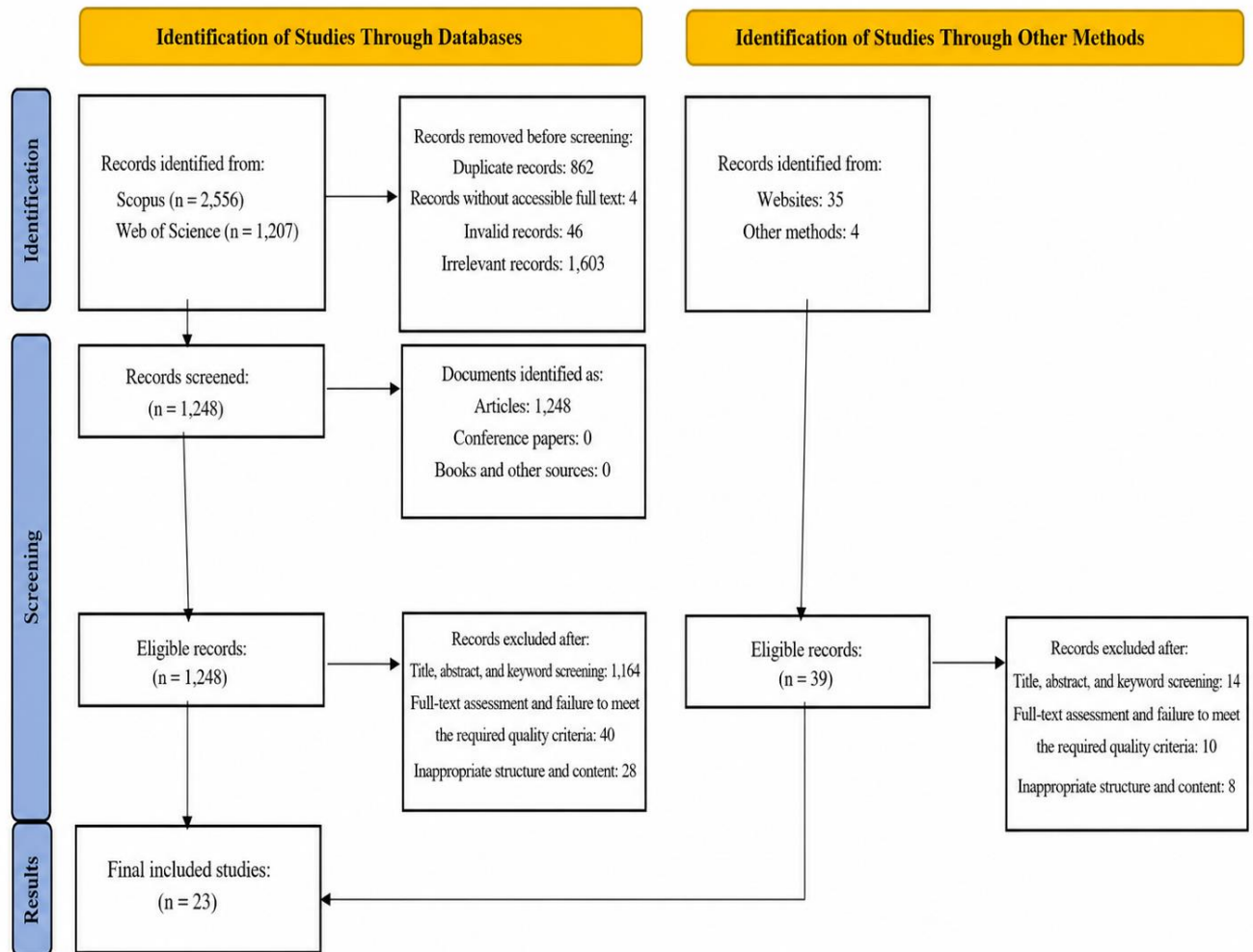


Figure 1. PRISMA flow diagram of the study-screening process

2.6. Step Six: Quality Assessment of the Selected Studies

Following the identification, preliminary screening, and full-text assessment stages, 23 eligible articles were ultimately selected for inclusion in the final analysis. To ensure the methodological quality of these studies and strengthen the credibility of the findings, the selected articles were assessed using the CASP checklist (CASP, 2018).

The assessment results indicated that a substantial proportion of the selected articles received high scores on the principal CASP criteria. The first reason for the high quality of these studies was the clarity and transparency of their research objectives, as almost all articles presented a clearly defined research problem, explicit research questions, and a coherent theoretical framework. The second reason was the appropriateness and rigor of their methodological designs. Most articles employed valid quantitative designs, such as structural equation modeling, multivariate regression, and confirmatory factor analysis. The third factor contributing to

their high quality was the reliability and validity of their measurement instruments. The fourth reason was transparency in data analysis and interpretation of the results. Finally, the applicability of the findings and their relevance to human resource management and public service motivation constituted another key factor contributing to the high CASP scores. Accordingly, it can be concluded that the 23 selected articles demonstrated a high level of methodological and substantive quality.

2.7. Step Seven: Data Extraction

Following the final selection of 23 articles—16 articles from the primary pathway and 7 articles from the supplementary pathway—the strategies and concepts affecting employees' public service motivation were extracted. For each article, the complete research title, authors, year of publication, key human resource management strategies, and associated factors were

recorded. Table 3 provides a comprehensive summary of this process.

Table 3. Data Extracted From the 23 Selected Articles

No.	Author(s)/year	Study title	Strategies extracted from the article	Factors extracted
1	Qasim and Mokhtar (2015)	<i>Improving Employee Outcome Through Human Resource Management Practices and Public Service Motivation: A Study of the Malaysia Public Sector</i>	Recruitment and selection based on public service values; mission-oriented training and development; meaningful job design; equitable and nonfinancial compensation systems; employee participation in decision-making	Organizational justice; perceived organizational support; value-based culture; organizational commitment; person–organization fit
2	Ripoll and Ritz (2022)	<i>Public Service Motivation and Human Resource Management</i>	Integration of PSM into strategic HRM; value-based and mission-oriented training; job enrichment; developmental performance appraisal	Satisfaction of autonomy and competence needs; organizational justice; institutional trust; supportive leadership; public value creation
3	Pham et al. (2023)	<i>The Meaning of Public Service Motivation: Human Resource Management Practices in the Public Sector</i>	Empowering leadership; employee participation in decision-making; support for professional development	Perceived autonomy; trust in the leader; affective organizational commitment; public service identity
4	Jallow and Jallow (2016)	<i>The Effects of Motivation on Employee Performance: A Strategic Human Resource Management Approach</i>	Meaningful job design; nonfinancial recognition; continuous training and development; strategic performance management	Intrinsic motivation; sense of competence; work meaningfulness; commitment to organizational objectives
5	Omar (2021)	<i>Factors Motivating Human Resources Management (HRM) in the Public and Private Sectors</i>	Senior management support for and ownership of HRM; alignment of human resource strategies with the organizational mission; investment in employee training and development; creation of a commitment- and meaning-based organizational culture; emphasis on long-term nonfinancial motivation	Job security; social security and insurance; appropriate working conditions; well-equipped workplace; opportunities for growth and continuous improvement; sense of personal value and organizational belonging
6	Young and Moon (2024)	<i>Public Service Motivation and Organizational Commitment: The Moderating Role of Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory</i>	HRM emphasis on motivational factors; meaningful job design; reinforcement of autonomy and responsibility; careful and non-dominant use of hygiene factors; alignment of HRM policies with employees' intrinsic motivation	Sense of meaning; perceived competence; opportunities for growth; responsibility; autonomy; avoidance of excessive reliance on extrinsic incentives; balance between hygiene and motivational factors
7	Miao et al. (2018)	<i>How Leadership and Public Service Motivation Enhance Innovative Behavior</i>	Development of entrepreneurial leadership; psychological empowerment of employees; behavioral role modeling by leaders; organizational support for innovation; recruitment and retention of employees with high public service motivation	Public service motivation; sense of meaning; sense of competence; sense of impact; leadership support; belief in the social impact of work
8	Kamdem (2021)	<i>Farmer Field Schools and Cocoa Yield in Cameroon</i>	Knowledge and skills empowerment; participatory and interactive learning; creation of social meaning and purpose in work; strengthening of collective identity and social networks; supportive leadership and facilitation	Sense of usefulness to society; commitment to the public interest; sense of professional competence; social responsibility; autonomy in learning and practice
9	Andersen et al. (2014)	<i>How Does Public Service Motivation Among Teachers Affect Student Performance in Schools?</i>	Meaningful and mission-oriented job design; reinforcement of autonomy and professional discretion; establishment of an organizational culture based on trust and justice; supportive and ethical leadership; alignment of organizational objectives with individual values	Public service motivation; commitment to the public interest; sense of usefulness to society; deep and sustainable job satisfaction; sense of competence and social responsibility
10	Yearworth and White (2013)	<i>The Uses of Qualitative Data in Multimethodology: Developing Causal Loop Diagrams During the Coding Process</i>	Multimethodology strategy; systems-modeling strategy using causal loop diagrams; grounded-theory-based qualitative data analysis; systemic diagnosis through appreciation and analysis phases	Sensitivity to system dynamics; problem structuring; comprehensive and systemic understanding of causal relationships
11	Lenner (2025)	<i>Change Management in Cross-Media Organizational Development: Evidence From a Public Service Media Provider in Germany</i>	Encouragement-based rather than coercion-based strategy; peer-to-peer learning; respect for medium-specific traditions; collaborative leadership; extension of the ADKAR model through the addition of professional identity, structure, and public interest dimensions—ADKAR + PSB	Voluntary participation; preservation of journalistic independence; professional identity; organizational structure; public interest

12	Ma et al. (2025)	<i>Intellectual Property Strategy and Corporate ESG Performance: A Quasi-Natural Experiment From National Intellectual Property Demonstration Cities</i>	Intellectual property strategy within an ESG framework; evidence-based policymaking; quasi-natural experimental assessment of policy effectiveness	Environmental performance; social performance; governance performance; organizational innovation
13	Papadopoulou and Dimitriadis (2020)	<i>Public Service Motivation and Job Satisfaction: A Study of Greek Public Sector Employees</i>	Strengthening job autonomy; designing meaningful and challenging jobs; increasing employee participation in decision-making; creating a supportive climate and supportive leadership; focusing on intrinsic motivation rather than external control	Public service motivation; commitment to the public interest; sustainable job satisfaction; sense of competence and meaning at work; belongingness and social relatedness in the workplace
14	Rajiani (2023)	<i>Greening Public Organisations: Is There Room for Pro-Environmental Public Servants to Participate?</i>	Strengthening voluntary employee participation in environmental initiatives; creating discretion and organizational trust; aligning individual values with public missions; reducing formalism and emphasizing intrinsic motivation; supporting environmentally oriented organizational citizenship behaviors	Public service motivation; affective environmental commitment; sense of responsibility for the public interest; willingness to perform voluntary extra-role behaviors; internalization of environmental values within professional identity
15	Belgo and Terziu (2025)	<i>Perceptions of Employee Motivation and Its Role in Work Efficiency: A Qualitative Case Study in the Basic Court of Prishtina</i>	Participative and supportive leadership; design of professional recognition and appreciation systems; provision of professional development opportunities and merit-based promotion; strengthening employee participation in organizational decision-making; redesigning HRM policies with an emphasis on the human and value-based dimensions of public service	Sense of meaning and social value in judicial work; organizational recognition and appreciation; organizational justice and institutional transparency; nonbureaucratic and human-centered organizational culture; opportunities for growth, learning, and career advancement; leadership style and quality of managerial relationships
16	Barsoum (2022)	<i>Why Is the Public Sector the Employer of Choice Among Women in the Middle East? A Gendered Qualitative Inquiry Into PSM in a Global Context</i>	Design of gender-sensitive HRM policies; social legitimization of public-sector employment; adaptation of job structures to the cultural context	Pure service motivation; gender expectations; social status of the public sector; cultural meaning and value of service
17	Barsoum (2015)	<i>The Public Sector as the Employer of Choice Among Youth in Egypt: The Relevance of Public Service Motivation Theory</i>	Alignment of recruitment policies with cultural and social values; emphasis on the social status of public service; linkage between material benefits and normative values; creation of a positive image of government as an employer	Job security; employment stability; social respect; symbolic status of public-sector employment; sense of service to society; internalization of extrinsic motives
18	Palma and Sepe (2017)	<i>Structural Equation Modelling: A Silver Bullet for Evaluating Public Service Motivation</i>	Reinforcement of the social meaningfulness of work; perceived organizational support; balanced job design; workload regulation; career life-cycle management	Perceived social impact; normative pressure; job burnout; resigned satisfaction; job tenure
19	Wenzel et al. (2019)	<i>Making Performance Pay Work: The Impact of Transparency, Participation, and Fairness on Controlling Perception and Intrinsic Motivation</i>	Transparency in performance-appraisal systems; employee participation in the design of compensation systems; noncontrolling and supportive reward-system design; strengthening procedural and distributive justice	Controlling perceptions of pay; perceived justice; sense of autonomy; trust in management; employee personality characteristics
20	Kim (2012)	<i>Does Person–Organization Fit Matter in the Public Sector? Testing the Mediating Effect of Person–Organization Fit</i>	Strengthening person–organization fit through job design; clarification of organizational values; alignment of individual and organizational goals	Person–organization fit; organizational commitment; job satisfaction; public service motivation
21	Dinour and Kousin (2021)	<i>Charity- and Project-Based Service Learning Models Increase Public Service Motivation Outcomes</i>	Service-learning; experiential education; design of socially oriented educational interventions; professional socialization	Commitment to the public interest; compassion; self-sacrifice; social awareness; reduction in self-centered motivations
22	Tao and Wen (2022)	<i>Demystifying the Components of Public Service Motivation Among Young Public Servants in China: A Qualitative Inquiry</i>	Localization of HRM policies; institutional socialization of employees; alignment of motivation with political and cultural values; strengthening organizational–political identity	Loyalty to the governance system; Confucian values; collectivism; institutional obedience; affective family–nation bond; moral commitment to service
23	Kiambati et al. (2024)	<i>Authentic Leadership and Performance of Public Servants in the Tanzanian Context: The Mediating Role of Motivation</i>	Authentic leadership; creation of organizational trust; employee empowerment; participation in decision-making; recognition and appreciation of employee efforts; creation of an ethics-oriented work environment	Intrinsic motivation; commitment to the public interest; sense of organizational belonging; social responsibility; work meaningfulness

3. Findings and Results

At this stage, following the extraction of the concepts and components of public service motivation, the findings were analyzed and synthesized. The objective was to integrate conceptually related and convergent concepts and abstract

them into broad employee public service motivation strategies. Table 4 presents the outcome of this analytical process and demonstrates how the diverse concepts extracted from the 23 selected articles were organized into 12 key components.

Table 4. Analysis and Synthesis of Findings: Categorization of Key Components

No.	Identified key component	Principal concepts and components	Representative articles
1	Leadership emphasizing public values and role modeling (C1)	Delegation of authority; managerial trust; leader support; facilitation of self-leadership; distributed leadership	Conger and Kanungo (1988); Alkaabi and Finetrap (2019); Kiambati et al. (2024); Vandenabeele et al. (2018)
2	Establishment of a service-oriented and ethics-based organizational culture (C2)	Participative culture; organizational cohesion; service-oriented values; professional ethics	Shareen (2020); Van Loon et al. (2015); Belgo and Terziu (2025)
3	Strengthening social responsibility and commitment to the public interest (C3)	Sense of responsibility toward society; commitment to service delivery; public interest	Fanmilayo et al. (2024); Bitos et al. (2023); Andersen et al. (2014)
4	Job design emphasizing social impact and service to citizens (C4)	Mission-oriented job design; social impact; service to citizens	Alkaabi and Finetrap (2019); Van Loon et al. (2015); Pham et al. (2023)
5	Increasing task variety and decision-making autonomy (C5)	Skill variety; autonomy; job independence; discretion	Fakane et al. (2023); Hafides et al. (2023); Jallow and Jallow (2016)
6	Creating opportunities for direct interaction with stakeholders and receipt of feedback (C6)	Interaction with citizens; direct feedback; community engagement	Elisa et al. (2024); Bitos et al. (2023); Rajiani (2023)
7	Training in public service values and service-delivery competencies (C7)	Training in public values; competency development; value internalization	Shareen (2020); Scott et al. (2019); Dinour and Kousin (2021)
8	Establishing a clear career path emphasizing advancement in public service (C8)	Transparent career path; professional growth; merit-based advancement	Elisa et al. (2024); Van Loon et al. (2015); Qasim and Mokhtar (2015)
9	Continuous learning and constructive feedback for performance improvement (C9)	Continuous learning; performance appraisal; constructive feedback	Fakane et al. (2023); Hafides et al. (2023); Wenzel et al. (2019)
10	Job characteristics and the nature of tasks (C10)	Skill variety; task significance; task identity; autonomy; feedback	Fanmilayo et al. (2024); Alkaabi and Finetrap (2019); Palma and Sepe (2017)
11	Organizational environment and prevailing culture (C11)	Dominant values; participative climate; organizational support	Shareen (2020); Van Loon et al. (2015); Tao and Wen (2022)
12	Organizational justice and job support (C12)	Distributive and procedural justice; organizational support; job security and stability	Fakane et al. (2023); Hafides et al. (2023); Omar (2021)

The present analytical table is the product of a systematic review of 23 scientific sources focusing on public service motivation and human resource management in the public sector. The principal objective of the table is to extract and organize two categories of key information from each article. The first category comprises the human resource management strategies proposed or tested for enhancing public service motivation, while the second category comprises the factors influencing the formation, maintenance, or weakening of this motivation. This analytical distinction enables researchers to consider both the operational dimension—strategies—and the contextual dimension—factors—simultaneously.

One of the prominent characteristics of this body of literature is the geographical and contextual diversity of the included articles. Studies conducted in Malaysia, Tanzania, Egypt, China, Germany, Italy, Vietnam, Greece, the Middle East, and international contexts indicate that public service

motivation is a transnational phenomenon with indigenous and culturally grounded foundations. Considerable methodological diversity is also evident, ranging from quantitative studies employing structural equation modeling (Kim, 2012; Palma & Sepe, 2017) to gender-oriented qualitative research (Barsoum, 2022), systematic reviews, and multimethodology using causal loop diagrams (Yearworth & White, 2013). This diversity enhances the content validity of the table and demonstrates that the findings were not derived from a limited or unidimensional context.

A horizontal examination of the strategies column indicates that several themes recur across the articles. The most important of these themes include meaningful and mission-oriented job design, authentic and transformational leadership, reinforcement of employee autonomy, and the establishment of a balance between material and nonmaterial incentives. On the one hand, this recurrence reflects

scholarly convergence regarding the most effective human resource strategies for strengthening public service motivation. On the other hand, it provides a robust foundation for developing policy recommendations. A noteworthy point is that Lenner (2025) presents a distinctive approach by emphasizing voluntary encouragement rather than the coercive imposition of change, an approach consistent with the intrinsic motivation literature discussed in the other articles.

The factors column prominently features concepts such as work meaningfulness, organizational commitment, perceived autonomy, organizational justice, and professional identity. Notably, some articles, including Palma and Sepe (2017), address the potentially adverse or “dark” side of public service motivation by identifying negative outcomes

such as job burnout and resigned satisfaction. Such outcomes may emerge under conditions of excessive normative pressure and inadequate organizational support. These findings indicate that the factors affecting public service motivation cannot be analyzed solely in terms of positive drivers. Inhibiting and risk-producing factors must also be considered when designing human resource policies.

Overall, the 23-row table is not only a useful reference instrument for researchers in public administration but also provides an analytical foundation for the next stage of the research, namely categorization and axial coding. The contextual diversity, methodological richness, and conceptual convergence of the selected articles substantially enhance the credibility and generalizability of the findings.

Table 5. Analytical Categorization of Strategies and Factors Affecting the Enhancement of Public Service Motivation in Human Resource Management

Code	Macro-category	Subcomponents	Related articles
Strategies			
R1	Job design and enrichment	Meaningful and mission-oriented job design; job enrichment; task variety; reinforcement of autonomy and professional discretion; balanced workload regulation	1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 8, 13, 15, 17
R2	Leadership and organizational culture	Transformational and empowering leadership; supportive and ethics-oriented leadership; value-based and mission-oriented organizational culture; participative and collaborative management; behavioral role modeling by leaders	3, 7, 10, 11, 19, 23
R3	Compensation and performance-appraisal systems	Balance between material and nonmaterial incentives; service-oriented performance-based pay; developmental performance appraisal; noncrowding-out reward systems; nonfinancial recognition	2, 4, 6, 9, 22
R4	Human resource training, development, and recruitment	Recruitment and selection based on public service values; training based on public values; competency development; peer-to-peer learning; mentoring programs; alignment of recruitment policies with cultural values	1, 5, 12, 16, 18, 19
Factors			
F1	Motivation and work meaningfulness	Public service motivation; intrinsic motivation; sense of meaning and purpose; sense of social impact; commitment to the public interest; belief in the social impact of work	2, 6, 7, 8, 17, 22, 23
F2	Organizational identity and commitment	Affective and normative organizational commitment; organizational and professional identity; person–organization alignment; organizational belonging; social norms of public service	3, 8, 10, 11, 16, 19
F3	Organizational justice, support, and well-being	Organizational justice, including distributive and procedural justice; perceived organizational support; job security; subjective well-being and mental health; work–life balance; prevention of job burnout	1, 5, 9, 14, 15, 21
F4	Competence, autonomy, and professional development	Perceived competence; perceived autonomy; professional self-confidence; opportunities for growth and continuous improvement; task identity; task significance	3, 4, 6, 12, 13, 22

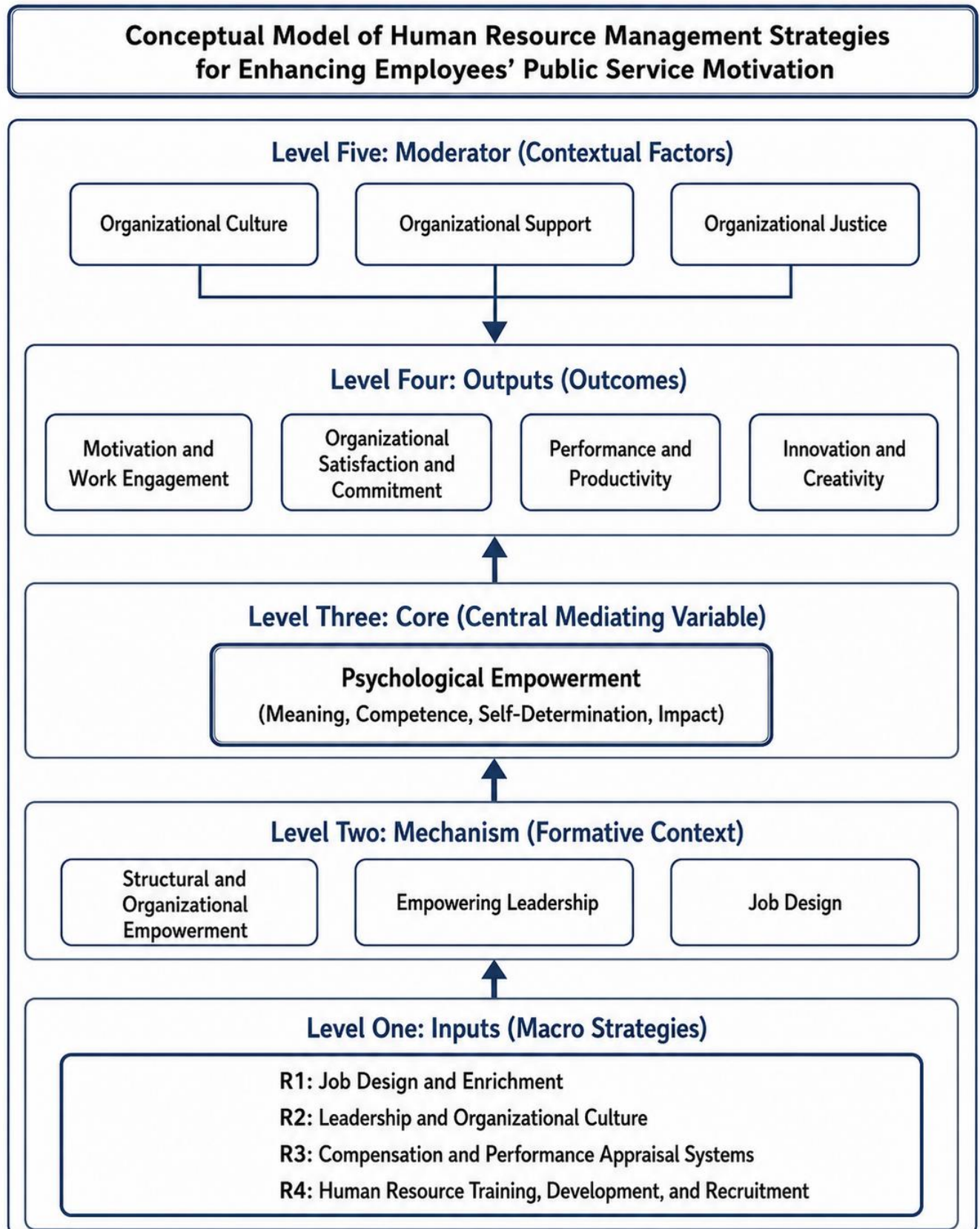


Figure 2. Final conceptual model derived from the systematic review

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The present systematic review sought to identify, categorize, and integrate human resource management strategies that can enhance employees' public service motivation, with particular relevance to the Baghdad Health Insurance Department. The review of 23 eligible studies produced 12 interrelated components and culminated in a five-level conceptual model comprising inputs, mechanisms, a central mediating core, outputs, and contextual moderators. The identified components included leadership grounded in public values and role modeling, a service-oriented and ethics-based organizational culture, social responsibility and commitment to the public interest, socially meaningful job design, task variety and decision-making autonomy, direct interaction with stakeholders and access to feedback, training in public service values and service-delivery competencies, transparent career paths, continuous learning and constructive performance feedback, job characteristics, the organizational environment, and organizational justice and job support. Taken together, these findings indicate that public service motivation is not produced by a single managerial intervention; rather, it emerges from the interaction of strategic HRM practices, empowering organizational arrangements, employees' psychological experiences, and the broader institutional context.

At the input level, the findings identified four major HRM strategy clusters: job design and enrichment; leadership and organizational culture; compensation and performance appraisal systems; and human resource recruitment, training, and development. This result suggests that public service motivation should be embedded across the entire employment cycle rather than addressed through isolated motivational programs. Recruitment based on public service values, mission-oriented socialization, competency development, and opportunities for career progression can help public organizations attract and retain employees whose personal values are compatible with the public mission. This interpretation is consistent with evidence that HRM practices influence employee outcomes when they are aligned with public service motivation and person-organization fit [11-13]. The findings also accord with studies showing that retention in public organizations depends on the interaction of meaningful work, career development, job stability, organizational belonging, and perceived future opportunities [5, 15-17]. Therefore, the enhancement of public service motivation begins before employees enter the organization and continues through

recruitment, placement, development, appraisal, and promotion.

Job design and enrichment emerged as a particularly important strategic category. The extracted evidence emphasized meaningful and mission-oriented work, task variety, autonomy, professional discretion, balanced workloads, and visible social impact. This pattern indicates that employees are more likely to sustain public service motivation when they can recognize the connection between their daily tasks and benefits delivered to citizens. In the context of the Baghdad Health Insurance Department, routine administrative work may become more motivating when employees understand how accurate processing, responsive communication, and timely decision-making contribute to healthcare access and financial protection. This finding is supported by research showing that meaningful job design, autonomy, and competence strengthen intrinsic motivation and organizational commitment [21, 22, 31]. It is also consistent with evidence that public service motivation can promote stronger work evaluation and performance when employees perceive their roles as significant and socially useful [4, 32]. Consequently, job design should not be treated merely as the technical division of duties but as a mechanism through which employees experience public value.

Leadership and organizational culture formed the second major strategic domain. The review showed that empowering, authentic, supportive, participative, ethical, and value-oriented leadership can reinforce public service motivation by creating trust, modeling appropriate conduct, delegating authority, and recognizing employee contributions. This finding is consistent with evidence that authentic leadership improves the performance of public servants through employee motivation [25]. It also aligns with research indicating that leadership and public service motivation jointly enhance innovative behavior by strengthening employees' perceptions of meaning, competence, and impact [6]. The importance of leadership is particularly pronounced in bureaucratic institutions, where formal rules may otherwise restrict initiative and weaken employees' sense of agency. Leaders who clarify the public mission, explain the social implications of administrative work, and provide employees with meaningful discretion can transform public service motivation from an abstract value into observable behavior.

The findings also showed that the influence of leadership is inseparable from organizational culture. A service-oriented and ethics-based culture was identified as a central

factor in sustaining public service motivation. Such a culture communicates that citizen welfare, procedural fairness, integrity, cooperation, and accountability are genuine institutional priorities rather than symbolic statements. This interpretation is supported by evidence that public service motivation operates more effectively in environments where public values are institutionalized and reinforced through HRM practices [1, 7, 39]. Research has also shown that red tape and excessive formalism can weaken the relationship between employee involvement, motivation, and performance [27]. Accordingly, the culture of a health insurance organization can either facilitate or obstruct the translation of employee motivation into responsive service. Where procedures are opaque, decision-making is overly centralized, and employee initiative is discouraged, public service motivation may gradually decline despite initially strong service values.

At the mechanism level, the review identified structural and organizational empowerment, empowering leadership, and job design as the formative context through which macro-level HRM strategies affect employees. This result is significant because it clarifies that formal HR policies do not influence outcomes directly in all cases. Their effects depend on whether employees actually receive access to information, resources, support, authority, and opportunities to participate. Studies of public-sector empowerment have similarly emphasized that centralized structures, weak delegation, limited access to information, and managerial distrust constrain employee capability and motivation [19, 23, 24]. Conversely, empowerment strengthens professional confidence, responsibility, initiative, and adaptive performance. The identification of empowerment as a formative mechanism therefore supports the view that HRM systems must alter the actual conditions of work, not merely issue motivational messages.

The central core of the model was psychological empowerment, comprising meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact. This is one of the most important findings of the review because it explains how organizational practices may be converted into motivational and behavioral outcomes. Employees are more likely to display public service motivation when they believe that their work is meaningful, that they possess the competence required to perform it, that they have sufficient autonomy to make decisions, and that their actions can influence organizational or social outcomes. This interpretation is compatible with self-determination theory and with public-sector research emphasizing autonomy, competence, and

meaningfulness as central psychological needs [21, 31]. It is also supported by training and empowerment studies that identify competence development and participation as essential for sustained employee performance [18, 19]. The model therefore suggests that public service motivation is most effectively strengthened when HRM strategies produce an internal experience of empowerment rather than external compliance.

The output level contained four principal outcomes: motivation and work engagement, organizational satisfaction and commitment, performance and productivity, and innovation and creativity. The inclusion of these outcomes reflects the multidimensional consequences of public service motivation. Previous studies have linked public service motivation to stronger commitment, intention to remain, and performance [3-5]. The relationship with innovation is also supported by evidence that employees with strong public service motivation are more willing to engage in innovative behavior when leadership and organizational support are present [6]. In addition, motivation can reduce counterproductive work behavior by strengthening employees' identification with organizational and public goals [32]. In the Baghdad Health Insurance Department, these outputs could be reflected in improved responsiveness to beneficiaries, reduced administrative errors, greater commitment to service standards, stronger collaboration, and increased willingness to propose procedural improvements.

Nevertheless, the findings indicate that public service motivation should not be viewed as uniformly beneficial. The inclusion of organizational support, justice, and culture as moderators reflects the fact that highly motivated employees may experience frustration or burnout when institutional conditions prevent them from fulfilling public-oriented goals. This interpretation is strongly supported by research on the bright and dark sides of public service motivation, which has shown that service-oriented employees may experience lower well-being when job demands are excessive and organizational support is insufficient [7]. Palma and Sepe likewise highlighted the possibility that normative pressure and strong service commitment may coexist with burnout or resigned satisfaction [8]. These findings are especially relevant to health-related institutions, where employees may face emotional demands, complex cases, public dissatisfaction, and resource constraints. Thus, the purpose of HRM should not be to maximize public service motivation without limits,

but to sustain it through supportive, fair, and psychologically healthy working conditions.

Organizational justice was identified as one of the major contextual moderators. This result suggests that employees' interpretation of HR policies depends on whether processes and outcomes are perceived as fair. Transparent performance appraisal, participatory decision-making, equitable workload distribution, and clear promotion criteria can preserve intrinsic motivation and institutional trust. Evidence from performance-pay research indicates that transparency, participation, and fairness reduce controlling perceptions and support intrinsic motivation [29]. Similarly, qualitative evidence from public judicial administration shows that recognition, fairness, transparent procedures, and humane leadership influence both employee motivation and work efficiency [37]. In the Baghdad Health Insurance Department, perceived favoritism, inconsistent appraisal, or unequal access to development opportunities could weaken public service motivation even among highly committed employees. Organizational justice should therefore be considered an enabling condition for the effectiveness of all other HRM strategies.

Organizational support was also identified as a key moderator. Employees need evidence that the organization values their contribution, protects their well-being, and provides the resources necessary for effective service. This finding aligns with studies emphasizing job security, social protection, recognition, career opportunities, and appropriate working conditions as important motivational factors in both public and private organizations [30]. It is also consistent with research linking workplace spirituality, employee well-being, and public service motivation [33]. Supportive organizational practices may be particularly important during periods of reform or technological change, when employees need training, role clarity, and psychological reassurance. Evidence from public service media demonstrates that organizational change is more effective when participation is voluntary, professional identity is respected, and the public purpose of change is clearly communicated [36].

The review further demonstrated the importance of social responsibility, stakeholder interaction, and direct feedback. Employees are more likely to experience their work as meaningful when they observe its effects on citizens and communities. This is consistent with studies showing that service-learning and community engagement can increase compassion, commitment to public interest, and public service motivation [10]. Compassion has also been proposed

as an important indicator through which public service motivation can contribute to improved service performance [9]. Moreover, participation in pro-environmental initiatives illustrates that public employees may extend their service motivation beyond formal job requirements when institutions provide trust, discretion, and opportunities for voluntary contribution [34]. For health insurance employees, structured interaction with beneficiaries and feedback on service outcomes may help prevent administrative detachment and reinforce the societal significance of their work.

The cross-cultural findings included in the review also indicate that public service motivation is shaped by local values and institutional traditions. Research in China has shown that collectivism, institutional loyalty, moral duty, and family–nation bonds may form part of the motivational structure of young public servants [28]. Research in the Middle East has similarly demonstrated that the attractiveness of public-sector employment may be linked to gender norms, social legitimacy, security, and cultural expectations [14]. These findings suggest that HRM strategies for the Baghdad Health Insurance Department should not be transferred uncritically from Western contexts. Instead, they should be adapted to local administrative norms, employee expectations, cultural understandings of service, and the institutional role of public employment. At the same time, the recurrence of autonomy, meaningfulness, justice, support, and commitment across diverse national settings indicates that the model captures several broadly applicable principles.

Finally, the review underscores the value of integrating public service motivation with broader contemporary public-management priorities. Public organizations are increasingly expected to support sustainability, innovation, digital transformation, and evidence-based governance. Research on ESG performance and institutional strategy demonstrates that organizational policies can influence environmental, social, governance, and innovation outcomes [35]. The findings of this review suggest that such strategic goals are more likely to be realized when employees perceive them as connected to public value and when HRM systems provide the competence, autonomy, and support required for implementation. Overall, the proposed five-level model offers a comprehensive explanation of how macro-level HRM inputs can operate through empowering mechanisms and psychological empowerment to produce desirable employee and organizational outcomes, while

remaining conditional on organizational justice, support, and culture.

This study has several limitations. First, the final synthesis was based on a relatively small set of studies that differed in national context, sector, research design, measurement instruments, and definitions of public service motivation. This heterogeneity increased the breadth of the review but limited direct comparison across studies. Second, some included articles addressed constructs adjacent to public service motivation, such as general employee motivation, empowerment, organizational commitment, or sustainability, which may have broadened the conceptual boundaries of the synthesis. Third, the review relied primarily on published studies and may therefore be affected by publication bias and the underrepresentation of unpublished or non-English evidence. Fourth, the proposed framework has not yet been empirically tested within the Baghdad Health Insurance Department, and its contextual applicability should therefore be interpreted with caution. Finally, the use of content analysis required interpretive categorization, meaning that alternative researchers might organize some strategies and factors differently.

Future studies should empirically test the proposed five-level model using data collected from employees and managers in the Baghdad Health Insurance Department and comparable public health institutions. Longitudinal designs would be particularly valuable for examining whether HRM strategies produce sustained changes in psychological empowerment, public service motivation, commitment, and performance over time. Researchers should also compare different occupational groups, administrative units, and levels of seniority to determine whether the model operates consistently across employee categories. Mixed-method studies could combine surveys with interviews, focus groups, and organizational records to capture both measurable relationships and employees' lived experiences. Further research should also examine potential negative outcomes, including burnout, emotional exhaustion, role overload, and frustration, and identify the conditions under which strong public service motivation becomes psychologically costly.

Managers of the Baghdad Health Insurance Department should adopt an integrated rather than fragmented approach to employee motivation. Recruitment and promotion criteria should include commitment to public values, service orientation, ethical conduct, and citizen-centered behavior. Jobs should be redesigned to increase task meaning, autonomy, feedback, and visibility of social impact.

Managers should delegate appropriate authority, involve employees in decisions, provide continuous training, and establish clear career-development pathways. Performance appraisal and compensation systems should be transparent, fair, developmental, and balanced between financial and nonfinancial recognition. The organization should also create regular opportunities for employees to receive feedback from beneficiaries and understand how their work contributes to healthcare access and public welfare. Finally, senior management should actively monitor workload, employee well-being, justice perceptions, and organizational support to ensure that public service motivation is strengthened without increasing burnout or excessive self-sacrifice.

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Authors equally contributed to this article.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethical Considerations

All procedures performed in this study were under the ethical standards.

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